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# **JOB QUALITY: THE PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF NEW ZEALAND WORKERS**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Management, The University of Auckland, 2019.

## **ABSTRACT**

Building on international definitions and theories of job quality, this thesis examined how workers in New Zealand perceive their job quality and the strategies that more vulnerable workers used, and are using, to transition out of jobs of inferior quality. The thesis employed a sequential mixed-method approach, using both secondary and primary data sources. Employees' perceptions of their job quality were examined quantitatively using data-sets from the 1997, 2005 and 2015 ISSP. These surveys have not yet been interrogated for what they reveal about the dimensions of job quality and employee satisfaction in New Zealand, including the association of a range of personal variables with job quality. The thesis did this, enabling job conditions in New Zealand to be compared internationally. Semi-structured interviews with part-timers, a more vulnerable group of workers, focused on their strategies for improving the quality of their jobs.

The results reveal modest changes regarding shifts in job values. Except for job security, employees place a higher priority on intrinsic job values. Only a few differences related to the altruistic drive of women, the desire for flexibility and job security are observed between men and women's job values. A discernible pattern of differences exists between full-timers and part-timers. Graduates tend to have greater expectations, valuing greater rewards from both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The overall pattern in job quality is that the average worker has experienced improvements in several aspects of their jobs except for having stressful work. Career prospects tend to be poorer and constitute a key contextual factor. In the New Zealand context, having an interesting job, good management relations and having a less stressful job were strong predictors of job satisfaction for all three surveys.

This thesis emphasizes that not all part-time jobs have poor features on all dimensions and so cannot be categorized as always of inferior quality thereby challenging the dual labour market theory's assumption. Overall, the highly educated had better experiences of the extrinsic features but their jobs were more stressful. The less educated had better experiences with good management relations but were required to exert harder physical effort. The results revealed that the dominant strategies which were successfully implemented by part-timers in transitioning into full-time jobs are speaking up to management and also demonstrating a positive work ethic.

## **DEDICATION**

To the two Emmanuels in my life 'boys boys'; Emmanuel senior and Emmanuel junior and  
my only 'bebe', Nana Akua

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‘The God who began it has accomplished it (Hebrews 12:2) in spite of all the challenges. Indeed, the race is not to the swift. Conceiving an idea and pursuing the dream of a doctoral programme is worth the journey, its challenges but rewarding. It has not been an easy road, but I am grateful to everyone who made this thesis possible. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to God who gave me the strength to journey through the doctoral learning process.

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## **Acronyms**

HILDA - The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia

ILO - International Labour Organisation

ISSP – International Social Survey Programme

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

SHARE - Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe

UNECE - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*‘The human being is created to work, as the bird is created to fly’ (Martin Luther 1483-1546 cited in Warr, 2007; p.5)*

### 1.1 Introduction

The quote above speaks to the centrality of work to our living. Work is so central to our lives because, as humans, we get more than earning money from our jobs. For instance, our titles, identities and affluence are all derived mainly from the jobs we do (Broom, D’Souza, Strazdins, Butterworth, Parslow, & Rodgers, 2006). Work, therefore, tends to be an avenue for realising the most important goals. For these reasons, most peoples’ well-being will be low when they are unemployed but willing and available to work (Clark, 2010). As humans, we seek to achieve various goals from work, we also tend to have divergent views about what makes a ‘good’ job (Kalleberg, 2011). Two people’s views on what makes a ‘good’ job will vary. The OECD (2014; p. 82) points this out by highlighting that ‘job quality does not have the same meaning for different individuals’. While one person might see a ‘good’ job as one with high pay and more benefits, to another, it is one that is interesting and challenging.

Furthermore, what makes ‘a good or bad job changes over the life-course’ (Pocock and Skinner, 2012; p. 72) and employees’ ‘evaluations of job quality evolve over time’ (Booccuzzo and Gianecchini, 2014; p.454). Belardi’s (2017) qualitative study on chefs in Australia found that job quality is influenced by a person’s life stage. Based on an employee’s life stage, certain dimensions become increasingly important. For instance, the study found that on average, chefs in Australia from the sample valued flexibility in their later life stage. Pocock and Charlesworth (2017; p.28) endorse this stance arguing that ‘what makes a good job also changes over an individual’s life

cycle'. Clark (2015), confirming this assertion, emphasizes that the value of job quality features is not necessarily the same for all but can differ for the same individual at different times.

Despite this subjectivity in understanding job quality, the 'objective approach' (e.g., Eurofound, 2012; Green, Mostafa, Parent-Thirion, Vermeylen, Van Houten, Biletta & Lyly-Yrjanainen, 2013; Schokkaert, Ootegem and Verhofstadt, 2009) assumes that certain objective characteristics make a good job. For example, jobs that are highly paid and have an array of benefits and good career advancement prospects are generally regarded as good (e.g. Foley and Schwartz, 2003; Kalleberg, 2011; Warhurst, 2003). This notwithstanding, some jobs may have a blend of good and bad characteristics (Munro, 2012; Tilly, 1996) but may be skewed more to a particular direction.

The debate above shows the difficulty of finding a single acceptable definition of job quality. To date, there is no consensus on the definition, dimensions or measurement of job quality; however, its multi-dimensionality is widely recognized (e.g. Findlay, Warhurst, Keep & Lloyd, 2017; Kalleberg, 2011; Pocock and Skinner, 2012). Generally, the theory of job quality argues that a good job will have more positive effects on employees than a bad one (Holman and McClelland, 2011). On the other hand, bad jobs are known to have negative impacts not only on employees but the employees' families, the wider community and the nation as a whole (Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011).

Implicitly, since bad jobs have negative consequences for employees, it is argued that the content of work and the context in which work is done should be improved to enhance employees' job quality (e.g. Clark, 2005; Foley and Schwartz, 2003; Kalleberg, 2011; OECD, 2010; Pocock and Skinner, 2012). For instance, commenting on job quality, the OECD (2014) argues that creating more jobs is critical, but this move only tackles the unemployment problems. Instead, improving the quality of these jobs is what leads to the enhancement of employee well-being.

Calls for the creation of good jobs and improvements of bad jobs are widespread among academics, unions and governments. Kalleberg (2011), for instance, called for a ‘new social contract’. In New Zealand, a recent parliamentary approval to change the minimum wage from \$15.75 to \$16.50 in 2018, the outlawing of ‘zero hours’ contracts’ and the enactment of the New Zealand Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 are avenues for improving job quality. Further, the extension of paid parental leave by the government to cover non-standard employees in 2016 and also increasing the weeks for receiving the benefits from 18 weeks to 22 weeks by July 2018 and then to 26 weeks by July 2020 are some steps aimed at maintaining good jobs and improving bad ones. Recently, there have also been calls for not just increasing the minimum wage but for a ‘living wage’ which, according to King & Waldegrave (2012, p. 3), ‘is the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life. A living wage will enable workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society.’ These policy interventions are all focusing on different aspects of improving job quality.

Some labour potential will be inactive in an economy if the quality of jobs is inferior. Previous studies have established that people are more inclined to work if their jobs enhance their well-being than when detrimental (e.g., Warr, 2007; Jones, Haslam and Haslam, 2017; OECD, 2014). For instance, in an interview with Jess Berentson-Shaw of the Morgan Foundation (April 3, 2017, in press), she explained how some New Zealanders are not inclined to work and/or do part-time because of the benefits they get from the social welfare system. She notes that it becomes too ‘stressful to manage income when it is not secure, so people just think it is easier for me to predict my income even though it might be lower if I stay on the welfare’. As job quality can predict whether to work or not (Clark, 1998), and whether to quit or not (Bryson Cappelari & Lucifora, 2005), improving employees’ job quality becomes an important avenue for raising employment



levels in a country (Ficapal-Cusi, Díaz-Chao & Torrent Sellens, 2015). For instance, if working will give an employee just what the person would have received or less than what he or she would receive without working from the welfare system, then there will be little incentive for working. This is especially true if the focus is on the income to be gained. Generally, labour force participation is enhanced with the improvement in the quality of jobs (OECD, 2014).

If the assertion by researchers such as Carre, Findlay, Tilly & Warhurst (2012), Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) and Pocock and Skinner (2012) on the effects of unemployment and bad jobs on employees' health and well-being is something to go by, then more attention must be paid to the concept of job quality. Indeed, if a government wants to make use of the potential of the working population, then more good jobs must be created and bad jobs improved because of the positive impact of these jobs on employees, their families, government and the society at large (Findlay et al., 2017; Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011).

## **1.2 Research questions**

Consequently, this thesis addresses employees' perceptions of their job quality in New Zealand. In particular, this study intends to address the following questions:

- Have there been changes in employees' job values over the years?
- Are there perceptions of improvements or deteriorations in employees' job quality over the years?
- Which groups of workers experience better job quality in New Zealand?
- How does job quality affect job satisfaction in New Zealand?
- What strategies do workers adopt to deal with jobs with 'inferior' quality?

As mentioned earlier, the experience of job quality is different for different individuals and is also argued to vary by the context (Carre, Findlay, Tilly & Warhurst, 2012). Most studies on employee job quality are centred on advanced economies. In this respect, most literature on job quality has emerged mainly from North America (e.g. Tilly, 1997; Kalleberg, 2000, 2011; Osterman, 2013), also in Europe (e.g. Warhurst, 2011; Green, 2009, 2013; McGovern, Smeaton & Hill, 2004; Eurofound, 2012) and increasingly from Australia (e.g. Belardi, 2017; Findlay, Kalleberg & Warhurst, 2013; Carre, Findlay, Tilly and Warhurst, 2012; Knox, Warhurst, Nickson and Dutton, 2015; Pocock and Skinner, 2012; McDonald, Bradley and Brown, 2009; Burgess and Connell, 2008). This is a gap in New Zealand that this thesis aims to bridge.

#### Question 1:

Work value refers to a ‘hierarchy of preferences an individual has towards being in employment’ (Johri, 2005, p. 24) or how much workers want different job outcomes (Clark, 2005a, 2015). Work values are argued to be the basis for understanding employees’ job quality under the subjective approach. Intrinsic and extrinsic job values explain the ‘reasons people have for working and the kinds of rewards and benefits that influence their satisfaction’ (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; p.255). Kaasa (2011) and Hauff and Kirchner (2014) have argued that job values differ among and between countries. Similarly, Gallie, Felstead & Green’s (2012), Kalleberg and Marsden’s (2013) and Clark’s (1998, 2005a, 2010, and 2015) studies have found broad stability in people’s job values in the UK, USA and among the OECD countries. Others like Jurgenson (1978) and Karl and Sutton (1998) have found significant changes in employees’ work values over time. On this premise, this thesis is interested in tracking changes in employees’ job values over a twenty-year period in New Zealand.

#### Question 2:

Against the backdrop that too many developed countries have poor quality jobs with good jobs worsening and an upsurge of bad jobs (Findlay et al., 2017), this thesis aims to examine the perceptions of employees of their job quality and also track changes in New Zealand employees' job quality over the last twenty years. In monitoring these changes, the study analyses whether there have been deteriorations or improvements in specific indicators over the period.

#### Question 3:

The impact of good jobs on workers' well-being as a whole and their satisfaction, in particular, is well acknowledged (e.g. Kalleberg and Vaisey, 2005; Holman, 2013; Eurofound, 2012). Many researchers argue that enhancing employees' job quality makes a positive impact on their satisfaction levels (e.g. Knox et al. 2015; Cooke, Donaghey & Zeytinoglu, 2013; Green, 2009; Burgess, Connell & Winterton, 2013). Findings from Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b & 2010), Handel (2005) and Hauret and Williams (2017) show that specific job quality dimensions affect job satisfaction. However, some indicators are more important in driving satisfaction and stronger predictors of job satisfaction than others. Furthermore, through a cross-national analysis Westover (2016) found job satisfaction facets to be contextual. Due to this result, he cautions against the generalisation of the facets of job satisfaction. Thus, the motivation to analyse the most important job quality factors in New Zealand that predict job satisfaction.

#### Question 4:

It has been recognized that job quality varies across socio-economic groups (e.g. Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; Kalleberg, 2011; OECD, 2014). For example, full-timers, older workers and the highly-educated are believed to have better jobs than part-timers, the younger workers and the less-educated. Due to these findings, this thesis will examine the quality of jobs for key groups

of workers in New Zealand in order to access any differences that exist. In particular, this thesis examines the differences between men and women, full-timers and part-timers and people of different levels of education.

#### Question 5:

If improvements in job quality have positive impacts on employees and employers, then what avenues exist for helping employees in jobs of inferior quality? It has been established in the literature that the nature of work and the context in which work is done determines employees' experience of good or bad job quality (e.g., OECD, 2010; Clark, 2005b; Kalleberg, 2011). In this regard, this thesis examines the working conditions of past and present involuntary part-timers with the hope of understanding the nature of their job quality. The emotional and financial challenges of present involuntary part-timers are investigated as research has found this group of workers to be vulnerable. Because involuntary part-timers are dissatisfied with their working hours, successful strategies used by past involuntary part-timers and ones being used by present involuntary part-timers are examined. This is in response to calls for the improvements in workers' job quality.

For these research questions to be examined, an existing survey and a series of interviews to understand employees' perceptions of their job quality are used. To provide an understanding of the perceptions of employees on their job quality, three waves (1997, 2005 and 2015) of the Work Orientations module of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) datasets are utilized. As the thesis aimed to explore whether there has been improvements or deteriorations in employees' job quality, it became important that this study employs all the survey years that New Zealand has so far participated in so that changes can be tracked. This thesis tracked employees' job values and job quality over the 20-year period to explore if there have been any significant

improvements or deteriorations in specific job quality indicators. In an attempt to identify differences in job values and job quality of socio-economic groups, this study analyzes perceptions of men and women, full-time and part-time workers, the educated and the less educated. In the qualitative data gathering, this study narrowed the analysis to a group of past and current involuntary part-timers with the aim of understanding the strategies used or being used for transitioning into jobs of better quality. To better appreciate the individual and collective strategies, the thesis discusses the working conditions and the emotional and financial challenges of these involuntary part-timers.

### **1.3 Thesis structure**

This thesis comprises nine chapters. Following this Introduction of the research aims, motivations and the structure of the thesis, Chapter 2 is tasked with reviewing current empirical and theoretical scholarship on the concept of job quality. The thesis provides detailed information on how job quality has been defined by various researchers. It discusses various key dimensions widely recognized to impact positively on employees' well-being. The chapter further reviews the literature on job quality between different socio-economic groups. Specifically, the focus is on the differences in job quality of men and women, part-timers and full-timers and the highly educated and less educated. Empirical reviews on job quality in specific countries and on firm size are highlighted. The chapter concludes with the benefits of improving employees' job quality and the role of the multiple stakeholders.

The next chapter, chapter 3, puts employees in non-standard employment and their job quality under the lens. Because findings from empirical research show employees in non-standard employment are more vulnerable than employees in standard employment, it delves deeper into this aspect of the research. It reviews the literature on non-standard employment in relation to both

the employer and the employee. It then focuses on analysing part-timers (voluntary and involuntary) and their job quality. Lastly, New Zealand's incidence of part-time employment is reviewed.

In chapter 4, the thesis explains the research design and methods used in analysing employees' job quality, detailing the research motivation and strategies for using the mixed-methods approach. The first half of the methods section discusses the quantitative analysis processes employed in conducting the study. It explains the rationale for using secondary analysis based on three waves of the ISSP datasets, which enabled the tracking of changes in employees' job values and job outcomes. It further describes the statistical techniques used in the analysis. The second part of the chapter describes how the qualitative analysis was done. In this section, the thesis also explains the motivation for using a qualitative approach to understand the emotional and financial challenges of employees in involuntary part-time jobs as well as the strategies they used or intended to use to transition into jobs of better quality. It also explains the research participants, nature of the interview process and the mode of data analysis.

Chapters 5 and 6 contain the analysis of quantitative findings and discussions. In chapter 5, findings relating to employees' job values and outcomes for the various socio-economic groups are explained. Specifically, differences between men and women, full-timers and part-timers and the highly educated and less educated are examined using T-tests and ANOVA. Regression analysis on the effect of several job quality indicators on employees' job satisfaction is explained. Chapter 6 then discusses perceptions of employees' job quality in New Zealand based on the quantitative analysis and the literature.

In chapter 7, using thematic analysis, the study provides interpretations of participants' views surrounding their working conditions, the emotional and financial challenges of involuntary part-

timers and the strategies used or intended to be used to move into jobs of better quality. Chapter 8 puts the spotlight on involuntary part-timers (both past and present) and discusses their experiences, challenges and strategies based on the qualitative analysis and the literature.

In the final chapter of the thesis, a conclusion is drawn showing how the research questions set out in the introduction are addressed. It also includes recapping the key findings and the theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis. It wraps up by making suggestions for further research.

## **Chapter 2: What and why is job quality important?**

Studies on work and job quality have been ongoing with renewed interest lately (ILO, 1999; Ankara declaration, 2015). This is because the quality of work, be it positive or negative has consequences for all stakeholders thereby warranting much attention (Jones et al., 2017; Holman and McClelland, 2011). With work and job quality being multi-dimensional and no agreement on the features (e.g. Findlay et al., 2017; Kalleberg, 2011; OECD, 2014; Warhurst and Wright, 2015), this chapter reviews literature on work and the various schools of thought on job quality. The aim here is to provide explanations on job quality and the measures commonly found in studies. This study focuses also on differences in the job values and quality of different socio-economic groups and countries. The impact of job quality on employees, their dependents, organisations and society is discussed. The roles of various stakeholders: employees, trade unions, employers and government are also elaborated.

### **2.1 Work and job quality**

Most people spend several years in employment after acquiring the needed education; hence, the relevance of paid employment cannot be ignored. Similarly, the motives for working vary from person to person. Rose (2003) argues that some people work because they want to earn income especially when they are the breadwinners (the provisioning motive). Others have a secondary economic rationale where they seek to work in order to earn money for extras, especially to support their spouse and family. While for others, it is about the expressive rationale where they work for self-actualisation purposes, yet others focus on the social contact as a reason for working. This notwithstanding, work is seen as one of the most important components of life (de Bustillo Llorente and Fernandez Macias, 2005). Being in employment provides a range of physical, social and



psychological benefits, Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) note. For instance, having a job is a key source of income which enables people to afford the necessities of life - food, accommodation, clothing, education and security. Status, prestige and respect ascribed to people usually come from the jobs they do. What's more, health, social relationships and personal identity are related to employment (Broom et al., 2006). For these reasons, finding a job is critical and, as such, being in employment is not an option but a must for almost everyone. Nevertheless, these benefits of employment are pivoted on the quality of work rather than the possession of the job (Strazdins, Shipley, Clements, Obrien, & Broom, 2010; Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011).

Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) argue that although it is recognized that unemployment can be detrimental to people (because of the reduction in life expectancy), transitioning from 'unemployment to a low-quality job results in a decline in mental health relative to remaining in unemployment' (p.172). In addition, Pocock and Skinner (2011; p.64) cite an Australian longitudinal study which suggests that 'poor quality jobs are associated with similar or poorer health than unemployment'. For these reasons, what happens to employees, how they are treated, and what their work is like can influence their lives, making them either satisfied or dissatisfied. Supposedly, these health benefits of being in employment are dependent on the quality of the job and not just being in employment. This is consistent with Robertson and Cooper's (2011) view that being satisfied or dissatisfied is dependent on what employees do and how they are treated. In this light, it is the nature (content) of work as well as the environment (context) in which the work is done that matters and not just working (e.g. Clark, 2005; Foley and Schwartz, 2003; OECD, 2010; Kalleberg, 2011; Pocock and Skinner, 2012).

## **2.2 Defining job quality**

Although there is the lack of consensus on the definition and indicators of job quality, this section aims to discuss relevant definitions of the concept including, components widely recognized in the literature as contributing to job quality as well as divergent approaches for explaining the theory of job quality. It is however known to be multi-faceted with several dimensions, with some features being objectively measured while others are subjective (Pocock and Skinner, 2012). For example, Kalleberg (2011) identified salary and benefits as objective constructs that are easy to measure because of the availability of data. Working hours, paid and holiday leave are other objective features (Pocock and Skinner, 2012). Opportunities for progression (Kalleberg, 2011), interpersonal relations and control (Pocock and Skinner, 2012) are subjective and not easily measured. Job security, according to Fagan, Norman, Smith & Menéndez (2014) is one job quality indicator that can be measured both objectively (type of contract) and subjectively (how employees feel about their jobs).

In defining the theory, Holman (2013) asserts that job quality is the degree to which jobs provide work and employment-related factors that foster advantageous outcomes for workers, especially psychological and physical well-being and the creation of positive attitudes. Green (2006) affirms Holman's position that job quality is constituted by the set of work features that foster the well-being of the worker. Generally, job quality is 'concerned with the impact that a job has on an employee' (Holman and McClelland, 2011, p.13) and therefore encompasses both intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes such as autonomy, security, high pay and work intensity among many others (Hoque et al., 2017). A basic premise in the theory of job quality is that a 'good' job will have more positive effects on an employee's health and well-being than a 'bad' job (Jones et al., 2017; Holman and McClelland, 2011). Further, a 'good' job should not only be one that has no adverse

effect on employees but rather have a positive impact on employees' health (Jones et al., 2017). A 'bad' job, as argued by Charlesworth, Welsh, Strazdins, Baird & Campbell (2014; p. 105), is 'a key social determinant of poor health and well-being outcomes such as cardiovascular disease and stress'. Sutherland (2016; p.1) buttresses this stance by noting that 'bad' jobs 'are associated with physical and psychological illnesses, stress and job strain, low pay and in-work poverty'.

### **2.3 Indicators of job quality**

Scholars in the social sciences approach this issue from divergent angles, but psychologists and sociologists have stressed the non-economic aspects of jobs. Whilst sociologists typically approach job quality from the dimensions of status, skill, physical and psychological risks, pace of work, duration and autonomy, psychologists highlight the non-economic facets of work such as autonomy, control and psychological sources of job satisfaction (e.g. Dahl et al, 2009; Foley and Schwartz, 2003; Kalleberg, 2011; Munoz de Bustillo et al, 2009). The perspectives of economists tend to emphasise economic aspects such as hourly wages, annual earnings and fringe benefits (e.g. Dahl et al., 2009; Kalleberg, 2011). Economists tend to equate a 'good' job with one that is highly paid with an array of benefits. These mean that job quality is seen differently depending on the disciplinary base (Burgess and Connell, 2008).

All social science perspectives on job quality have been criticised for their inadequacies in examining the nature of job quality. Consequently, most researchers now provide an elaborate picture of job quality comprising several features (e.g. Dahl et al., 2009; Kalleberg, 2011; Munoz de Bustillo, 2009; Lower-Basch, 2007), which is the approach adopted in this thesis. In a bid to present a holistic view of job quality, this thesis integrates perspectives used by scholars from the different social science perspectives. A summary of studies that have used these dimensions in measuring job quality is provided below in Table 2.1.

### 2.3.1 Economic compensation

Table 2.1 below shows the various dimensions of job quality confirming some level of arbitrariness of the theory. It can be observed, however, that there seems to be some consensus on several dimensions.

*Table 2.1:*

*Job Quality Dimensions*

<b>Job Quality Dimensions</b>	<b>Examples of studies utilising dimension in the measurement of job quality</b>
<b>Economic compensation (earnings and fringe benefits)</b>	Kalleberg (2011); Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005); Green (2013); Dahl et al (2009); Handel (2005); Coats and Lekhi (2008); Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010); Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2010, 2015); Osterman (2013); Carre et al (2012); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Green (2009); Eurofound (2012); Kalleberg et al (1999); Warhurst (2011); Lower-Basch (2007); Jackson and Kumar (1998); Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); Findlay et al (2017); Ficapal-Cusi et al (2015); Jones and Schmidt (2011); Boccozzo and Gianecchini (2014); Olsen et al (2010)
<b>Degree of job security</b>	Kalleberg (2011); Green (2013); Dahl et al (2009); Handel (2005); Coats and Lekhi (2008); Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2010, 2015); Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005); Carre et al (2012); Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Green (2009); Eurofound (2012); Lower-Basch (2007); Jackson and Kumar (1998); Osterman (2013); Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); Mustosmaki et al (2016); Ficapal-Cusi et al (2015); Olsen et al (2010); Sutherland, 2016
<b>Opportunities for advancement</b>	Kalleberg (2011); Green (2013); Handel (2005); Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2010, 2015); Carre et al (2012); Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005); McDonald et al (2009); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Lower-Basch (2007), Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); Ficapal-Cusi et al (2015); Boccozzo and Gianecchini (2014); Olsen et al (2010)
<b>Extent of work-life balance</b>	Kalleberg (2011); Green (2013); Carre et al. (2012); Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010); Ficapal-Cusi et al. (2015); Boccozzo and Gianecchini (2014)

<b>Number of hours worked</b>	Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2010, 2015); Carre et al (2004); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Eurofound (2012); Lower-Basch (2007); Jackson and Kumar (1998); Warhurst and Trebeck (2011)
<b>Intrinsic qualities of jobs:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quality of work itself</b></li> <li>• <b>Physical environment</b></li> <li>• <b>Work intensity</b></li> <li>• <b>Autonomy/level of employee control</b></li> <li>• <b>Interesting and meaningful work</b></li> <li>• <b>Difficulty in performing task</b></li> <li>• <b>Skill level, development and utilisation</b></li> </ul>	Green (2013); Dahl et al (2009); Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005); Handel (2005); Coats and Lekhi (2008); Clark (2005a); Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Eurofound (2012); Lower-Basch (2009); Osterman (2013); Kalleberg (2011); Handel (2005); Osterman (2013); Carre et al (2012); Green (2009); Warhurst (2011), Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); McDonald et al (2009); Mustosmaki et al (2016); Ficapal-Cusi et al (2015), Okay-Somerville and Scholarios (2013), Boccozzo and Gianecchini (2014), Olsen et al (2010)
<b>Social relations and employee voice</b>	Clark (1998, 2005a, 2005b, 2010, 2015); Eurofound (2012); Pocock and Skinner (2012); Carre et al (2012); Lower-Basch (2007); Jackson and Kumar (1998); Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); McDonald et al (2009); Olsen et al (2010)
<b>Job satisfaction</b>	Warhurst and Trebeck (2011); Olsen et al. (2010), Ficapal-Cusi et al. (2015)

Economic compensation (earnings and benefits) is the most prominent dimension among all the indicators (Osterman, 2012). Wages or salaries are the physical evidence of employment and are also the primary source of income to employees allowing them to afford the necessities of life (Muñoz de Bustillo, Fernández-Macías, Antón, & Esteve, 2009). Compensation is seen traditionally as the most important hallmark of job quality (Kalleberg, 2000; Warhurst, 2003). For this reason, workers who receive higher wages/salaries are argued to have higher job quality.

In the short term, employees who receive higher income can afford most of the necessities of life such as food, housing, clothing, education, health etc. The possession of these necessities can be a foundation for ‘higher quality of life, healthier workers and stronger families and communities’ (Kalleberg, 2011; p.2). In the long term, too, the amount of money one receives from employment may determine one’s pension contributions that can affect a person’s life during retirement. An

increase in the salary of employees, for this reason, may mean there is an improvement in their job quality (Dahl et al., 2009; UNECE, 2010). Most researchers, therefore, tend to agree that a higher level of compensation means one has a higher quality job (e.g. Burgess and Connell, 2008; Clark, 2005; Coats and Lehki, 2008; Kalleberg, 2011; McGovern et al., 2004; Warhurst, 2011).

Another argument is that good jobs are not just ones that are well-paid, but ones that ensure equity in the distribution of rewards. Siegrist (1996) posits that an imbalance between efforts (demands) and rewards (money) violates the social exchange process, leading to strain reactions. A balance between efforts and reward has an impact on employees' job quality (Coats and Lekhi, 2008); hence inequity in the distribution of compensation can influence job quality negatively.

While having a well-paid job is considered a feature of a 'good' job, it is only one dimension. Social/fringe benefits also come into the picture of economic compensation. These are indirect compensation given in addition to salaries that can also enhance employees' job quality (e.g. Kalleberg, 2011; Kalleberg, 2000; Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009; UNECE, 2010). Benefits that are based on an employee's position and unrelated to performance also determine the 'goodness' or 'badness' of a job. Legally mandated benefits, payment for time not worked (holidays, sick leave etc.) and health facilities for self and family are some benefits. These benefits may serve as a buffer for making life comfortable and so important for most employees depending on the context in which work is done. If some of these benefits are provided by government (e.g. health care insurance, loss of earnings through illness), as is the case in Britain, then employer provision of such benefits is less relevant in making a distinction between 'good' and 'bad' jobs (McGovern et al., 2004). On the other hand, if these benefits are not provided by employers, then, a 'good' job is generally one with many benefits (e.g. Burgess and Connell, 2008; Kalleberg, 2000; Meisenheimer, 1998). For instance, the relevance of such benefits in the United States of America

cannot be down-played because employees depend mainly on their employers to get them. Conversely, a bad job is one with no or few benefits.

### **2.3.2 Job security**

Additionally, employment security is another core dimension known to improve employees' job quality. To Esser and Olsen (2011; p.447), job security is 'a person's assessment of how likely he or she is to lose the job in the near future'. It is also defined as the tendency of a job continuing in the future (Eurofound, 2012). Most physical and psychological benefits of working are lost when there is job insecurity. Specifically, job insecurity has repercussions for employees as income and retirement benefits are lost when employees lose their jobs. Income security is only possible when there is long-term employment, for example. 'Unstable employment is often related to anxiety, lower wages, lower access to training, difficulties in planning a career and long-term commitments' (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009, p.132).

Job insecurity, which has consequences for employees' well-being, is multi-dimensional encompassing the 'risk of job loss, the chances of not finding another job, the loss of income while unemployed and uncertainty over job content (Dickerson and Green, 2011; p.199). Further, researchers such as Gallie, Felstead, Green & Inanc (2017) and O'Connell and Russell (2007) explain that job insecurity affects job quality negatively due to exhaustion and sickness absence and subsequently well-being. These negative outcomes have the tendency of reducing the productivity of organisations (Erlinghagen, 2007) because less secure workers tend to be less committed to their jobs or organisation and would prefer to change jobs or careers (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). Not only does job insecurity affect workers but as Dickerson and Green (2011) comment, it affects dependents of workers and inhibits their spending and reduces wage growth.

Jones et al. (2017) suggest that while job security has a strong influence on employees' health and satisfaction, job insecurity has adverse general health (Van Aerden, Moors, Levecque & Vanroelen, 2015). In this regard, when there is the expectation of employment continuity, the job can be seen as better (e.g. Burgess and Connell, 2008; Russell, McGinnity & Kingston 2014). Also, the level of security can be influenced by the labour market conditions. For instance, Curtarelli, Fric, Vargas & Welz (2014) provide evidence to show that the global financial crises in 2008-2009 negatively affected some employees' job security in Europe. Nineteen out of the twenty-seven countries in Europe experienced increased job insecurity between 2005 and 2010.

The type of contract, whether standard or non-standard, can be tied with the security of one's job. Usually, contingent/non-standard employment is regarded as a 'secondary' job with many bad job characteristics (e.g. Kalleberg, 2000). Non-standard jobs (especially, involuntary ones) are mostly insecure as earnings and work schedules are less predictable and mainly dependent on the employer's needs (Kalleberg, 2000). For instance, some benefits elude contingent employees, thereby making them worse off. Permanent employees are more likely to have secure jobs with more benefits than contingent employees. This assertion is further endorsed by Gallie, Felstead, Green & Inanc (2017) whose study confirms the idea that employees with temporary contracts experience greater insecurity than regular employees. Erlinghagen's (2007) study found similar evidence as part-timers were less likely to feel secure than full-timers and employees with permanent contracts reported greater job security than those with fixed-term contracts. Barley, Bechky and Milliken (2017) argue that another new development worth mentioning is the rise of the 'gig' economy which has the tendency of worsening the job security of employees. Fueled by the power of technology (e.g. apps on smartphones) (Dokko, Mumford and Schanzenbach, 2015), gig employees who use digital/online platforms to get jobs (Barley et al, 2017) are known to have



‘no promise for future employment’, and therefore experience ‘economic fluctuations’ (Friedman, 2014; p.172). Although it affords employers the flexibility in the variations of their labour, employees suffer isolation due to the movement from job to job and also an increase in their job insecurity (Friedman, 2014).

This is therefore seen by some researchers as an important feature of employment quality (e.g. Kalleberg et al., 2000; Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009). While long working hours is argued to predict stress, fatigue and work-life imbalance (Boxall and Mackey, 2014), short working hours provides inadequate hours for employees (Wooden, Warren and Dragon, 2009). However, non-standard employment is not necessarily synonymous with poor job quality if it is the choice of employees. For example, Wooden et al. (2009) using the Release 5.1 of the HILDA Survey found that the number of hours worked did not contribute to well-being but rather the working time mismatch. For instance, being underemployed or overemployed did not create many problems, but the individual preference determined the effects on the employee’s job and life satisfaction. When the actual number of hours worked matches with the preference of the individual, subjective well-being improves. Being in a part-time job due to personal reasons such as family-related responsibilities, attending school or having an illness/disability does not fit the description of a bad job. Rather, a part-time job would be seen as a ‘bad’ one when a person seeking a full-time job only lands on a part-time job (e.g. Kauhenen, 2008, 2014; Tilly, 2010; UNECE, 2010).

### **2.3.3 Career prospects**

Referring to table 2.1 above shows that opportunities for advancement in one’s career are another relevant trait of job quality. Little or no progression in the short term does not make a job bad. It is, however, bad if it is a dead-end job (McGovern et al., 2004) i.e. no upward mobility for employees. The reason most researchers conceive this to be an important indicator is because

promotion typically increases responsibilities, salary and security, hence affecting other areas of job quality. Career advancement can also be linked to providing intrinsic rewards such as prestige and challenge to workers (Dill, Morgan, & Kalleberg, 2012).

In a study of a multi-national hotel chain, McPhail and Fisher (2008) provide evidence showing the importance of training and promotion in improving employee's job satisfaction, commitment and reducing labour turnovers. They argue that more than wages were important for employees in improving their job quality. Human Resource strategies such as internal recruitment policies, internal training, creating career paths, and appraisals were features of the job that made employees perceive their jobs to be of high quality. McPhail and Fisher (2008) suggest that when low-paid employees are trained and promoted, their job security becomes less of a problem. Similarly, Siebern-Thomas' (2005) analysis of the European context (EU-15) using the European Community Household Panel (wave 7, 2000) found that an increase in job satisfaction is associated with promotion to a higher status. In addition, Dill et al.'s (2012) USA-based study of frontline healthcare workers found that promotion prospects influenced employees' decision to stay with their current employer.

#### **2.3.4 Work-life balance**

As workforce diversity is increasing, work-life balance has also become an increasingly important dimension (e.g. Johri, 2005). For Johri (2005; p. 37), work-life balance is 'achieving a balance between paid work and other activities'. It can also be seen as the 'extent to which a job meets the needs for a good balance between the demand of work and of life outside paid employment' (Eurofound, 2012; p. 16). This job characteristic has an influence on well-being (e.g. Kluczyk, 2013; Hoffmann-Burdzinska & Rutkowska, 2015) hence its addition to the list of attributes that make up a good job. For instance, Kluczyk's (2013; p.72) study in Ireland confirms the 'negative

effects of poor work life balance on work satisfaction and psychological health'. Boccuzzo and Gianecchini (2014) add that commuting time and working hours directly affect a person's work-life balance. While a long commuting time may affect a person's leisure time, excessive work hours increases the stress levels of employees, thereby affecting their capacity to achieve work-life balance. Boxall and Macky (2014), drawing on a national population survey in 2009, found that work intensification and hours worked in a week were associated with poorer work-life balance.

Work-life balance is increasingly becoming an issue not only due to the increase in women's labour market participation which tends to affect the traditional male-breadwinner model/female homemaker (Radcliffe and Cassell, 2015; Haddock, Zimmerman, Lyness & Ziemba, 2006), but also due to the changing nature of work. Currently, the trend is more towards the dual-earner couples' system where a family has both partners actively engaged in paid work. This can be challenging because couples with children now have to find options of integrating the goals and demands of their careers and family responsibilities and that of their partners too. However, flexible work practices (e.g. telework, job sharing, flex-time, compressed workweeks, part-time work etc.) are known to assist employees to achieve a better work-life balance thereby contributing to improved job quality according to Kalliher and Anderson (2008). In addition, a study by Haddock et al. (2006) provides other successful workplace practices that enables dual-earner couples to balance work and family responsibilities. These included flexible work scheduling, non-traditional work hours and job autonomy.

### **2.3.5 Hours of work**

Time is a scarce resource which can never be regained when used or wasted. Consequently, all humans have twenty-four hours in a day for work and non-work activities (family, school,

friendship). Generally, there is an inverse relationship between working hours and job quality, suggesting that the longer the hours worked, the poorer the quality (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009). Shorter hours will mean good quality when working shorter hours is a choice of the employee. It can, therefore, be argued that having a full-time or a part-time job may be either a 'good' or 'bad' job depending on the preference of the individual. Being forced to accept a part-time job when one is seeking a full-time job is not an improvement in one's job quality (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009). Impliedly, working excessively long hours or involuntary short hours have implications for employment quality (UNECE, 2010). Involuntary long working hours by employees can have an effect on their well-being (Wooden et al., 2009), likewise involuntary short hours, which affects the income level of the worker.

### **2.3.6 Intrinsic job quality**

Intrinsic job quality (job content and working conditions) describes those aspects of jobs that concern the nature of work and the environment in which work is done (e.g. Van Aerden et al., 2015). It refers to the utilities that employees gain from task performance (Kalleberg, 2011), such as autonomy and meaningfulness of the work (Morgan et al., 2013). Quality of work itself (e.g. skill use and discretion), physical environment and intensity of work are all intrinsic aspects of jobs (Eurofound, 2012). Due to technological changes, employee skills may become obsolete if not updated continuously (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009). Skill levels, skill development and skill utilisation, are endorsed by many researchers as central components of job quality as they are linked to the prospects of career advancements (Charlesworth et al. 2014) and increasing employability (Oinas, Anttila, Mustosmaki and Natti, 2012).

One argument is that an employee's quality of work is enhanced when the job makes use of a variety of skills (Eurofound, 2012). Consequently, jobs demanding the performance of different

activities, requiring the use of various skills, provide greater meaning to employees. Employees' wellbeing is improved when they can use their skills and abilities (Lowe and Schellenberg, 2001). Employees tend to rate their jobs to be of high quality when there is congruence between the skills required and the skills possessed. According to a definition provided by Kalleberg (2007; p.27), skills mismatch (i.e. overqualification or underqualification) is a 'lack of fit between peoples' skills and their jobs' skill requirements'. While underqualification occurs when a person's skill sets are below the requirements of the job, overqualification occurs when an employee's skill set exceed the skills demanded to perform a job. Similarly, in Humphrys and O'Brien's (1986; p.317) study, skill utilisation was defined as 'a measure of the degree of match between the skills required to do a job and the skills possessed by the person doing the job.' Both overqualification and underqualification present challenges to employees and may also be detrimental to organisations. In most cases, employees become dissatisfied when they are overqualified because they are unable to fully utilize their abilities. The underqualified are also likely to experience high stress because they do not have the competencies to perform the assigned tasks. These situations can reduce an organisation's competitiveness (Kalleberg, 2007).

Job satisfaction is better when there is fit between the skills required and the skills possessed because employees get the opportunity to control the content of their jobs (Humphrys and O'Brien, 1986). In contrast, skill mismatch has been shown to be related to a low perception of job quality (Boccuzzo and Gianecchini, 2014).

Autonomy, task discretion or the degree of control is very relevant in determining the 'goodness' or 'badness' of a job. Boxall and Winterton (2015) view autonomy as an important pathway for enhancing job quality. Autonomy is the extent to which employees' exercise discretion and initiative over what happens in their job (Dahl et al., 2009). Esser and Olsen (2011) defined

autonomy as the degree of control and influence workers have over their work. Similarly, Gallie (2013) referred to autonomy as the scope that workers have for control over their tasks. It enables workers to use their creativity and develop their abilities with time (Boxall and Macky, 2014) and is desirable for opportunities for self-realization (Gallie and Zhou, 2013). Autonomy has been confirmed to have implications for work motivation and well-being and is also a strong predictor of job satisfaction, involvement and commitment (Lower-Basch, 2007; Gallie and Zhou, 2013; Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Humphrys and O'Brien, 1986).

Green (2006) also notes that lack of autonomy is found to be detrimental to job satisfaction. More knowledgeable and skilful employees are likely to have greater discretion in performing their tasks than semi and low- skilled employees (Dahl et al., 2009). Esser and Olsen (2011) reported similar findings in an analysis using data from the European Social Survey from 19 countries. They found that employees with less education had lower autonomy. Additional findings are that women, young workers, part-timers and employees with limited contracts also had lower autonomy.

Employees have more control if they can choose or change the order of tasks, methods of work, the speed of work, colleagues they work with and when they can take a break (e.g. Green, 2009; Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009; Russell et al. 2014). Employees' influence on 'what tasks are done, how they are done, on quality standards, and the pace at which work is carried out saw a decline in the UK during the 1990s (Green, 2009, p. 18). This decline in discretion is a signal that there is a decline in job quality for employees in this regard. A high degree of control of employees' work activities makes them feel more like machines (robots), and this erodes their fulfilment as humans (Green, 2009). Also, in a New Zealand study, Boxall and Macky (2014) found that job quality of employees in professional occupations are undermined when there is a decline in autonomy. In

this respect, Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005) argue that a job of high quality is one that gives employees a high degree of autonomy.

The conditions under which work is performed can affect the health of employees overall (e.g. Kalleberg, 2011; Munoz de Bustillo et al. 2009). Maintaining safe work environments is not only an act of legal compliance but also relevant in minimising ill-health and injury caused by dangerous environments (Jones et al., 2017). An unsafe work environment makes employees more prone to accidents. The identification and removal of potential hazards is a step in improving the quality of jobs of employees. Working conditions have an impact on the health of employees as, for instance, exposing employees to excessively high noise, high or low temperatures, radiation, infectious materials and painful postures deteriorates the quality of employees' jobs. An environment that records numerous accidents in a given period is a threat to the quality of jobs. Therefore, a good job is also usually seen as one that is done in a safe environment (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009).

Employees' level of well-being and quality of working life is influenced by the nature of their work environment. Job strain/stress that results from the interaction between high job demands and low work control tends to erode these benefits if not properly managed (Karasek, 1979). Karasek (1979) and Karasek and Theorell (1990) are credited with the job demands-control model, also known as the job strain model. To Karasek (1979), work demands and discretion are two essential aspects of the working environment. The job strain model theorizes that psychological stress at work is caused by both the workload and the level of decision latitude available to employees experiencing those demands. Workload in the workplace was labelled 'job demands' and decision latitude referred to as 'job control or discretion'. Job strain occurs when job demands are high, and discretion is low. Additionally, job demand could be the source of stressors that can

have an effect on productivity (Karasek, 1979; Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Decision latitude, a component of control reduces stress levels and at the same time, increases learning (Karasek and Theorell, 1990).

Accordingly, the model proposes that four types of jobs are derived from mapping job demands and control. A match or mismatch between job demands and work control will lead to any of these four job conditions - high-strain, active, passive and low-strain jobs (Karasek, 1979; Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Active jobs (a simultaneously high job demand and job control) are the most preferred because they are beneficial to employees (Karasek, 1979). Ideally, job demands and discretion must be the same such that authority given must be commensurate with responsibility (Karasek, 1979). If this happens then though the job is demanding, the jobholder has enough control over how the tasks are performed. The outcome of such a pairing is high satisfaction with the job and the 'development of new behaviour patterns both on and off the job' (Karasek and Theorell, 1979; p. 288). Such jobs are challenging and enable employees to perform since they come 'without negative psychological strain' (Karasek and Theorell, 1990, p. 35). Employees performing such jobs tend to improve their personal growth and learning due to the challenging nature of jobs - all of which are 'conducive to high productivity' (Karasek and Theorell, 1990, p. 35).

Physiological symptoms, mental strain, fatigue, anxiety characterize high strain jobs (high demands but low control) (Karasek and Theorell, 1979; Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Karasek and Theorell (1990) argue that high-strain jobs are very common in the world of work. This happens because although the employee has high demands, he or she is unable to complete tasks assigned to him or her effectively due to low control. Strain then occurs because demands are more than discretion (Karasek, 1979).



While high levels of job demand and low levels of job control will lead to job strain, high levels of control over low levels of job demands leads to low-strain (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Though low-strain rarely occurs, if it does, then boredom sets in as the employee has little to do (workload) but more than enough control/discretion. Employees in such jobs experience lower levels of psychological strain and low risk of illness and also tend to relax (Karasek and Theorell, 1990).

On the other hand, passive jobs combine low demand and low discretion (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). As such, employees in these jobs become dissatisfied as their problem-solving activity is reduced, they tend to experience ‘negative learning’ as there is ‘gradual loss of previously acquired skills which will lead to lower-than-average levels of leisure and political activity outside the job’ (Karasek and Theorell, 1990; p. 37). This type of situation leads to long-term loss of motivation and productivity due to the lack of challenging work and loss of relevant skills. Though there are low demands and control, employees in such jobs are still faced with an ‘average level of psychological strain and illness risk’ (Karasek and Theorell, 1990; p.38).

In 1979, Karasek, using a National Survey data from the United States and Sweden established that mental strain and dissatisfaction are caused by a combination of high job demands and low job control. The University of Michigan Quality of Employment Survey (1972) and the Swedish Survey (1971a) data sets were used as samples for the analysis. Analysis was done using quantitative methods such as factor analysis, correlations and regressions with a concentration on males. For both samples (USA and Sweden), employees in high-strain jobs reported after-work exhaustion, depression, nervousness, anxiety, insomnia and trouble awakening in the morning. Another finding was with the degree of decision latitude available to employees. Discretion was not known to cause stress even if it was in excess because it enabled employees cope with the

stress of job demands. While employees with high job demands and high discretion (active jobs) reported the highest satisfaction and reduced depression, employees in passive jobs were dissatisfied. Karasek's (1979) study accentuates the possibility of enhancing mental health 'without sacrificing productivity'. This can be realized by increasing decision latitude for employees even if the workload is kept constant as 'workload is related to organisational output levels' (Karasek, 1979; p. 304).

Holman (2013) affirms Karasek's (1979) JD-C theory that the various job types has a different effect on job quality. For instance, active jobs are categorised as high-quality jobs because employees can cope with demands of the job as they have adequate control over these demands. Conversely, high strain jobs are regarded as jobs with low quality and well-being because employees have little control over the enormous demands (Van Der Doef and Maes, 1999). This tends to influence their ability to cope making them encounter high strain levels. Low to moderate levels of job quality is experienced by employees in passive and low-strain jobs as these jobs come with few challenges and developmental opportunities.

A work environment characterised by excessive job demands can lead to stress, which is detrimental to employees' well-being (e.g. Clark, 2005b; Harter et al., 2002). Stress which is an outcome of excessive workload (demands) and inadequate/lack of resources is seen as one of the causes of poor job quality. It has the tendency of increasing the probability of workplace accidents and also exposes employees to heart diseases and other serious illnesses (Clark, 2005b; Lower-Basch, 2007). Van Aerden et al. (2015; p.68) point to the fact that the 'perception of a healthy work environment (less stressful) is related to absenteeism, job satisfaction and the intent to quit the job'. Furthermore, an analysis according to the OECD (2014) is that men were more likely to experience job strain than women.

For Eurofound (2012), work intensity (physical and emotional) is the extent of effort exerted during work time. It can also be seen as the quantity of work an employee does in a particular period (Kalleberg, 2011). In Boxall and Macky's (2014) study, work intensity was measured as hours worked, work overload experienced, and pressure to take work home or work long hours. The researchers emphasise that using hours worked alone is rather too simplistic. Their findings from a national survey were that 'higher levels of work intensity increase fatigue and stress and undermine work-life balance' (Boxall and Macky, 2014; p.963). It should, however, be recognised that both low and high work intensity may be detrimental (Eurofound, 2012). High work intensity which places high job demands but accompanied with low work control on employees may affect job quality negatively. Likewise, low work intensity, characterised by high levels of control and low levels of job demands can potentially affect job quality negatively. Similarly, Coats and Lekhi (2008) explain how excessive working time impacts negatively on physical and mental health and exposure of employees to workplace accidents. While low work intensity can make work boring because workers are not challenged, high work intensity may cause stress (e.g. Boxall and Macky, 2014; Eurofound, 2012). This implies that jobs demanding higher levels of intensity expose workers to poorer job quality because of the potential impact it can have on employees' health and well-being (Jones et al., 2017; Oinas, Anttila, Mustosmäki & Nätti, 2012). Some reasons most employees seem to be working hard was explained by Green (2009) who argues that the impact of consumerism is encouraging workers in the UK to be hard working in order to receive more pay to meet their necessities and luxuries in life. In the USA, Kalleberg (2011) explains that most Americans were working more hours because of the need to finance their loan settlements. This change in how long people are working is likely to increase stress levels with effects on employees' well-being. Also, Curtarelli et al.'s (2014) study found rising stress levels during the 2008-9

financial crises in some European countries. This suggests that the economic conditions can increase the level of stress experienced by employees.

Social support from management and colleagues, especially in stressful environments, additionally enhances well-being (e.g. Eurofound, 2012; Munoz de Bustillo, 2009). Having a good relationship with co-workers and one's superiors is a form of resource which has the potential of improving employees' job quality. Supportive relationships between subordinates and superiors and among subordinates are an important feature for meeting employees' social needs and generating well-being (Eurofound, 2012). Social support which is the 'overall levels of helpful social interaction available on the job from both co-workers and supervisors' can serve as buffering mechanisms between psychological work stressors and adverse health outcomes (Karasek and Theorell, 1990; p.69). Boxall and Purcell (forthcoming) explain how social interactions (subordinates and managers and among colleagues) can be a source of satisfaction because employees' relatedness needs have been met at work. Jones et al.'s (2017) study of job quality for blue-collar workers confirmed the assertion of poor relationships impacting negatively on employees. Consequently, jobs cannot be seen as 'good' if relationships are poor.

The above section presented the dimensions of job quality and sample studies of researchers who used these dimensions. Although these indicators are not exhaustive, they provide a comprehensive view of the most common dimensions found in the literature.

## **2.4 Why job quality?**

Among academics, policymakers, practioners and governments, creating good jobs and improving bad ones has become topical recently (e.g. Cloutier-Villeneuve, 2012). Extensive evidence exists to show that improvements in job quality impact positively on individuals, organisations and

national well-being (e.g. Hoque et al., 2017, Jones et al., 2017; Warhurst and Wright, 2015). Particularly, this has become important because job quality is believed to impact on employee wellbeing, working conditions and satisfaction and in turn organisational performance, productivity, social cohesion and national competitiveness (e.g. Van Aerden et al, 2015; Carre et al, 2012; Diaz-Chao et al, 2014; Findlay et al, 2017; Kalleberg and Vaisey, 2005; Knox et al. 2015; Knox et al. 2011; Siebern-Thomas, 2005; Warhurst et al. 2011). Meanwhile, recent studies have also shown the importance of good quality jobs for employees' motivation and commitment (Bosch and Weinkopf, 2017; Esser and Olsen, 2011) which in turn can increase discretionary efforts, lower the rate of quits and absenteeism and subsequently affect productivity (Hoque et al, 2017; Warhurst and Wright, 2015). Recent developments also show the links between job quality and innovation with the former underpinning the latter (Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2015; Warhurst and Wright, 2015).

Globally, on the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) agenda (1999) has been the creation of 'decent work' for employees with the aim of raising labour standards and improving employment and income opportunities. Also, in the year 2000, the European Union through the Lisbon Agreement explicitly advanced the improvement of employment quality (more and better jobs) as one of its goals to become the most advanced economic region. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has job quality as one of its objectives. Also, recently the Ankara Declaration, which was signed by governments of advanced economies in 2015, pledged commitment to improving job quality. Additionally, studies on job quality, its dimensions and measurements continue to arouse the interest of many academics as well (e.g. Findley et al., 2017; Green, 2013; Green, 2006; Kalleberg, 2000; McGovern et al., 2004; Osterman, 2013; Siebern-Thomas, 2005). These commitments emphasise the relevance of this

concept thereby leading to many studies concentrating on job quality in countries, sectors, by firm size and immigration status etc.

This is exemplified in the studies of Kalleberg (2011) in the USA, by Green (2013, 2009) in the UK, by Pocock and Skinner (2012) in Australia, by Lowe (2007) in Canada, Siebern-Thomas (2005) for EU15, and O'Connell and Russell (2007) in Ireland. Others such as Wagner (1997), MacDermid et al. (2001), Drolet and Morissette (1998) and Litwan and Phan (2013) have focussed on job quality and firm size. For the analysis of job quality and immigration status, studies by Hamermesh (1997) and Enchautegui (2008) in the USA and UNECE (2010) for Canada can be cited. An interesting observation is that findings have differed for the same type of study conducted in different contexts. This is to be expected because, in addition to job quality being a multi-dimensional construct, it can also vary geographically, so that what is regarded as 'good' or 'bad' job quality can vary by country (e.g. Carre et al., 2012; Sutherland, 2016). In acknowledging the multi-dimensional nature of the concept, different researchers have incorporated many job attributes. For instance, Green's (2013) study of job quality in the UK used four dimensions, comprising wages, job prospects, intrinsic job quality and quality of working time. Six indicators including extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, work intensity, working conditions, interpersonal relationships and overall job satisfaction were utilised in Olsen et al.'s (2010) study. Likewise, Handel (2005) used four markers comprising material rewards, intrinsic rewards, other working conditions and the quality of workplace interpersonal relations.

While the ILO has attempted to create a model of 'decent work' internationally, there is a lack of consensus about what constitutes job quality across countries, with most research focused on the advanced economies of North America and Europe (Findlay et al. 2013). In this respect, most literature on job quality has emerged mainly from North America (e.g. Tilly, 1997; Kalleberg,

2000, 2011; Osterman, 2013), also in Europe (e.g. Warhurst, 2011, Green, 2009, 2013; McGovern et al, 2004; Eurofound, 2012) and increasingly from Australia (e.g. Knox et al, 2015; Pocock and Skinner, 2012; McDonald, Bradley & Brown, 2009; Burgess and Connell, 2008).

## **2.5 Subjective versus objective approaches to job quality**

A key issue relevant to the conceptualisation of the job quality concept is whether to use objective or subjective approaches. While some researchers believe ‘objective’ characteristics should be used in measuring job quality, other academics subscribe to the subjective view owing to the fact that employees are the best informants on the job characteristics fulfilling their needs.

The subjective tradition of job quality places importance on the value that a worker derives from his or her job and the preferences each employee has for different job features (e.g. Eurofound, 2012). Employees’ attitudes and experiences of jobs meeting their needs is the basis of understanding their job quality (Warhurst and Wright, 2015). This approach focuses on asking employees which job features they consider relevant when defining a good job (e.g. Clark, 2005a; Munoz de Bustillo, 2009). According to Holman and McClelland (2011), the subjective approach emphasises the degree to which a job fulfils a worker’s job preferences. And it is best understood by taking cognisance of employee values and job outcomes experienced from the organisation (Clark, 2005b).

### **2.5.1 Understanding job values**

Job values have been referred to differently by several researchers including job preferences (e.g. Gallie et al., 2012), work values (e.g. Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013) and job values (e.g. Halaby, 2003; Daehlen, 2007, Marini et al., 1998). For Hauff and Kirchner (2014; p 10), job values ‘signify what people desire from work and serve as points of reference to assess working conditions’. These

preferences can further be understood in terms of the goals that employees seek to attain and against which they evaluate their current state (Holman and McClelland, 2011). In the words of Kaasa (2011; p. 853), work values are ‘the desirable outcomes individuals feel they should obtain through work’. In the same vein, Schwartz (1994; p.21) defines values as ‘desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity’.

Generally, work values are the characteristics that people consider paramount in a job; thus, employees’ values are relevant to understanding and measuring job quality because these values signify the meaning of work for people. These values appear to have a link with one’s gender, race, age and cohort, education, work experience (Jones et al, 2017; Longest et al, 2013; Kalleberg, 2011; Daehlen, 2007), life-stage, life-focus, immigration status (Knox et al. 2015), personality, family role (Jones et al, 2017), socialization (Gallie et al, 2012) and employment sector (Karl and Sutton, 1998). Longest et al. (2013) further indicate that employees’ values are influenced by socioeconomic status, religion, marriage and parenthood. According to Rosenthal (1989) employee values derive from different socio-economic backgrounds and the environment in which people live. Also, differences in interests and perceived abilities are factors that influence employee values, and these differences affect how people view their jobs, either bad or good. For instance, a study by Jones et al (2017) shows how job values were influenced by the stage of life and age of a person. They found that income became less important to employees as they aged and when their children left home.

Although Sutherland (2012) argues that the categorisation of some elements of job values is problematic, job values encompass both intrinsic and extrinsic components (e.g. Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; Kaasa, 2011; Daehlen, 2007; Marini et al, 1998) with the latter comprising



physical benefits such as safe working conditions, job security, high income etc. Intangibles such as interesting work, the usefulness of job to society and autonomy are some examples of intrinsic values, and these emphasise the process of work. Intrinsic job values are related to the nature of the job itself and ‘people realise intrinsic rewards by doing the work itself’ (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; p. 260).

Work values tend to direct employee actions, thereby explaining what is good to attain (Longest et al., 2013; Kaasa, 2011) and determine how satisfied employees are. This assertion falls in line with Karl and Sutton’s (1998; p. 515) explanation of job satisfaction. To them, job satisfaction ‘results from the perception that one’s job fulfils or allows the fulfilment of one’s important job values’. Inkson (1976; p. 46) buttresses this argument by noting that employees’ values are what they want from their jobs and that job satisfaction tends to be a ‘function of the sum of the discrepancies between workers’ wants and the extent to which these wants are met on the job’. Kalleberg (1977) also confirms this stance by noting that job satisfaction is a function of job preferences and job outcomes. Impliedly, the quality of a person’s job can be thought of to be the extent to which ‘there is a match between the job and the employee’s preferences’ (Weaver, 2009; p. 581). This is because employees tend to compare their expectations (values) with what the employer provides (job outcomes).

Understanding employees’ job values has economic implications in that employers get to know how to redesign jobs and reward systems that result in job satisfaction which affects organisational productivity (Karl and Sutton, 1998). Phillips and Weaver (1990) further suggest that since job values determine the motives for working, knowing these values was important to human resource experts as it aids in the development of reward and incentive systems. With job satisfaction possibly having an impact on employees’ behaviours (such as productivity, absenteeism, turnover

intentions and turnover and citizenship behaviours), it pays to know what employees value from their jobs (Hauret and Williams, 2017; Karl and Sutton, 1998). These work values also relate to the desirable outcomes employees feel they should obtain through work (Kaasa, 2011), thereby regulating human behaviours (Longest et al., 2013; Ravari et al., 2012; Kaasa, 2011; Johri, 2005) and determines emotional responses (Kalleberg, 1977). Therefore, the fulfilment of these job values results in employee satisfaction (Karl and Sutton, 1998). Impliedly, gaining an understanding of what employees desire from their jobs can enable organisations and their managers to know how to satisfy them to impact on absenteeism, turnover and citizenship behaviours (Karl and Sutton, 1998). Consenting to this, Kalleberg (1977; p.80) also explains that ‘work values affect job satisfaction because they influence the congruence between what workers want from their jobs and the rewards that their jobs provide’. These job values emphasise ‘reasons people have for working and the kinds of rewards and benefits that influence their satisfaction’ (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; p.255).

Subsequently, having an insight into employees’ job values is an important step to improving their job quality (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013). Clark (2015) endorses this stance by noting that being informed about employees’ job values is important for policymaking because employers get to know which areas to concentrate in improving job quality. Additionally, knowing these job values enables organisations and their managers to identify what motivates employees to stay in their jobs as well as their desires when searching for other jobs (Johri, 2005). Employees, therefore, tend to enjoy high job quality if these values are realised at the workplace. In agreement, Hauff and Kirchner (2014, pp. 354) indicate that ‘whether or not a job is considered good or bad depends on the workplace situation and on individual work values at the same time.’ It is therefore argued that

if the 'preference ranking is higher than the satisfaction rating; it would appear highly desirable for management to improve conditions relating to that factor' (Jurgensen, 1947; p. 562).

Job outcomes/rewards, on the other hand, form the 'evaluative judgments on the part of employees concerning features of their jobs' (Kalleberg, 1977; p.131). Central to the subjective view of job quality is the notion that job outcome is individual and relative so the conditions that establish what constitutes a good job will vary across individuals, occupations, industries and locations (Burgess and Connell, 2008). Job quality, therefore, becomes relative as it differs from person to person because each might seek a different objective from work (Kalleberg, 2011).

While one individual will define a bad job as one that is highly stressful, another might describe a bad job as one with no security, thereby making it very subjective due to differing work values. The same job can be defined as either good or bad by different job-holders depending on their characteristics and preferences, according to Knox et al. (2015). For these reasons, some researchers argue that 'measures of well-being, including feelings and emotions, or job satisfaction, can be used as measures of subjective job quality' (Eurofound, 2012; p.10), because an employee's well-being is related to the degree to which he or she can fulfil personal preferences. For instance, using the 1989 ISSP data set, Clark (1998) finds that an employee's job satisfaction results from a comparison of job experiences and job expectations.

Also, another key theme of this view is that one does not have to indicate what matters in a job beforehand (Green, 2006). This subjective perspective also intimates that employees' job quality can be assessed when the workplace condition is aligned with employees' work values (Hauff and Kirchner, 2014).

### **2.5.1.1 Changing job values**

Shifts in the importance placed on job values do occur over time (Jones et al., 2017) due to changes in economic, social, technological and political conditions (Karl and Sutton, 1998; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013). For instance, technological changes such as the use of artificial intelligence, robots and computers have made significant changes into the workplace, thereby making most employees place a greater premium on job security (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; Karl and Sutton, 1998). Since it is anticipated that job values are likely to change, it is important to track significant changes in employees' job values as argued by researchers like Hauff and Kirchner (2014), Karl and Sutton (1998) and Kovach (1987). For instance, Kovach (1987) tracked changes in job values in the American context from the 1946 to 1986 and confirmed changes in employees' job values. While employees placed more emphasis on 'full appreciation of work done' and the 'feeling of being in on things' in 1946, changes were observed in 1981 as employees ranked interesting work and sympathetic help with personal problems as more relevant. By 1986, although interesting work was still ranked as the most important, full appreciation of work done was the next important job value. The evidence shows that priorities employees put on job values has been changing although slightly. For instance, Karl and Sutton's (1998) comparative study on job values between public and private sector employees in the USA concurred with previous studies concerning changes in employee values. They find that unlike employees in the 1970s and 1980s who attached more importance to interesting work, in the 1990s, employees valued good wages first, followed by job security and interesting work.

Gallie, Felstead & Green (2012) and Clark (2005b), however, found that there has been stability of these job values from studies conducted in Britain and OECD countries. For instance, Clark's study of seven OECD countries in 1998 using the 1989 ISSP data set found that the highest-ranked

job values in order of importance to be job security, job interest, promotion and working independently. High income, flexible work and lots of leisure time were the least ranked (Clark, 1998). Also, in 2005, using the same data set but for nineteen OECD countries, Clark (2005a) finds not much change in employees' values. Job security and having an interesting job still ranked high. However, independence had shifted places with promotion. High income and flexible working hours were still the lowest ranked. Coincidentally, similar results were found for the 2005 survey where both the 1989 and 1997 ISSP data sets were used. Income and flexible working hours were the lowest rated while job security, having an interesting job and independence were rated highest (Clark, 2005b). An observation Clark made was that job security and interest have been ranked the most important job values over several periods of time with barely any changes over the years. Furthermore, little evidence was found for declining importance in extrinsic job values. In 2010, Clark provides evidence to show broad stability in job values as well as consistency between men and women. Reflecting on these trends, Clark (2015), drawing on the same ISSP data sets (1989, 1997 and 2005), comments that employees' ranking of their job values have not changed much because job security and interesting jobs are the highest rated. Men and women were still similar in terms of their job orientations.

In their study of *changing work values in the United States between 1973 and 2006*, Kalleberg and Marsden (2013) find that employees ranked highest a job that gives a 'feeling of accomplishment' as the first and most important value during the period. High income was however preferred to job security, chances of advancement and short working hours. The researchers conclude that there have been modest overall changes in employees' job values with more premium being put on income and job security during the period. Kalleberg and Marsden's (2013), therefore, conclude that intrinsic job preferences are still the highest ranked although the importance placed on high

income and security has grown. Further, findings from a study by Gallie et al (2012) using the *British Skill Surveys of 1992 and 2006* showed that most British placed a higher premium on intrinsic job values than extrinsic job values although the value assigned to pay had increased over the period. The importance employees attached to intrinsic job values was higher in 2006 than 1996 thereby showing the relevance of tracking these changes in employees' values.

#### **2.5.1.2 Job values and gender**

Another twist to this debate is whether job values are gendered. Using high school seniors in the US from 1976 to 1991, Marini et al. (1998) examined gender differences in job values. Evidence was that women were more likely than men to value intrinsic, altruistic and social rewards. They further note that although there was no statistically significant difference between men and women, men assigned more value than women to extrinsic rewards and influence. On the other hand, some researchers have provided evidence to show that women and men have different job values. Jurgenson's (1947) study of job values in the US context found that while men prioritised security, advancement and benefits, women put a premium on interesting work, cordial relationships with co-workers and supervisors and good working conditions. Hence, while men prioritised extrinsic job values, women valued intrinsic job preferences. Significant evidence was also found for the number of dependent children of respondents and type of job values. More premium was put on job security, working with a company one was proud of, having cordial relationships with colleagues and supervisors and benefits as the number of children increases. Similarly, Lowe's (2007) study of the Canadian setting using the Graham Lowe Group national worker survey (fall 2004) data shows that while men were more likely to put a higher premium on income and career prospects, women placed more emphasis on good management relations and a safe and comfortable work environment.

In Tolbert and Moen's (1998) study in the United States drawing on data from the General Social Survey for 1973 to 1994, they find that while women valued intrinsic job values (altruistic values), men placed more emphasis on extrinsic job values thereby endorsing previous studies. Similarly, Daehlen (2007), using data from the Norwegian Longitudinal Database for studies of Recruitment and Qualification in the Professions (StudData) found that women place more importance on helping others, being useful to society and having contact with others than men. Additionally, Chow and Ngo's (2002) study in China using university students showed that men and women were similar on the importance of career prospects, income and learning. However, gender differences existed for job security with women more likely to put importance on that value. Also, in a study by Clark (2010) using the 1989, 1997 and 2005 ISSP datasets, evidence shows that women put more emphasis on job security than men although it was not statistically significant. Further, Sutherland's (2012) study in the UK using the *2006 Skills Survey* shows the gendered nature of employees' job values. Regarding intrinsic job values, women were more likely to attach importance to good management relations, 'work like doing', good working conditions and collegial relations. On the extrinsic factors, women were more likely than men to put a high premium on having a secure job, convenient hours, choice of hours and good training provision. Women were less likely to value highly the use of their abilities in their jobs. On the basis of these findings, a series of hypotheses are developed.

H1(a): Men regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than women

H1(b): Men regard working independently as more important than women

H1(c): Men regard high income as more important than women

H1(d): Men are less likely than women to value job security as important

H1(e): Men are less likely than women to value flexible working hours as important

H1(f): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that are interesting as important

H1(g): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important

H1(h): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that are useful to society as important

### **2.5.1.3 Job values and employment status**

Sutherland's (2012) study in the UK on employees' work orientations using the *2006 skills survey* provides evidence showing the differences between full-timers and part-timers. According to his findings, part-timers (those not working full-time) were less likely to place high values on career prospects, good income, and job security than their full-timer counterparts but they tended to put greater value on 'convenient hours and choice of hours'. On the intrinsic values, full-timers were more likely to place a high value on using their initiative and abilities and having variety in their work. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H2 (a): Full-timers regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than part-timers

H2 (b): Full-timers regard high income as more important than part-timers

H2 (b): Full-timers regard working independently as more important than part-timers

H2 (d): Part-timers are less likely than full-timers to value job security as important

H2 (e): Full-timers are less likely than part-timers to value flexible working hours as important

H2 (f): Full-timers are more likely than part-timers to value jobs that are interesting as important

H2 (g): Part-timers are more likely than the full-timers to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important

H2 (h): Part-timers are more likely than full-timers to value jobs that are useful to society as important



#### **2.5.1.4 Job values and education**

Turning to the level of education and job values, interestingly, Jurgenson's (1978) study found a strong relationship between the level of education and job preferences. Employees who were more educated favoured advancement, interesting work, pay and working conditions more strongly than the less educated. Also, the educated (having spent more than 12 years in school) valued intrinsic job values (accomplishment) more highly than the less educated (having spent 12 years or less in school) who preferred extrinsic job values. On the contrary, Jurgenson (1978) argument, Tolbert and Moen's (1998) study using the General Social Survey (1973 - 1994) found that the level of education was a strong determinant of job preferences. This is because the highly educated were more likely to place a higher value on having a sense of accomplishment than the less educated. They also tend to place less value on job security, promotional opportunities and high income.

Similar findings by Kalleberg and Marsden's (2013) study in the USA showed that while the highly educated placed the greatest importance on accomplishment, the less educated valued income first. Also, the highly educated are more likely than the less educated to rank intrinsic job values over extrinsic job values. In agreement, Gallie et al.'s (2012) study found the level of education to influence employees' job values such that those with higher levels of education assigned a greater importance to intrinsic job values than those with lesser education. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H3 (a): The more highly educated regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than the less educated

H3 (b): The more highly educated regard working independently as more important than the less educated

H3 (c): The more highly educated regard high income as more important than the less educated

H3 (d): The more highly educated are less likely than the less educated to value job security as important

H3 (e): The more highly educated are less likely than the less educated to value flexible working hours as important

H3 (f): The highly educated are more likely than the less educated to value jobs that are interesting as important

H3 (g): The less educated are more likely than the highly educated to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important

H3 (h): The more highly educated are more likely than the less educated to value jobs that are useful to society as important

### **2.5.2 Understanding employees' job outcomes**

As already indicated, using the subjective view implies that employees' job quality is best understood after examining their job values. The fulfilment of these values determines whether employees have positive or negative experiences. This section aims to explain differences in job quality on the basis of demographic compositions (e.g. Clark, 2005b; Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; Kalleberg, 2011; Okay-Somerville and Scholarios, 2013). Job quality trends in various countries are also included.

#### **2.5.2.1 Gender and job quality**

The possibility that there will be differences in the job quality of women and men was confirmed by Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010) in their European study using data from *Eurostat*, *European Structure of Earning Survey* and the *Labour Force Survey (2006 and 2007)*. Defining job quality in terms of unsocial working hours, contract type, annual wage and participation in training and education, they found that there are some differences in the job quality of men and women. On the dimensions of atypical hours of work and access to training, they observe that

women were at an advantage. European women were disadvantaged on other dimensions – wages and part-time work in general and specifically involuntary part-time jobs.

Similarly, Kalleberg (2011), in painting the picture of the USA situation, indicates that work has been feminized with most men having a better-quality job than women. He argues that this disparity is due to the increasing wage gap and the greater autonomy and control by men over their work. Another reason has been the continued influx of women into part-time jobs with many bad job characteristics, especially if it is involuntary (Kalleberg, 2011). Boccuzzo and Gianecchini (2014) find somewhat similar results in a recent study of young graduates' job quality in Italy. Using professional (career prospects, training and development and organisation of work), economic (wages, benefits and contractual arrangement) and work-life balance dimensions, they affirmed that men were more likely than women to have better quality jobs. Specifically, women had inferior job quality regarding the professional and economic dimensions.

The gender wage gap difference was also confirmed by Green's study of job quality in Britain where he found that 'monthly earnings are much more unequal than elsewhere in Europe' with men earning more than women (2013; p. 1). In the case of Spain, Ficapal-Cusi et al.'s (2015) study agreed with others because they also find evidence that although the quality of work has seen some improvements, men were better off than women. In respect of intrinsic job quality, work organisation and workplace relations, working conditions, intensity and safety and extrinsic rewards, men were generally better off than women. However, on some specific indicators like the relationship with directors, health and safety at work and work-life balance, women report higher job quality than men.

Also, supporting the claim of gender differences in job quality, Stier and Yaish (2014), drawing on the 2005 ISSP data, found that men had an advantage over women in relation to achievement

(wage and promotion), time autonomy and emotional conditions. In contrast, women had an advantage over men regarding physical conditions, but no differences were recorded for job security and job content. They conclude by noting that men were better off on many of the dimensions of job quality than women.

Furthermore, Muhlau's (2011) study of job quality in Europe reiterates that job quality is gendered with men having better jobs than women. Utilizing the Second Round (2004) of the European Social Science Survey, the study found that of the ten indicators used, women were better off in only two as significant gender differences are found for eight dimensions favouring men. Men were more likely than women to be in jobs that required continuous training with varied and complex tasks. Men tended to have jobs that offered good career prospects, had more autonomy and were more involved in taking organisational decisions than women. Women were less likely than men to experience lower work pressure and gain support from colleagues. On the other hand, women were better off than men regarding working in safe environments and working during unsocial hours. Muhlau (2011) did not also find significant gender differences regarding job security. Confirming previous literature, Green et al.'s (2001) study using a single indicator to measure job quality found that in relation to job security, there was no significant difference between men and women. Finally, the OECD's (2014) finding corroborates with other studies indicating that there is no significant difference between men and women regarding job security.

Contrasting the above studies is a notable exception by Clark's (1998 and 2005) analysis of OECD countries using data from the ISSP (1989) and 1997 which found that men have worse jobs than women. Clark (1998 and 2005) defined job quality on these dimensions – pay, hours of work, prospects, how hard or difficult the job is, job content and interpersonal relationships. Based on these characteristics, Clark (1998) found men tended to work longer hours and did harder work

than women. Women were slightly more likely to report good relations at work than men, but there was little variation by gender in terms of job security and no variation for job content. However, women did worse than men on income and promotional opportunities but reported better jobs regarding hard work, relations at work and higher satisfaction. He, therefore, concludes that women had higher job quality than men because most of the indicators favoured women.

Sourcing data from the *2010 European Social Survey*, to investigate cross-national analysis of gender differences in job satisfaction in Europe, Hauret and Williams (2017) found that generally women still report higher satisfaction than men. They found that there are positive correlations between pay, career prospects, collegial relations and having work that allows one to learn new things and job satisfaction. Job security correlated with job satisfaction for all countries surveyed except Southern European countries. Women were less likely than men to report that they were paid adequately, had good career prospects, worked in dangerous conditions and worked more hours. Women were better off than men with a flexible schedule. However, there were mixed results for job security, collegial relations and control over work organisation within the countries surveyed. While men were better off regarding job security in some countries, it did not elsewhere. Similar results were found for collegial relations with women favoured than men in some countries.

Mustosmäki, Oinas & Anttila's (2017) study in Finland which sought to investigate changes in Finnish employees' job quality using cross-sectional data between *1977 and 2013 (Finnish Quality of Work Life survey)* found that there was gender gap regarding autonomy with men having an advantage. This was related to blue collar and lower white-collar groups. However, there was no difference in the level of perception in autonomy between men and women in the upper white collar. Further, findings also show worse work intensity for women in all social class than men.

Also, higher levels of insecurity were perceived by blue-collar women than men in 2013 although the situation was the opposite in 1977. The situation was different for upper and lower white-collar employees because the level of insecurity was similar for both men and women for 1977 and 2013. Generally, men have had an advantage over women concerning access to training and development.

Conclusions from the above studies have presented mixed results on gender and job quality. However, in most studies, men were better off on many dimensions than women from different studies. These findings lead to the formulation of several hypotheses:

H4 (a): Men perceive higher income than women

H4 (b): Men perceive better job security than women

H4 (c): Men perceive better opportunities for advancement than women

H4 (d): Women perceive better job content ((i) My job is interesting, (ii) In my job I can help other people, (iii) I can work independently, (iv) my job is useful to society) than men

H4 (e): Women perceive better relations with superiors than men

H4 (f): Women perceive better relations with colleagues than men

H4 (g): Men perceive greater work intensity ((i) hard physical work and (ii) stressful work) than women

### **2.5.2.2 Education and job quality**

Another twist to the job quality debate is its variation on the basis of demographics. Siebern-Thomas (2005), Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010) and Kalleberg (2011) argue that there is heterogeneity in job quality according to social groups - gender, level of education and age. In terms of educational levels, it has been observed that there are differences in job quality between workers with higher levels of education and those with lower levels of education. Holman's (2011)

study in Europe found that the higher the level of education, the higher the quality of work. Similarly, Kalleberg (2011) posits that in the USA, generally, workers with higher levels of education have the tendency of being in better jobs. This is because educational attainment is an important predictor of earnings, so those with lower levels of education gain little market power thereby, affecting their job quality negatively. This finding was corroborated by Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010; p.14) whose study in Europe using the *Labour Force Survey (2006 and 2007)* found that ‘people with low education levels face greater socio-economic insecurity in terms of wages and work contract and are less likely to receive training’.

In agreement, the OECD (2014, p.120) in comparing workers across socio-economic groups found that the unskilled tend to have worse job quality than the skilled. Specifically, the study revealed that ‘the highly-skilled workers perform well on all dimensions (earnings quality, labour market security, and quality of the working environment) with unemployment rate decreasing significantly with education’. The study acknowledges the positive effects of education on job quality, implying that educated workers have better access to good jobs in all dimensions. In another study by Erlinghagen (2007) using a multi-level analysis of 17 European countries and drawing on data from *Round 2 of the European Social Survey* found that job insecurity was inversely related to increasing qualifications such that the higher the level of education, the better the job security. Bockerman (2004), using the *Employment Options for the Future survey* confirms the assertion that job insecurity declines with higher educational attainments.

Some studies have also shown that the educated tend to report higher job quality in relation to intrinsic job quality features than extrinsic job quality indicators. For instance, Okay-Somerville and Scholarios (2013), drawing on data from the *2006 UK Skills Survey*, found that graduates define good jobs as those related to intrinsic job characteristics - job content (job control and

opportunity for skill development). This suggests that although earning increases with educational attainment, it is not the only characteristic relevant in explaining employees' job quality. Intrinsic factors were more valuable than job security and pay in enhancing graduates' job quality (Okay-Somerville and Scholarios, 2013). Consequently, Okay-Somerville and Scholarios (2013) suggest that these intrinsic characteristics known to influence graduate job quality, attitudes and well-being should be given more consideration.

The impact of these intrinsic characteristics on graduates' job quality was also confirmed in a study by Boccuzzo and Gianecchini (2014) on Italian graduates. Defining job quality in terms of economic (wages, benefits and contractual arrangements), professional (career prospects, training and development and organisation of work) and work-life balance and drawing on a survey of 2436 graduates three years after graduation, findings showed that the professional dimension was more important in explaining their job quality. The second-most valued aspect was the economic dimension and lastly the work-life balance dimension.

Likewise, Hansez's (2012) study using the *Fifth European Working Conditions Survey* found that the highly educated tend to experience better general health than the less educated. Regarding physical health, the highly educated tend to have fewer physical problems than the less educated. Similarly, Siebern-Thomas (2005; p.42), using data from the *European Community Household Panel (1994-2001)* on the EU15, confirms previous studies by noting that 'young and low-skilled employees are more likely to be in jobs with low pay and productivity and that lack job security, training opportunities and career prospects'. Siegrist et al.'s (2005; p.198) study using the *SHARE* data show that in almost all European countries, 'better quality of employment goes along with better education'. However, Kalleberg (2008) using the *General Social Survey* found that in the



USA, the highly educated were disadvantaged in terms of stress levels. This was because they were more likely to report being overworked.

Despite these findings, Kalleberg (2011; p.43) argues that ‘highly educated workers tend to be more dissatisfied with their jobs since their relatively high expectations are less likely to be met by the reality of their jobs’. Empirical results from Hauret and Williams’s (2017) study based on the *European Social Survey* for the year 2010 (wave 5) confirm previous results by Kalleberg (2011) that the lower the education, the more satisfied the worker because the highly educated were less satisfied than the less educated. As has been reviewed, the educated value the benefits they obtain from performing the job itself more than the benefits they obtain for doing their tasks (Kalleberg, 2011). Most studies have, however, revealed that the more highly educated have higher job quality than the less educated, making education an important factor in determining the ‘goodness’ or ‘badness’ of a job. Putting all this together, the thesis hypothesizes the following:

H5 (a): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of higher income

H5 (b): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of better job security

H5 (c): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of good advancement opportunities

H5 (d): The higher the level of education, the weaker the perception of intrinsic job quality (i) good job content, (ii) good interpersonal relationships and (iii) high work intensity

### **2.5.2.3 Age and job quality**

The notion that age has a bearing on job quality was investigated by Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010) in Europe. Using data from the *Labour Force Survey* (2006 and 2007), they find that younger workers (below the age of 25) have lower quality jobs than older workers. Focusing on wages, type of contract, working conditions and training and education, they explain that younger

employees “have lower socio-economic security than middle-aged and older workers and younger employees are more likely to be in temporary contracts (40%) and involuntary part-time work (28.2%) (Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; p.10). The tendency was very high for younger workers to be affected by night work and work on weekends. Younger workers typically have lower wages than older ones because of differences in experience levels. However, not all aspects of job quality were worse for younger employees. Younger employees were better off in training opportunities than older workers. The higher job quality experienced by older workers could explain why they are also more satisfied than younger employees. Kalleberg (2011) argues that in the USA, younger employees tend to be relegated to ‘bad’ jobs as well as being in involuntary part-time employments. Similarly, in defining job quality on the basis of earnings quality, labour market security and quality of the working environment, the OECD’s (2014) findings also affirmed that youth have worse jobs. This finding is also consistent with Clark’s (2005) study which drew data from the 1997 *International Social Survey Programme* data-set and found that older workers have better jobs than younger workers. In Clark’s (2005) study, job quality was defined in terms of pay, hours of work, career prospects, the difficulty of the job, job content and interpersonal relationships.

According to Warr (2007; p. 312), older employees tend to have higher job satisfaction than younger employees because ‘older and younger employees have different expectations about the quality of jobs. Also, older workers’ accumulated employment experiences might have created expectations that jobs tend to be relatively unattractive and because older workers have become aware over time of a wider range of job characteristic levels’.

#### **2.5.2.4 Job quality trends**

In his research on '*is Britain such a bad place to work? The level and dispersion of job quality in comparative European perspective*', Green (2013) compared job quality of employees in the UK to the EU27 as a whole and four other European countries. This research was premised on the basis that Britain was considered by many to be a 'bad place' to work and also because full-time employees worked the longest number of hours in Europe. Since job quality is multi-faceted, Green believed using only two indicators is inadequate in providing the true picture of the UK situation. Green's (2013) measures include monthly earnings, career prospects, intrinsic job quality and working time quality, the same indicators used by Eurofound (2012).

Data from the *2010 European Working Conditions Survey and the European Labour Force Survey* were used in comparing the job quality of Britain, the EU27 and the four selected European countries comprising Germany, Italy, Sweden and the Czech Republic. Data analysed were reported using means and Gini coefficient. Green's (2013) study shows that on average and in comparison, with the other countries, UK workplaces do not have low job quality. The UK places second after Sweden in relation to intrinsic job quality and earnings. However, earnings are highly unequal in comparison to the other countries. Sweden and Italy rank higher than the UK when it comes to working time quality, but the UK ranks higher than Germany and the Czech Republic. The UK scores above the EU27 and all four individual countries with respect to career prospects. He concludes that contrary to the view that Britain is a bad place to work, the evidence shows that Britain's job quality is high on these three dimensions: career prospects, intrinsic job quality and working time quality.

Similarly, O'Connell and Russell's (2008) research examined job quality in Ireland using autonomy, work pressure/stress, security and job satisfaction as job quality constructs among the

professional, associate professional and personal services/sales occupational groups. Data from the 2003 *Changing Workplace Survey* (CWS) and *European Union surveys* such as the *International Social Survey Project* (ISSP), *Eurobarometer* and *European Working Conditions Surveys* were employed with findings analysed using descriptive statistics.

Discretion, the extent of control employees has over their tasks, effort and timing were high for the professional and technical/associate professionals but not for the personal services/sales occupational groups. In this regard, employees with a high level of discretion are more likely to rate their jobs as good. On the other hand, employees in the personal services/sales occupations had bad jobs because of ‘below-average levels of autonomy’ experienced by them (O’Connell and Russell, 2008; p.57). That means most Irish workers in the personal services/sales occupations are much less able to decide when and how they work and are usually dependent on managers for any change in how work is done.

It is assumed that factors such as globalisation, growing task complexity and increased autonomy have increased work pressure on employees (O’Connell and Russell, 2008). This was true for employees in the professional and associate professional and technical occupations making their jobs bad on this dimension. This finding validates O’Connell and Russell’s (2008; p.60) assertion that ‘work pressure is strongly associated with occupational status’. Job quality was high for employees in the sales/personal service occupation on this dimension.

Due to the fall in unemployment rates and the decline in fixed-term contracts between 1996 and 2004, employment security increased for most Irish workers. Employees in the professionals’ occupations had the most secure jobs, followed by the associate professionals and technical and sales/personal service category. Since job security determined income and benefits stability, the professional category had good jobs on this dimension. Employee satisfaction was very high for

Irish employees. Specifically, when asked how satisfied they were generally with their jobs, over 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their jobs. Satisfaction in relation to earnings, physical working conditions, commuting times and hours of work was very high for the professional and associate professional, and technical occupations and lower for sales/personal service groups as these groups of workers were not so satisfied with their employment. It can be inferred that although general satisfaction was high for all worker groups, in comparison, sales/personal service groups were not as satisfied as the others.

Additionally, Lowe (2007) conducted a study into trends in Canadian job quality using nine constructs comprising hours and schedules, earnings and benefits, union membership and skill utilization and training. Health and safety, work-life balance, job stress and job satisfaction were the other indicators examined in relation to the changing job quality of Canadians. He researched job quality changes between 1971 to 2006 and notes that ‘other than the large change in the unemployment rate, other changes were quite small’ (Lowe, 2007; p. x).

Data for this research were sourced from multiple sources depending on the type of job quality dimension being tracked. These included *Statistics Canada*, the *Canadian Community Health Survey*, *Workplace and Employee Survey* (WES), *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics* (SLID) and the *General Social Survey* (GSS). Complementing these sources was Rethinking Work, a survey of over 2000 Canadians conducted by Graham Lowe Group and Ekos Research Associates. Since job quality is a multi-faceted concept, its measurement needed to come from different sources, and because there was no one document for these data, multiple data sources were necessary. For instance, in Canada, information on work-life balance was retrieved from the General Social Survey. Descriptive statistics were used in reporting these changes in trends.

Employees' job quality was analysed based on the hours worked and employees' work schedules as working longer or shorter hours can affect a person's job. In the case of Canada, the evidence is that most employees worked between 41 to 49 hours weekly. Also, in 2005 overtime work increased and was mostly unpaid. Most workers also had the opportunity to work from home. However, it was mostly unpaid with only a few engaging in telework which was paid. Employees in part-time employment also saw an upsurge although it was largely voluntary.

While earnings improved for some Canadian employees, others did not benefit from this change, leading to growing inequalities in earning distribution (Lowe, 2007). In addition to earnings, employee benefits which complemented earnings increased considerably. The range of benefits used in the analysis includes health insurance, life and disability insurance, pensions and employee stock purchase plans. A substantial increase was recorded for dental plans, life and disability insurance and group-registered retirement savings plans. There was a reduction in other benefits (supplemental medical insurance, employer-sponsored pension plans and stock purchase plans) and these reductions had the tendency of affecting job quality negatively. Personal and family support programmes including employee assistance, fitness, child and elder care and other personal and family support were available for one out of three employees irrespective of their gender. These benefits were available to employees in large organisations, among professionals and those above 25 years. Impliedly, employees in these categories will have had their jobs improved in terms of quality.

It is generally believed that employees in unionised organisations have improved job quality as union leaders can negotiate better wages and benefits (Lowe, 2007). Unfortunately, there was a reduction (from 35% to 30%) in union representation in Canadian organisations, and further declines mean improvements in the economic aspects of the job might suffer.

Employees and employers benefit from skill use and training. Most employees are likely to see their jobs to be of bad quality if there is underutilization of their skills (Humphrys and O'Brien, 1986). Underutilization infers that the employee is not making full use of his or her potential, and this can lead to job satisfaction and performance problems (Lowe, 2007). Regarding this feature, younger, recent immigrants, people with part-time jobs, employees working in non-unionized firms with university qualifications were at a disadvantage. In Canada, one in five employees with university qualifications had their skills underutilized because they were in jobs that only demanded high school education. Employee participation in training was either improved slightly (since the 1990s). This notwithstanding, Lowe notes 'Canada's record for job-related training is mediocre compared with other OECD nations, and we are slipping behind our major competitors' (Lowe, 2007; p.38).

Unfortunately, the quality of Canadians' jobs declined in comparison to other OECD countries on the following dimensions. According to Lowe (2007), there were many fatalities due to accidents occurring at the workplace and these deaths increased the rates of absenteeism for both genders. Another decline in the job quality documented was work-life imbalance issues. Generally, this did not surge upwards, but rather work-life balance dwindled for most Canadians, especially women, employees aged 40 and above, and workers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario, making these employees more dissatisfied.

Fortunately, an improvement was seen in the reduction of workplace stress (Lowe, 2007). Reasons for this decline were due to the availability of resources and employees' ability to manage job pressures. In spite of the reduction, those who suffered most from stress were managers and health-care practitioners. There was stability in job satisfaction levels between 1999-2003 with about one-third of employees being very satisfied and a majority of (55%) being satisfied.

Further, Gallie's (2003) study provides a comparative analysis of employees' job quality using 15 countries. These comprised 4 Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) and 11 European countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain). Using work task, participatory, career and job stability constructs of work quality, the author found that employees from Sweden, Denmark and Finland had a high ranking for the quality of work task (variety of tasks, opportunities for skill development and scope for personal initiative) with employees from Portugal having the lowest ranking. Regarding direct participation, the majority of workers from Sweden, Denmark and Netherlands indicated that they tend to have substantial influence concerning having a voice in taking decisions related to their work organization.

A similar trend was also observed for the consultation indicator with Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Netherlands having a high incidence of consultative meetings (Gallie, 2003). While the ranking was high for training possibilities for all Scandinavian countries, signaling a high job quality, it was low for Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal. In terms of promotion (having been promoted in the past) and future promotional opportunities, the Scandinavian countries recorded an average performance. Employees from Sweden and Finland with Italy and Netherlands reported a high perception of job security. Gallie's (2003) study shows that, overall, employees from these Scandinavian countries experience higher job quality than those in other European countries.

Utilizing the mixed-method approach and gathering data using questionnaires, interviews, observations, desk research and focus group discussions, Morton (2004) researched job quality in 50 small and medium scale enterprises in the Accra-Tema metropolitan area in Ghana. The study found that, generally, job quality was low in many regards but not all. Specifically, employees' job quality was not high regarding health and safety, union organization, remuneration and social



insurance. Due to the unsafe and unhealthy conditions under which many employees were working, there were recurring injuries (40%) and health complaints which affected their wellbeing negatively. Although the majority (78%) were getting above the minimum wage, they were not satisfied with their remuneration. Additionally, a majority (83%) of respondents indicated that they received no benefits. Also, some women perceived being discriminated against in terms of remuneration because the average female worker earned below their male counterpart for similar work done. Due to this discrimination, many women were dissatisfied with their pay. There appears to be a lack of voice for many employees because union participation was low. Generally, employees' job quality was very low regarding social insurance schemes due to the lack of unemployment benefits and insufficient health, life and disability insurance. Many employees were also planning to continue working after retirement due to the inadequacy of their pension benefits.

On a positive note, many employees were satisfied with the content of their jobs (although sometimes repetitive) and the nature of superior-subordinate relations at work. Although many employees did not have employment contracts, many perceived their job security was relatively high. Employees were, on average, satisfied with the opportunities given to them to learn job-related skills at work. Most employees were also satisfied with opportunities to use and develop their abilities through the work they perform as well as having opportunities to participate in decision making. On average, they worked about 43.7 hours a week and received lesser leave (between 4.5 days and 14 days) than the 15 work days stipulated by the labour law. Overall, this study paints a general picture of the quality of jobs in Ghanaian small and medium scale enterprises that are not very well structured. In summary, like elsewhere, it was not rosy on every dimension, neither was it bad on all dimensions (e.g. Clark, 1998; 2004; Gallie, 2003; Green, 2013).

Specifically, employees' experiences were positive on these dimensions; job security, management relations, training opportunities, skill utilization and job content. Experiences were negative about health and safety, income, union participation and social insurance schemes.

In like manner, using the *ISSP data set (1989)*, Clark (1998) measured the quality of jobs in nine OECD countries. Defining job quality in terms of high income, hours of work, career prospects, hard work, job content and interpersonal relations, Clark (1998) found that few workers (less than a quarter) reported receiving high income and having good career prospects. Most workers were in agreement or strongly agreed that their jobs were secure (over 70%), had good job content (55%) and experienced good interpersonal relations (75%). All indicators positively correlated with job satisfaction with good relations and good job content making the largest impact. Job security made the smallest impact.

Clark (2005a) reported very similar findings in an analysis of 19 OECD countries drawing data from the 1997 ISSP dataset. Using the same indicators, findings were similar because the majority of employees reported high job security and good relations at work with very few reporting high income and good promotional prospects. Some 42 percent of the sample reported good job content, and 37 percent reported hard work (stressful work, hard physical work, dangerous conditions and exhaustion). Results also show that all indicators predict job satisfaction with the largest impact being good relations and good job content. Clark (2015) using the 1989, 1997 and 2005 ISSp data sets further shows that subjective income and job security deteriorated between 1989 and 2005 but career prospects and hard work saw some improvements.

Similarly, Olsen et al. (2010) using the same *ISSP datasets* but with analysis conducted for the United States, United Kingdom, Norway and Germany from 1989 to 2005 found changes in employees' job quality on specific indicators in the various countries. Olsen et al.'s (2010) findings

show that job security dropped for employees in these countries during the period (1989 - 1997) except for Norway which fell later in 2005. Also, for the USA, improvements were reported by employees for having jobs that allowed them to help others and enabled them to contribute to society, having an interesting job and collegial relations. On the other hand, deteriorations were experienced by workers in Norway concerning these dimensions: interesting work, independent work, the utility to society and social relations with managers.

Likewise, Handel's (2005) study of the perceptions of job quality in the USA using the *General Social Survey* (1989 and 1998) shows that although all indicators were significant predictors of job satisfaction, some were stronger than others. The strongest predictors in the order of the effects were having interesting jobs, good management relations, career prospects, high income, job security, working independently and collegial relations. The perceptions of having an interesting job and job security declined between 1989 and 1998. There was stability on the dimensions of high pay, promotion opportunities and working independently. Improvements were observed for perceptions of interpersonal relations (management and collegial relations) at work. On the basis of these findings, Handel (2005, p. 66) concludes that employees' 'perceptions of the quality of their jobs remained remarkably stable on most dimensions.'

On the basis of the findings from the different countries on the effect of job quality indicators on employee satisfaction, it is hypothesized that:

H7 (a): Perceived higher income is positively related to employee satisfaction

H7 (b): Perceived better opportunities for advancement is positively related to employee satisfaction

H7 (c): Perceived greater job security is positively related to employee satisfaction

H7 (d): Perceived better job content is positively related to employee satisfaction

H7 (e): Perceived better interpersonal relationships ((i) superiors and (ii) colleagues) is positively related to employee satisfaction

H7 (f): Perceived higher levels of work intensity ((i) hard physical effort (ii) stressful work) are negatively related to job satisfaction

H7 (a): Perceived job satisfaction is more strongly associated with intrinsic job quality (good job content, good interpersonal relationships and low work intensity) than extrinsic job quality (income, job security and opportunities for advancement)

Summarizing, improvements in the quality of work are dependent on the changes made to the content and context of work (e.g. Clark, 2005b; Kalleberg, 2011). In addition, most studies also show that mostly men and older workers have a better quality of work than women and younger workers. However, in Clark's (2005b) study of OECD countries, he found women had a better quality of work than men. The highly educated were also found to have better job quality than the less educated although the educated were found to be more dissatisfied. Empirical evidence also shows that the highly educated valued both extrinsic and intrinsic factors, but the latter satisfied them more strongly.

## **2.6 The objective view**

Conversely, the objective approach to job quality examines features of jobs that are argued to objectively meet workers' needs (e.g. Eurofound, 2012; Green et al., 2013) with the satisfaction influencing well-being (Green et al., 2013). These job characteristics include both economic and non-economic characteristics (Knox et al., 2015, Warhurst and Wright, 2015). This view considers human needs and examines the extent to which these needs are met by jobs (Eurofound, 2012). Any theory of human needs, for example, Maslow's needs hierarchy (1943), Alderfer's ERG theory (1972) or Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959) can become the basis for selecting key job dimensions (Eurofound, 2012). Advocates argue that the objective view is based on certain

objective characteristics of a job that a majority of people agree makes a good job. These objective characteristics are argued to be the ones that are judged to be relevant in determining how good or bad a job is (Schokkaert, Ootegem and Verhofstadt, 2009). In this respect, the presence or absence of these characteristics determines the goodness or badness of a job (Sengupta et al., 2009). The objective tradition, however, ‘neglects the simple fact of life that different individuals have different ideas about the relative importance of different job characteristics’ (Schokkaert et al., 2009, p. 2).

To summarise this section, it is argued that there is no agreement on the one definition and indicators job quality. Generally, job quality is concerned with the impact of work on employees (Holman and McClelland, 2011). The dimensions making up job quality differs based on the type of study and the disciplinary base of the researchers. While economists emphasise the economic aspects of quality of work, psychologists and sociologists stress the non-economic aspects like autonomy (Kalleberg, 2011). The commonest dimensions are pay, benefits, job security, career prospects, work-life balance, hours worked, social relations and intrinsic qualities of jobs. There are differing views on job quality based on the approach used, with the subjective approach arguing that job quality varies among individuals based on the different work values they have. Their satisfaction will, therefore, be based on the perceived fulfilment (job outcomes) of these values (Ravari et al., 2012). The subjective view centres on worker preferences and their perceived fulfilment, while the objective view highlights the extent to which certain defined employee needs have been met by the job (e.g. Carre et al., 2012; Holman and McClelland, 2011). The subjective approach is being used if the job quality features are based on employees’ values and job outcomes. However, if the features chosen are those accepted by a group of theoretical analysts as determining job quality, then the objective view is being utilised.

## **2.7 Dual labour market theory**

The dual labour market theory theorises that jobs are segmented in two tiers: primary and secondary (e.g. Dorienger and Piore, 1971; Watchter et al. 1974; Reich, Gordon & Edwards, 1973; Dahl et al. 2009). The primary segment consists of good jobs while the secondary comprises jobs with low quality. The dual labour market theory further asserts that bad or good job features have the propensity to congregate in such a way that a job that is good or bad on a dimension tends to be good or bad on others.

Primary jobs are of high quality because they tend to possess several of these characteristics: 'high wages, good working conditions, employment security, chances of advancement, equity and due process in the administration of work rules' (Dorienger and Piore, 1971, p. 165). Primary jobs are, for instance, highly paid with numerous benefits, with greater security, utilizing more of employees' skills and allowing employees to progress in their careers. Pfeifer (2005) explains that due to the existence of works councils (in Europe), workers in the primary labour markets gain higher job security. Employees in the primary labour markets also benefit from the protection of unions (Blaauw & Uys, 2006).

Secondary jobs are, however, of low quality with negative attributes on several dimensions (e.g. no or little progress, low skilled, paying poverty-level wages with no benefits and highly insecure). Primary labour markets have better jobs than secondary labour markets, making the latter unattractive due to their features (e.g. Wachter et al. 1974; Kalleberg et al., 2000; Dahl et al., 2009). Additionally, tardiness and higher rates of turnover and absenteeism are exhibited by workers in the secondary segment due to the bad nature of their jobs (Doeringer and Piore, 1971). Due to the nature of secondary jobs, employees and their families are very likely to suffer from financial difficulties and poverty if these employees are the breadwinners (Hudson, 2007). Additionally, the

theory predicts that movement from the secondary category to the primary is restrictive (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Hudson, 2007; Dickens and Lang, 1984). The theory suggests that employees in secondary jobs will be less likely to transition to the primary segment over the course of their lives.

Studies testing the tenets of the dual labour theory have provided inconsistent results. A study by Dickens and Lang (1984) using the thirteenth wave (1980) of the *Panel Study on Income Dynamics* strongly supported both tenets: the existence of two separated labour markets and barriers to mobility between these labour markets. Similarly, Rosenberg (1976) provides evidence to show a lack of mobility into primary jobs for some employees who began their careers in the secondary segment. On the other hand, studies by Leigh (1976) using the *1970 Census and the National Longitudinal Survey* and Schiller (1977), drawing on the *Longitudinal Employer-Employee Data file of the social Security Administration*, refute the mobility assumption of dual labour market theory. Specifically, Leigh (1976) finds an upward mobility for some groups of workers in the secondary market regarding occupational advancement and Schiller (1977) finds that some employees in the secondary markets can increase their incomes (wage mobility).

On the other hand, Blaauw and Uys (2006) confirm the tenets of dual labour market theory in South Africa using the informal sector. The researchers utilized two samples, comprising informal car guards in the municipal parking areas of the central business district and the ‘so-called’ formal car guards. Their findings show differences regarding the level of education, having had formal training and income. Respondents from the formal car guards were more highly educated (even including tertiary education) than those in the informal sector. Training in the form of apprenticeships was also provided to employees in the formal sector but not to those in the informal sector. In spite of the fact that the nature of the tasks performed was very similar, disparity was observed in terms of the income received, favouring those in the formal car guard industry.

Mobility was also limited for those from the informal sector. The authors conclude by noting that ‘the South African labour market is fragmented, consisting of a well-paid formal sector and the periphery that consists of workers in the informal sector..... and even within the periphery, there is a certain degree of dualism’ (Blaauw & Uys, 2006; p. 254).

Hudson (2007), using data from the *February 1995, 1997 and 1999 Current Population Survey, and the 1972-1973 Quality of Employment Survey*, found that in the USA although there is evidence to show that there is dualism, many jobs (42%) combine both primary and secondary features. This third category was referred to as the ‘intermediary’ group. Hudson (2007) therefore proposed a ‘new labour market segmentation’, made up of primary, intermediary and secondary segments. The author also provides evidence showing that most employees in secondary jobs are able to transition successfully into primary jobs especially if they are young (by their 30s).

A key argument of critics of dual labour market theory is that most jobs are likely to have a combination of good and bad features. For example, it is possible to have a job that is not highly paid but does have opportunities for career development. Munro (2012) conducted a series of research projects in hospital cleaning in England and Scotland over a thirty-year period (the early 1980s to late 2000s). In contrast to dual labour market theory, Munro (2012, p.182 & 187) argued that ‘domestic service work has always had a mix of features associated with ‘good’ and ‘bad’ work quality’, such that ‘ostensibly bad jobs can have good aspects’. In agreement, Tilly (1997; p. 270) notes ‘there is no reason to expect that a job that is bad in one way will also be bad in other ways’.



## **2.8 Job Characteristics Model (Hackman and Oldham, 1980)**

Studies in work and organisational psychology establish that the way a job is designed can have an impact on employees. Hackman and Oldham (1976) argue that the appropriate design of work provides dual benefits by improving employees' quality of work and increasing the productivity of organisations. According to Panzano, Baird and Seffrin (2012), jobs can be designed to increase production efficiency, reduce strain or motivate employees. The job characteristics model (JCM) (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, 1980) is one of the several theoretical approaches that explain how jobs can be structured and enriched to motivate employees to exert greater efforts to achieve performance. The job characteristics model was developed in response to the negative consequences of Taylor's job simplification (Parker, 2014; Ayandele & Nnamseh, 2014). Although Frederick Taylor's scientific management principles enabled organisations to be highly efficient, they increased stress, leading to turnover and absenteeism (Parker, 2014). Hackman and Oldham's model offered a better alternative of redesigning the work content, activities, relationships and responsibilities to benefit both employees and employers (Parker, 2014).

Besides this model, motivation-hygiene, activation and the socio-technical systems theories are other work redesign approaches that examine how jobs can be enriched to motivate employees (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). The JCM explains how job characteristics can affect employee attitudes and behaviour (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). Central to this model is that enriched jobs provide both personal (internal motivation, growth and general satisfaction) and organisational outcomes (work effectiveness) due to the prompting of three psychological states. These three psychological states (experienced meaningfulness and responsibility and knowledge of results)

mediate between job characteristics (skill variety, task identity and significance, autonomy and feedback) and personal and work outcomes (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Skill variety refers to the extent to which a job demands a variety of different activities, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Jobs with varied activities, requiring more skills and stretching employees' abilities, are seen as more challenging and meaningfulness is experienced by the person performing that task (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Hackman and Oldham, 1980). The knowledge that one's job has a positive effect on other people and contributes to society relates to the dimension of task significance (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). This impact could be on the immediate organisation or on the external environment. When employees know that their jobs can affect the happiness, health or safety of others, the more likely they are to care about their jobs. Employees see their jobs as meaningful when they get to know the relevance of their jobs to others. Also, higher job performance is proposed as the outcome when employees perceive their jobs to be of high significance i.e. having information about the relevance of the job to others (Hackman and Oldham, 1976).

Task identity is the extent to which a job requires the completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Allowing employees to only work on an aspect of work denies them the opportunity of seeing the visible outcome of their efforts. On the other hand, employees experience meaningfulness when they are able to complete an entire job. When jobs possess these characteristics, employees experience meaningfulness as they are able to use their varied skills and abilities (skill variety), perform a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome (task identity) and also because they know that their jobs have an impact, be it psychological or physical on others (task significance) (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). A job must have one or more of these job attributes for employees to experience meaningfulness which

Hackman and Oldham (1976, p.256) define as ‘the degree to which the individual experiences the job as one which is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile’.

Autonomy is the extent to which the ‘work is structured to provide employees with substantial freedom, independence and discretion to employees in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in doing the work’ (Hackman and Oldham, 1980, p. 79). Employees feel more responsible for their successes and failures if there is high autonomy but if they are instructed by their managers, peers, manuals or other external factors, then they tend not to feel so responsible for the outcome. Experienced responsibility, which is ‘the degree to which the jobholder feels personally accountable and responsible for the results of the work he or she does’, is the psychological state that is experienced when employees have enough autonomy in taking initiatives and decisions as to how to perform their work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p. 256).

Feedback is explained as the ‘degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance’ (Hackman and Oldham, 1980, p.80). The receipt of accurate and timely feedback on performance, whether successful or unsuccessful, is a prerequisite to the experience of the psychological state, ‘knowledge of results’. Employees who get to know how they have performed (well or poorly) through the design of their jobs can feel good about having done well or sad about doing poorly (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

Jobs to be performed by employees need to possess more of these features for the psychological states to be enhanced so the personal and work outcomes can be improved. A job must have one or more of these: skill variety, task identity and significance to boost meaningfulness. Also, autonomy and feedback need to be present to promote responsibility and knowledge of results, respectively (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p.256). Employees whose jobs are enriched with these

characteristics develop internal work motivation and experience growth and general satisfaction. They tend to feel good about themselves having attained performance or feel sorry when there is poor performance. 'Good performance is an occasion for self-reward, which serves as an incentive for continuing to do well' (Hackman and Oldham, 1980, p.72). Employees get the opportunity to learn and grow, which most employees consider satisfying. Further, employees get to be more satisfied with their jobs and do not see the need to quit. Employees are not the only ones to benefit from enriched jobs but the organisation too. The benefits of enriching employees' work to the employing organisation are high work effectiveness with improvements in both quality and quantity of work. For instance, employees in these enriched jobs produce defect-free or few defective products and more of such products because they 'experience positive affect when they perform well' (Hackman and Oldham, 1980, p. 91).

Thus, the JCM argues that internal work motivation, satisfaction and performance work outcomes (both quality and quantity) are achieved because the critical psychological states are present due to the characteristics of jobs (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

In spite of the gains achieved when jobs are enriched, Grant, Christianson, & Price (2007, p. 54) argue that job redesign practices can 'undermine employee health' as employees are challenged to stretch beyond their limits. This sometimes leads to strain reactions, fatigue, overload and a high incidence of cardiovascular diseases due to an increase in responsibilities. They conclude that 'work redesign practices can increase psychological well-being but decrease physical well-being, providing clear evidence of well-being trade-offs' (Grant et al. 2007, p. 54). The job characteristics model is also critiqued for limiting the motivational work features to only five when in reality there could be other important characteristics such as the social environment (Humphrey et al., 1986, p. 1332).

Hackman and Oldham (1976) tested their model using data sourced from 658 workers in 7 business organisations in which people performed 62 different jobs. These different jobs included blue collar, white collar and professional work in the different organisations. Hypotheses tested included: psychological states must be present for internal motivation to be aroused and that job characteristics are responsible for the creation of these states. Utilizing regression, the theory was validated as there was support for its propositions. There was general support ‘for the proposition that the effects of the core job dimensions on the outcome variables are mediated by the three psychological states’ (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p.272). These psychological states had a stronger relationship with outcome measures than the job characteristics, confirming the model’s hypothesis.

Similarly, Hadi and Adil (2010) undertook a study to test the validity of the job characteristics model in relation to its ability to predict work motivation and job satisfaction. Using a sample of 150 bank managers in Pakistan, the study tested the job characteristics model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980) with emphasis on the model predicting motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) and job satisfaction. Using multiple regressions and correlations, Hadi and Adil (2010) found that while all the five job characteristics correlated significantly with intrinsic motivation, skill variety, task significance and task identity correlated positively with job satisfaction. Specifically, task identity was the most important predictor of job satisfaction with feedback not correlating with job satisfaction. These researchers argue that in the Pakistani work environment, feedback is seen as an interference with subordinates’ job responsibilities and this might have accounted for the finding. The notion of intrinsic motivation relating to work content variables was supported, with autonomy coming out as a significant predictor. Hadi and Adil’s (2010) study

validated the job characteristics model in relation to two of the three outcomes - work motivation and job satisfaction.

Analysing data using hierarchical regression from 161 managerial employees from 34 organisations in Turkey, Ozbag and Ceyhun (2014) examined the relationships among job characteristics, job satisfaction, work-family conflict and burnout. Analysis shows that all job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) are positively associated with job satisfaction, confirming Hackman and Oldham's (1980) theory. Of all these characteristics, autonomy had 'the highest negative correlation with cynicism' (Ozbag and Ceyhun, 2014, p. 298). An implication of the job characteristics model was confirmed in this study as the model was significantly and negatively related to burnout. Job satisfaction experienced through the design of jobs resulted in fewer burnout symptoms. Also, work-family conflict had a positive relationship with burnout, thereby confirming the model's motivational tendencies of reducing work-family conflict and burnout.

In a similar vein, Ayandele and Nnamseh (2014) tested the validity of the job characteristics model on the performance of Akwa Ibom State Civil Servants in Nigeria. In order to validate the model, data were gathered from 224 employees working in 19 ministries and analysed using simple percentage frequency statistics, Pearson product moment correlation and Student t-test distribution statistics. A finding was that the job characteristics model was valid in the Nigerian context. The proposition of the model that the three psychological states significantly influence internal motivation, general satisfaction and performance was confirmed. In calculating the 'correlation between the three JCM's psychological states and Civil Servants' performance', Ayandele and Nnamseh (2014; p. 95) found that civil servants' performances are significantly predicted by the three psychological states due to the presence of the five job characteristics. Anyadele and

Nnamseh (2014, p. 96) concluded that ‘the relationship between the core characteristics and work outcomes was stronger when mediated by the critical psychological states’.

In summarising studies that have applied the JCM, Parker (2014) notes that empirical studies using the JCM model since its inception have not consistently validated all propositions predicted by the model. However, the ‘central proposition that work characteristics affect attitudinal outcomes has been well established in several meta-analyses’ (p.154). Also, of the three psychological states, experienced meaningfulness was the most important mediator between job characteristics and work outcomes, and the links between work characteristics and reduction in turnover and increase in subjective performance have been clearly established. Parker (2014) further notes that only a few studies have failed to establish the relationship between job characteristics and work performance (e.g. Kopelman, 2006).

## **2.9 Firm size and job quality (Evidence from Germany, the USA and Canada)**

Few researchers debate the notion that small businesses are the backbone of job creation in many economies (Litwin and Phan, 2013; Wagner, 1997). For instance, in the USA: ‘small business is critical to our economic recovery and strength, to building America’s future and to helping the US compete in today’s global marketplace’ (Litwin and Phan, 2013; p. 835). This is what was said when the Small Business Act of 1953 was passed by Congress.

Jobs in these small firms (defined in terms of the number of employees) are however known to be of lower quality than ones in large firms. Wagner (1997), in an analysis of firm size and job quality in Germany, utilised wages, non-wage benefits, work organisation, opportunities for skill enhancement, participation and job security as job quality constructs. Data from the Germany study were retrieved from multiple sources for each of the indicators. For instance, in relation to

wages, job security and work organisation, both individual and firm-level micro data were employed. Data from the first wave of ‘Das Hannoveraner firmenpanel’ was relevant to the skill enhancement dimension of job quality. For non-wage income, data from the 1988 Labour Cost Survey conducted by the Statistical Office were used while the German Betriebsrat Works Council provided data for the participation component.

Evidence from the research showed that, on average, small firms produce poorer quality jobs than large firms. This is because employees in small firms scored low on many of the job quality dimensions used in assessing how good or bad their jobs were. More precisely, Wagner (1997) found that large firms provide more and better wages and benefits (e.g. annual payments for Christmas allowances, a thirteenth monthly pay, profit sharing, bonuses, extra holiday allowances etc.) than their small firm counterparts indicating that wages rise with firm size. The finding that wages increase with firm size is also confirmed by Eurofound (2012). For example, working time quality and work organisation in small firms are less rigid than those in large firms (e.g. Eurofound, 2012 and Wagner, 1997). Other findings that were also positive for employees in large firms were job security, opportunities for skill enhancement and participation. Participation in either quality circles or team-work tends to be used more often in large firms than small firms due to the institutionalization of work councils by law in large firms.

According to Wagner (1997), the flexibility of work organisation in small firms is the only advantage to employees working in small businesses in Germany. Workers in small firms benefit from having more discretion in performing their tasks as the work organisation were less rigid. All in all, small firms create a lot of job opportunities (quantity). They are, however, poorer in terms of quality of employment on average. Comparatively, working in a large organisation can offer employees a better job quality than in a small firm in Germany.



MacDermid, Hertzog, Kensinger & Zipp (2001) survey in the USA examining the relationship between job quality and firm size used a more elaborate set of job quality dimensions including earnings, benefits, education, and discrimination, fit between actual and desired work hours, supportiveness and, interference between work and family. Utilizing data from the 1997 *National Study of the Changing Workforce* and a phone survey of 2477 respondents, they establish that large firms are at an advantage over small firms in relation to job quality. Hierarchical linear modelling was used in the analysis. Findings were that employees in larger firms reported receiving higher earnings, more benefits, and enhanced education than their small firm counterparts. Although employees in large firms were better off in terms of the above, employees in smaller firms experienced less discrimination, had a better fit between their actual and desired work hours, enjoyed more supportive relationships and experienced less burnout. It can be recognized that there was a split in the indicators as employees in both large and small firms benefit from the presence of some indicators at their workplaces.

Findings in relation to earnings and benefits being enjoyed more by employees from large firms in the US and Germany cases are very consistent with those documented by Drolet and Morissette (1998). These researchers used Canada as the test case to examine the link between firm size and job quality. Three characteristics including wages, pension plans (benefits) and work schedules were the dimensions used in the analysis. Data was sourced from a variety of household surveys between 1983-1993, including the *Longitudinal Employment Analysis Program* (LEAP), *Labour Market Activity Survey* (LMAS), *Survey of Work Arrangements* (SWA), *Labour and Income Dynamics* (SLID) and *Labour Force Survey* (LFS). Descriptive statistics were used in reporting findings. Employees in large firms received more pay (between 15-20% higher) and pension plan coverage (4 times higher for larger firms) than employees in small firms. Employees in large firms

enjoyed other benefits more often than their counterparts: health insurance, dental plans, vacation and sick leave. On work schedules (number of hours worked and timing of work hours), employees in small firms had the tendency to work more than five days in a week more often than employees in large firms. In respect of timing of work, employees in large firms were more often likely to be in shift work especially in the manufacturing sector due to the type of technology used and the large-scale nature of work.

Litwan and Phan (2013) examined the relationship between job quantity and quality of 4928 businesses established from 2004 in the USA drawing on data from the *Kauffman Firm Survey* (KFS). They focused more on new businesses which usually start small using health-care coverage and retirement plans as job quality indicators. To Litwan and Phan (2013) since these benefits are not provided by the state, employees without these benefits from their employers are deprived economically. Respondents were reached via either the phone or internet with data gathered analysed quantitatively using multi-level modelling techniques with probability weights.

Litwin and Phan (2013) found that health-care is more likely to be offered by employers than pension plans. However, both features are dependent on firm size. Employers with more employees are more likely to provide these benefits than ones with fewer staff. New employers who mostly start with few employees are unlikely to offer health insurance and pension plans to their full-time employees. Also, the ‘likelihood of offering health or retirement benefits increases only marginally over their first six years of operation’ (Litwan and Phan, 2013).

Studies from Germany, the USA and Canada on job quality and firm size used different sets of indicators, confirming that there is some level of arbitrariness in the dimensions. For instance, while Wagner (1997) used six indicators, MacDermid et al. (2001) employed seven indicators and Drolet and Morissette (1998) utilised three dimensions. However, wages/earnings and benefits run

through all studies, confirming the assertion that the only ones traditional hallmarks of job quality (e.g. Kalleberg et al. 2000; UNECE, 2010). For these indicators, employees from large firms enjoy better job quality than their counterparts from small firms. In spite of the difference in the number of indicators, the dimensions used are quite different. Whilst Wagner (1997) tracked job quality of Germans using wages, non-wage benefits, work organisation, opportunities for skill enhancement, participation and job security, MacDermid et al. (2001), measured job quality using earnings, benefits, education and discrimination, fit between actual and desired work hours, supportiveness and work-life balance. In the case of Canada, Drolet and Morissette (1998) used wages, pension plans and work schedules as indicators determining how ‘good’ or ‘bad’ a job was.

## **2.10 Job quality consequences for stakeholders**

Jobs of better quality can improve the lot of employees, employers and society as a whole. As argued by Warhurst and Trebeck (2011), improving job quality is in the interest of all stakeholders. It thus becomes important for stakeholders to find ways of creating good jobs and improving bad ones. While some researchers are sceptical of the relationship between job quality and organisational performance as they believe this argument is at an early stage (Eurofound, 2012), others have confirmed the relationship with performance (e.g. Knox et al. 2015; Findlay et al. 2013; Johri, 2005; Coats and Lekhi, 2008). This relates to the benefits of specific job quality indicators, for example, income and career prospects on employees’ performance. Improving job quality as noted by Coats and Lekhi (2008) and Clark (2015) comes with higher labour costs, but there is a business case for its improvement.

The quality of a person’s job affects not only employees and their families but also the organisation and the country (Findlay et al. 2013; Knox et al., 2015). In their recent research, Knox et al. (2015, p.1550) argue that job quality is associated with improvement in the ‘satisfaction and well-being of

employees, organisational productivity and performance as well as national/regional economic competitiveness’.

### **2.10.1 Impacts of job quality on employees**

Many scholars associate job quality with improved well-being that influences employees’ attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Kalleberg and Vaisey, 2005; Holman, 2013; Eurofound, 2012; Findley et al. 2013; Burgess et al. 2013; Weaver, 2009). Like the definition of job quality, there is no one accepted definition of employee well-being (e.g. Grant, Christianson & Price 2007; OECD, 2013; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Dodge et al. 2012). Well-being can be thought of as ‘creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows employees to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation’ (CIPD, 2016; p. 4). Well-being also relates to ‘the overall quality of an employee’s experience and functioning at work’ (Grant et al. 2007; p. 52). It can also be seen as ‘a state of being with others, where human needs are met, where one can act meaningfully to pursue one’s goals, and where one enjoys a satisfactory quality of life’ (ESRC Research Group, cited in OECD, 2013; p. 26). Also, Baptiste (2008; p. 287) referring to the definition by Warr (2002), notes that well-being can be seen as ‘peoples’ satisfaction with their jobs in terms of facets like pay, colleagues, supervisors, working conditions, pay security, training opportunities, involvement, team working and the nature of the work undertaken’.

Well-being also relates to ‘the overall quality of an employee’s experience and functioning at work’ (Grant et al. 2007; p. 52). According to CIPD (2016, p. 7) ‘organisations that genuinely promote and value the health and well-being of employees will benefit from improved engagement and retention of employees with consequent gains for performance and productivity’.

Although there is no consensus on its definition, there is an agreement that there are distinct types of well-being. Well-being, which encompasses physical (health), psychological (satisfaction), spiritual, social (relationships) and economic (material), tends to have positive effects on the employee, employer and society in general (e.g. Grant et al. 2007; Danna and Griffin, 1999). Employee well-being can be influenced greatly in the workplace by managers (employers) engaging in certain practices like work redesign, safety initiatives, compensation, provision of resources, clarification of expectations etc. It is argued that all of these practices fall within the domain of job quality dimensions (Grant et al., 2007; Harter et al. 2002). Employee well-being is influenced by the content of an employee's job as well as the type of environment in which the job is carried out (van Wanrooy, Bewley, Bryson, Forth, Freeth, Stokes & Wood 2013; Markey, Harris, Lamm, Kesting, Ravenswood, Simpkin & Williamson, 2008). Additionally, Boxall and Macky (2014; p.978) in a recent study in New Zealand concluded that well-being is 'more likely to improve when the scope for discretion and creativity is enhanced while simultaneously ensuring that workloads are reasonable and that workers can lead balanced lives', all of these practices mostly within the control of employers.

Many researchers agree that enhancing employees' job quality makes a positive impact on their satisfaction levels (e.g. Knox et al. 2015; Cooke et al. 2013; Green, 2009; Burgess, Connell & Dockery, 2013). Satisfaction, which according to Locke (1976; p. 1304) 'is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences', is known to affect many attitudes and behaviours of employees. For instance, good working conditions indirectly have a bearing on employee health and well-being. An example to illustrate this is the effect of high job demands and poor physical environment on the health of workers. Poor quality jobs that place huge demands on employees have the propensity of affecting their mental health (Eurofound, 2012).

Findlay et al. (2017) suggest that being in a bad job reduces earnings, satisfaction and health. Further, Henseke (2017) explains how poor job quality can expose workers to stress and ill-health which can influence retirement intentions and early cessation of labour force participation. Siebern-Thomas's (2005; p.50) study of 15EU countries using the *European Community Household Panel*, *European Foundation's surveys on working conditions*, *the European Statistics on Accidents at work*, *Eurostat's health and safety database* and *the 1995-2003 Community Labour Force Surveys* found that 'over 20 per cent of employees in bad jobs leave employment'. Siebern-Thomas' findings corroborate other studies that established the link between job quality and labour force participation. Siebern-Thomas (2005; p.50) concludes stating that 'improvements in the quality of jobs are needed to entice inactive people back to the labour market' and increase the employment rate. Van Aerden Moors, Levecque & Vanroelen, (2015; p.66) extends this argument by highlighting the fact that 'prolonging the working life of the labour force will not be possible if jobs are not sustainable, both physically and psychosocially'. In agreement, Siegrist et al.'s (2004; p.62) research drawing on data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) support previous research in that 'poor quality of work was significantly associated with intended early retirement'. Within Europe, Anton et al. (2012) confirm the positive correlation between job quality and employment levels. With good health and well-being being the positive outcomes from high job quality, Van Aerden et al. (2015) emphasise that early drop out from the labour force is prevented when jobs are of high quality.

Findlay et al. (2017; p.6) buttress this point by indicating that economies with higher job quality have 'higher employment participation and lower unemployment rates'. Warhurst and Wright (2015) endorse this assertion by arguing that there is higher employment participation for both sexes in OECD countries when the quality of jobs is improved. In the case of Siegrist et al.'s (2005) study

of European countries using the SHARE data, findings confirmed the above because bad jobs aroused premature exit from the labour force. Employees in bad jobs will most likely prefer to stop working than expose themselves more to detrimental working conditions with adverse health effects.

### **2.10.2 Impacts of job quality on business outcomes**

Although due to economic conditions, companies are implementing various forms of cost-cutting minimisation strategies (e.g., Appelbaum, Bernhardt and Murnane, 2003; Price, 2011), improving well-being through enhancing their job quality bring several benefits to employers too. In line with this, Warr (2007), Green (2009) posited that greater well-being is associated with greater commitment and voluntary overtime, improved organizational citizenship and less absenteeism. Also, incidences of counterproductive work behaviours are reduced as well as labour turnover (Green, 2009). While it can be agreed that not all turnover is bad, turnover of experienced and high performing employees can increase organisational costs. Appelbaum et al. (2003) argue that retaining good employees is important because high turnover is expensive to the organisation. Filling a vacant position is expensive due to the time it takes for new employees to be trained on the job and be up to the task. This impacts negatively on customer satisfaction. This is even true in low-skilled and low waged jobs where management perceive that jobs can be filled quickly. This explains the importance of enhancing employee well-being through their job quality.

Research has proven that well-being has significant relationships with these business level outcomes - customer satisfaction, productivity, profitability, employee turnover and 'presenteeism' (e.g. Robertson and cooper, 2011; Harter et al. 2002; Eurofound, 2012; Knox et al. 2011). Poor well-being is argued to lead to less productive behaviours and increases in accident rates, all of which diminishes contributions to the organisation (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Empirical results from

Europe using the SHARE data by Siegrist et al. (2005) provide a strong relationship between good jobs and well-being. For instance, depression and poor health are reported by the employed and self-employed who experienced an imbalance between high effort and low reward. Also, findings from Holman and McClelland's (2011) study using the *2005 European Working Conditions Survey* found that employees in high quality jobs (active jobs) had a significantly higher level of physical and psychological well-being than those in other job types. Consistently, these empirical studies have demonstrated the relationship between job quality and employee well-being.

For most businesses, achieving goals of productivity and performance is one of the most important reasons for being in business. Several avenues are available for employers in realising this goal, one of which is to ensure that employees have good quality jobs because quality jobs tend to have a strong positive relationship with employee well-being (e.g. Eurofound, 2017; Eurofound, 2012; Knox et al. 2015; Burgess et al. 2013). Businesses benefit from employee well-being through positive attitudes having positive effects on business outcomes. While some job characteristics such as good working conditions expose employees to improved well-being, the opposite leads to deleterious well-being (Eurofound, 2012). These positive attitudes and behaviours have a link with organisational performance as the opposite retard organisational progress. Johri (2005; p.1) affirms this assertion by noting that bad jobs are associated 'with a range of less than positive outcomes'. Siebern-Thomas's (2005) study of 15EU countries using the *European Community Household Panel*, *European Foundation's surveys on working conditions*, *the European Statistics on Accidents at work*, *Eurostat's health and safety database* and *the 1995-2003 Community Labour Force Surveys* also confirmed this stance by explaining the positive relationship between labour productivity and job quality.



Although there are mixed reports on the correlation between organisational performance and employee satisfaction, many studies confirm a strong relationship between a satisfied workforce and good organisational performance (Green, 2009). Improved organisational performance is achieved because of the positive attitudes and behaviours exhibited by highly satisfied employees. For instance, job dissatisfaction is seen as a strong predictor of quits and absenteeism as dissatisfied ones are likely to look for better jobs elsewhere and may also absent themselves from work (Clark, 2005a). In addition, Judge (1993) provides an array of employee attitudes and behaviours affected positively by satisfaction. He notes that employee satisfaction is positively correlated with prosocial and organisational citizenship behaviours, life satisfaction and job performance. Employee satisfaction is negatively correlated to absenteeism, turnover decisions and psychological withdrawal behaviours. From these studies, it can be observed that having satisfied employees is better than dissatisfied ones as managing satisfied employees is easier due to the exhibition of positive attitudes and behaviours.

Employee well-being tends to impact on organisational survival and performance by minimizing the costs associated with illness and health-care from unhealthy employees (Grant et al. 2007; Baptiste, 2008). Organisations save costs from having physically healthy workers who are more productive and resilient than physically unhealthy ones (Worldatwork, 2012). Mentally and physically, it is argued that healthy employees are likely to be more engaged thereby influencing organisational turnover and absenteeism positively. It can be implied that organisational efficiency and profitability are enhanced when there are healthy employees (CIPD, 2016). Coats and Lekhi (2008) point out that absenteeism due to the nature of jobs performed by employees has an impact on organisational performance and productivity. Consequently, enhancing employee well-being

creates positive attitudes with direct benefits to the organisation. The organisational performance that is achieved is due to the job quality-well-being relationship (Burgess et al. 2013).

Cooke et al. (2013) also argue that job quality affects employees' attitudes and behaviours and their work performance, which by extension affects organisational outcomes. Attitudes and behaviours such as tardiness, absenteeism, turnover intentions and turnover have implications on organisational performance. For instance, absenteeism, which is a negative behaviour is acknowledged to be an indirect measure of a worker's health and well-being (Griep et al. 2010; p. 180); hence 'improvements in psychosocial conditions in the work environment could lead to a considerable decrease in work absences due to health issues'. Also, if these absences are related to sicknesses, it has been suggested that they are better tackled through the improvement of job design and attention to the organisation of work (Coats and Lekhi, 2008). In a similar vein, Hausser et al. (2010) admit that impaired psychological well-being is one of the most prominent causes of absenteeism and reduced job involvement.

To the employer, both direct and indirect costs are incurred through increases in sickness absences, high turnovers which subsequently affects employee innovation, organisational productivity and performance when jobs are of low quality (e.g. Findlay et al., 2017; Henseke, 2017; Diaz-Chao, 2014). Frequent accidents in organizations cause pain not only to affected employees and their dependents but also organisations. To the organization, providing a physically safe and healthy working environment has a link with productivity as workplace accidents lead to losses due to the inability of the person to perform (Eurofound, 2012). Costs could also come in the form of an increase in medical bills to the organization. Usually, organisations get bad reputational publicity that can affect patronage of their products by their customers (Eurofound, 2012). For this reason, there is a business case for ensuring that the physical well-being of employees is enhanced.

In addition to the above-mentioned benefits, good jobs can result in higher organisational productivity as there is evidence of a link between job quality and productivity at various levels (Eurofound, 2012; Knox et al., 2015). Some indicators of job quality are known to have a direct effect on the productivity of individuals and organisations. Green (2009; p.9) highlights that enhancing the skills of employees to enable them function in ‘more skilled jobs will be better for organisational productivity’. Training which enhances skill level is usually associated with higher productivity. Improving the skills of employees will subsequently improve their performance, that of their colleagues and the organisation (Eurofound, 2012; Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010).

In-depth case studies analyses of the links between job quality and impact on employees and company performance in six European countries were conducted by Eurofound (2011). Twenty-one case studies in 4 sectors (food manufacturing, financial services, insurance activities and electromechanical engineering) from Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, France, Spain and Sweden formed the basis of the studies. Training, skills and employability, health, safety and well-being, work-life balance, and career and employment security were constructs whose links with employee and organisational performance were investigated.

Key findings from these case studies indicate that training, skills and employability had a direct link with performance. Organisations that trained their employees because of customer needs and technological changes benefited as well as their employees. Improvements in employees’ skills empowered them to perform effectively, and that benefits their organisations while at the same time increasing employees’ employability. The case studies were indicative of benefits that organisations gained when they had career advancement programmes in place. In most cases, employees felt secure and publicised their organisations to others. In other cases, employees treated the

organisation's success as their personal success hence, felt personally responsible for making sure the organisation was successful.

In terms of health, safety and well-being, the findings show that organisations gained from improved performance through the reduction in absenteeism, payment of insurance, voluntary turnover and increased job satisfaction. Organisations that had company work-life policies saw improvements in their performance because they became employers of choice. Increases in employee satisfaction and commitment were reported by employees who had enjoyed such work-life balance programmes. The final report, however, concludes 'that most companies apply a bundle of measures to improve different dimensions of quality of work, therefore is it difficult to single out how one specific measure affects performance' (Eurofound, 2011; p. 1).

Wage-earning/pay is another construct that has implications for productivity. Increasing the wages of employees sometimes make them work harder and become more committed to the organization. In terms of turnover, it is suggested that organisations that pay higher reduce the rate of employee turnover as they become employers of choice. Recruitment and initial training costs are also reduced due to lower turnover (Eurofound, 2012; Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010).

Findlay et al. (2013) note that 'inferior job quality' is the vehicle through which some employees exhibit negative attitudes. On the other hand, 'by improving job quality, employers will be better able to recruit, develop, retain and energize tomorrow's workforce (Lowe, 2007; p. vii). It can be confirmed from the above reviews that although improving job quality comes with costs, there are numerous benefits to be enjoyed by organisations that implement the concept.

### **2.10.3 Impacts of job quality on society**

Lowe (2007; p.vi) in his brief overview asserts that ‘individuals, employers and society will reap substantial benefits by making better job quality a national goal’. Besides employees and their organisations benefitting when ‘good’ jobs are created, the general society is also a beneficiary. This is because job quality has a linkage with poverty and social exclusion according to Johri (2005).

According to the OECD (2013), in-work poverty ‘reflects different forms of precarious employment (low working hours and hourly pay among full-time workers, frequent moves between low-paid work and joblessness), its incidence informs about the quality of employment’. If employees who are parents or would-be parents suffer from in-work poverty due to the low wages they receive, then governments’ aim to eliminate child poverty is not feasible if its eradication is not tackled at the firm level. The eradication of poverty depends ‘on more parents finding sustainable, decent jobs with opportunities for development and progression’ (Coats and Lekhi, 2008; p. 6). As an example, employees who are low-waged with little or no benefits might have challenges educating their children because they do not have the means. With no better education, these children might develop behavioural problems thereby perpetuating the poverty cycle and society might bear the brunt. Complementing the above, Litman (2013) illustrates how low pay can hurt the whole community. Children of parents who earn less and who have to work long hours or engage in multiple jobs are less likely to spend quality time with them, will be less able to help their children’s school or engage in community activities. Bluntly, society at the end will bear the brunt of wage inequality and not just employees.

Due to the relationship between health and work (Coats and Lekhi, 2008), bad jobs are likely to have an impact not only on the individual concerned but also on their families and the nation because of increases in the cost of health-care. As the nature of employees’ job has implications for their

health, unhealthy employees are likely to put more stress on the health-care system of the country if there is a national insurance policy as happens in places like Britain and New Zealand. For example, research by the World Health Organisation shows that ‘poor mental health outcomes are associated with precarious employment and that workers who believe their work is insecure experience significant adverse effects on their physical and mental health’ (Coats and Lekhi, 2008; p. 12).

Also, enabling employees to balance life both at work and home has the tendency of affecting their families positively, aiding in the raising up of children, all saving the nation a great deal. Not surprisingly, Henseke (2017; p.6) found that ‘higher intrinsic job quality, lower job insecurity and greater pay correlate with fewer health complaints’. Additionally, good quality jobs create thriving and decent economies and reduce the health budget on the country (Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011). This assertion is affirmed by Sutherland (2016), Henseke (2017) and Findlay et al. (2017) who note that bad jobs increase health care expenses, welfare spending and reduces tax revenues.

In a nutshell, positive well-being at work benefits society and generally the nation because healthy people require less support from the health services (CIPD, 2016). Overall, a significant group of theorists have argued the gains employees, employers and the society get when good jobs are created and bad ones improved (Knox et al. 2015; Findlay et al. 2013; Johri, 2005; Coats and Lekhi, 2008).

## **2.11 The role of stakeholders in improving job quality**

If there are reported positive outcomes associated with good jobs and negative outcomes with bad jobs, then what are the responsibilities of stakeholders? Due to the impact of job quality on employees, employers and society, conscious efforts have to be made by stakeholders in its improvements. Findlay et al. (2017) argue for a deliberate decision to be made by governments

and firms to create good jobs. Complementing the above, Knox et al. (2011), also reiterate that enhancing employees' jobs quality should be the collective efforts of government, employers and or unions in formulating policies that will improve workers' experiences. In agreement to the above, Pocock and Charlesworth (2017; p.23) argue that 'interventions are necessary in three domains: at the macrosocial and economic level, in the regulatory domain and in the workplace domain'. Not only is it the responsibility of government, firms and unions but also that of employees (Coats and Lehki, 2008). The collective benefit to be realised by the stakeholders demands that employees, their unions, employers and governments play their roles.

### **2.11.1 The role of employees**

Since there is enough evidence that the less educated or people with low or no qualifications (e.g. Carre et al., 2012; Siebern-Thomas, 2005) are likely to be trapped in poorer job quality, education, retraining and the acquisition of higher skills can help workers get into 'good' jobs (Johri, 2005). For instance, evidence from Erlinghagen's (2007) study showed that job insecurity was inversely related to increasing qualifications such that the higher the level of education, the better the job security. Also, Kalleberg (2011) and Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere's (2010) study of the USA and Europe respectively reveal that educational attainment is an important predictor of earnings. Due to this, Findlay et al., (2017) suggest that before entering the labour market, workers should develop their human capital to access good quality jobs. Johri (2005) also recommend that moving jobs occasionally and working in either the governmental sector and large businesses where the possibility of upward mobility is high are some other viable strategies. For instance, a study by Boccuzzo and Gianecchini (2015) confirmed prior research by Wagner (1997) findings that employees in larger organisations have higher job quality (economic and professional indicators) than those in smaller firms. To them, although smaller firms offer better work-life balance than

larger firms, larger firms due to formal human resource management practices are more likely to provide better job quality to their employees on many other dimensions.

### **2.11.2 The role of trade unions**

Some researchers (e.g. Findlay et al., 2017; Kalleberg, 2011) note the weakening of unions as one of the drivers for worsening job quality. Carre et al. (2012) recommend that worker organisations are in a position to help block low-road strategies while facilitating high road strategies. Unions can play a critical role in monitoring, enforcing and raising minimum standards (Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011). Traditionally, trade unions are known to raise standards and fight for the interests of members through negotiations for higher pay, employment security and occupational health and safety (e.g. Appelbaum, 2012; Bernhardt and Osterman, 2017; Esser and Olsen, 2011; Findlay et al., 2017). For instance, Bernhardt and Osterman (2017) and Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) provide examples in the USA and the UK of how union members had had better jobs and received more pay than non-union members.

Basically, union presence is a form of encouragement to employers to invest in employees (Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011) as their involvement can ‘reduce the contractive effects of the change on the quality of jobs’ (Diaz-Chao et al., 2014, p. 614). This is the case in Sweden where the state is not involved in wage negotiations but rather the unions with the state performing an enabling role (e.g. through the strengthening of unions’ power resources) negotiate on behalf of workers (Bosch and Weinkopf, 2017). On the other hand, the absence of unions transfers the responsibility to employees and government which is inappropriate (Findlay et al., 2017). Further, Hayter and Ebusui (2013) suggest that probably, one of the union’s role can be putting a priority on organising precarious workers and negotiating with the government for the extension of social



protection. Complementing the above, Keune (2013) argues that worker organisations should possibly engage in media campaigns in a bid to advocate for employees in precarious work.

### **2.11.3 The role of employers**

Turning to the main stakeholder, Findlay et al. (2017; p. 114) put it bluntly that ‘employers are, on the face of it, the architects of job quality’. Implying that they are most able to affect job quality interventions using several routes. According to Eurofound (2017), improvements in each job quality indicator is possible with changes in organisational policies and practices. Similarly, Pocock and Charlesworth (2017) intimate that the workplace is actually where regulation is effected and also the avenue where these regulations can be implemented or hindered. In supporting this view, Osterman (2013; p. 740) also notes that ‘job quality is determined by decisions made by employers regarding the range of working conditions’. Evidence is provided by Dill et al.’s (2012; p.15) study of frontline healthcare workers in the USA, which found that employers had made decisions to improve career advancement opportunities and enhance the quality of jobs of their workers through ‘human resource policies (e.g., tuition remission), organisational culture and management practices (e.g., creating supportive supervisors) and work processes (e.g., learning through job tasks and responsibilities).’ Specific decisions included but were not limited to publicising vacancies internally first, allowing employees paid-time off for study, institutionalising mentoring programmes and performance-based promotions.

In another study by Dill and Morgan (2017) of low-waged health care sector workers, they explained how organisations in the USA created departmental ladders and paraprofessional credential programs (higher education to allow movement into a new occupation) for their employees not to be stuck at one position. Pocock and Charlesworth (2017) exemplify how technology (email communications) is interfering with family life and making employees work

everywhere. Although most employees love this flexibility, in their findings, especially women felt it had a negative effect on work-life balance if they had to respond to mails outside working hours.

In fact, Bryson, Cappellari and Lucifora (2005) using the *Workplace Employee Relations Survey* of 1998 found that employer practices, particularly career development increased satisfaction. With employers somehow influencing how jobs are designed, career prospects and pay, they certainly have roles to play in job quality improvements. Bryson et al. (2005) suggest task discretion is an aspect of work that falls within the control of employers. Findlay et al. (2017) argue that the choice of either the 'high road' market strategies or the 'low road' market strategies determines the improvement of bad jobs and the creation of good jobs. The latter strategy which relies on cost reduction tends to create bad jobs while the former which is based on employee motivation tends to create good jobs (Bosch and Weinkopf, 2017; Kalleberg, 2011).

Carre et al. (2012) also suggest that organisations must be encouraged to follow the high road business strategy (e.g. training and retraining) while blocking the low road strategy through regulatory measures. For instance, in suggesting ways of improving employees' job quality, Dill et al.'s (2012) study show how the creation of career ladders to ensure upward mobility by US health-care employers have improved employee retention. Jones et al. (2017; p.8) suggest that improvements in job quality can be made by 'addressing specific aspects globally such as increasing control over working hours or providing greater training opportunities. In making improvements, Warhurst and Wright (2015) add that organisations should have job quality audits with the aim of identifying areas that need improvements. Due to the multi-dimensional nature of job quality, some of the improvements can be cost-free financially. Some intrinsic job quality features can be improved based on how employees are managed which is cost effective. For

instance, fostering better social relations between management and subordinates and among colleagues could be cost-effective.

#### **2.11.4 The role of government**

Bosch and Weinkopf (2017), Coats and Lehki (2008) and Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) argue that the state's role involves improving the number of high quality jobs or making poorer jobs better through stronger, stringent and better labour regulations and legislation. Regulations such as health and safety, working time restrictions, unfair dismissal, reduction of excessive working hours, maximum working times could improve bad quality jobs. Budd (2012) further suggests that, among others, the government could come with policies such as paid personal leave, stronger legislation on unfair dismissals, the extension of employment laws to cover employees in non-standard employment and improvements in social safety nets. Referring to these legislations as either protective, promotional or participative standards, Bosch and Weinkopf (2017) indicate that they are relevant for establishing rules that govern employment conditions. Findlay et al. (2017) further argue that government must not only legislate but enforce and increase regulations. Perhaps, beyond the establishment of some minimum standards, Coats and Lehki (2008) suggest encouraging employers, employees and their unions to pay more attention to job quality issues. Similarly, Coats and Lehki (2008) and Warhurst and Trebeck (2011) advice that job quality issues should be one of the topmost priorities of government. Leading by example by delivering good jobs as an employer in the public sector could enlighten other employers is suggested by Warhurst and Trebeck (2011).

## **2.12 Summary of literature review**

This current chapter brings to a close the review of relevant literature. It is hoped that this review has demonstrated the relevance of this thesis in making an original contribution to improving the well-being of employees through the job quality concept. In pursuing this, the study began with an explanation of work and job quality. It emphasised the fact that up to date, there is no consistency on the features that make a good job although there is consensus on the multi-dimension nature. Despite the level of arbitrariness of the theory, economic compensation, job security, opportunities for advancement, work-life balance, the number of hours worked, social relations, intrinsic job quality and job satisfaction have featured the most in several studies. These features broadly grouped as either extrinsic or intrinsic measures are known to impact employee well-being. The thesis observed that different disciplines (the economics, the sociology and psychology) emphasise different features. However, a focus on any one discipline could be erroneous as it does not showcase the multi-dimensional nature of jobs. Due to this, in this thesis, all features identified from the various disciplines are included in order to paint a holistic picture of the concept.

Job quality can mean different things to different employees because different people put a premium on different job values. This is the subjective approach to understanding job quality. This tradition takes cognisance of employee values and job outcomes experienced from the organisation. In this approach, employees get satisfaction when there is a match between what they care for in their jobs and what they experience. The objective tradition, on the other hand, considers human needs and examines how far these needs are met by the job. These are features that are objectively viewed to meet workers' needs.

As prior research has shown that job quality varies by gender, education and employment status, this highlights some of these differences. These findings from studies have not shown clear-cut differences because, in some studies, men were better-off on some dimensions. Nonetheless, the majority of these studies have shown that men are better off on many dimensions than women, implying that men have higher job quality than women. With the educated, on many but not all dimensions, they tend to have better job quality than the less educated. Similar results were also found as full-timers were better off than their part-time counterparts on some dimensions but not all. On no account, however, was any one group better on all dimensions than the other. Concerning studies on job quality in different countries, it was observed that on some dimensions, there are improvements whereas job quality has deteriorated on other dimensions.

Regarding job quality and firm size, observations are that no particular set of job quality dimensions has been used in the various studies; nonetheless, the traditional ones like earnings and benefits have featured consistently with almost all of the studies. Furthermore, findings from these studies show no perfect jobs for any group of workers. It can be inferred from these studies that jobs of better quality are ones with many good features. This concurs with Kalleberg et al.'s (2000) definition of 'good' or 'bad' jobs based on the number of characteristics. From this evidence, no cluster of jobs has been good on all dimensions, confirming Tilly (1996) and Munro's (2012) assertion that a job can have both good and bad features.

The reason for this heightened interest in job quality is because of the effect of jobs on employees especially 'bad jobs'. Jobs of lower quality have negative impacts on employees, organisations and society at large. Because work is a central feature of our lives and we spend the most of our lives working, its nature and the context in which it is done have implications for employee well-being. Many scholars agree that 'good jobs' have the tendency of improving the well-being of

employees which influences their attitudes and behaviours. There is an agreement that job quality affects every type of well-being – physical, psychological, spiritual, social and economic. Employers benefit from the exhibition of these positive attitudes and behaviours: greater job satisfaction and commitment, improved citizenship behaviours, less absenteeism, higher productivity and profitability when the well-being of employees is improved. These outcomes are known in research to improve contributions to the organisation. To the society, in-work poverty and social exclusion are reduced or eradicated when employees are in good jobs. For instance, the eradication of child poverty which is a canker in society is highly possible when parents are in good jobs that enable them to provide for their children's needs.

For all of these benefits to be reaped, a deliberate attempt by stakeholders is required. Employees, their unions, employers and governments have the responsibility of improving job quality. Since there is evidence to show that education is inversely related to insecurity, employees have the onus of developing their human capital in order to be in good jobs. Worker representatives can raise the standards and fight for the interest of members not only for higher wages but on many of the measures of job quality. Employers, who are seen as the key stakeholders are encouraged to make decisions that will improve the working conditions of employees because they reap many benefits. Providing stronger, tougher and better labour regulations and legislations is the main role of the state in improving employees' job quality. Improvements in the nature of work as well as the context in which work is done is the sure way of creating good jobs and improving bad jobs.

## **Chapter 3: Non-standard employment and job quality**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter explained the concept of job quality, key indicators and evidence of studies conducted in different countries. The aim of this chapter is to examine existing knowledge on non-standard work arrangements. In this chapter, the thesis reviews literature related to the quality of work of employees in this type of employment with specific emphasis on part-timers. It begins with an analysis of the rise in employment in non-standard employment and their job quality. Next, it narrows the review to part-time employment and job quality, highlighting the differences between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment. As argued, this group of people is a substantial minority but with challenging circumstances. It concludes the chapter by highlighting existing literature on involuntary part-timers in the New Zealand context.

### **3.2 Job Quality and definitions of Non-Standard Work Arrangements**

Non-standard work arrangements are defined as ‘employment relations other than standard, full-time jobs’ (Mitlacher, 2008, p.446), i.e. ‘that which is either not permanent or not full-time’ (McGovern et al., 2004, p.231). Non-standard work departs from the standard permanent, full-time, salaried job at a fixed workplace and includes part-time, multiple jobs, temporary and self-employment (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

For Carre et al. (2012) and Burgess et al. (2013), there are groups of workers who are frequently vulnerable and in precarious jobs. Many of these are female (Young, 2010) or ethnic minority workers, with little or no qualifications, often working part-time and in industries that are vitally important, such as health and social care. Migrants, younger and older workers, temporary contract workers and the disabled are other groups seen as vulnerable (Burgess et al., 2013; Holman, 2011).

As an example, Young's (2010) study in the USA found that precarious employment is gendered in that men were more likely than women to earn more, have benefits, enjoy union protection and less likely to work part-time. Keep and James (2011; p.214) also argue that employees in non-standard work arrangements are 'more vulnerable than permanent workers'. Because they are likely to earn less, have minimal health insurance and pension benefits and receive less training and have fewer promotion opportunities (e.g. Ferber and Waldfogel, 1998; McGovern et al., 2004). There is also the issue of lower payments for overtime or unsociable hours and a higher tendency of work intensification (Campbell and Chalmers, 2008). Vulnerable workers are at risk of working in low-quality jobs and the likelihood of them getting confined in such jobs is also high if there are no interventions from stakeholders (Holman, 2011).

Like other international studies, researchers in Australia, New Zealand, and the US recognise that there has been an upsurge in the growth of non-standard work arrangements (e.g. Burgess and Connell, 2008; Johri, 2005; Tilly, 2010; Kalleberg, 2008). For instance, it accounts for about 30% of jobs in the US (Litman and Phan, 2013) and a third (32.8 percent) of the employed in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). Kalleberg (2008) and Burgess and de Ruyter (2000) suggest that the growth in recent times is due to the growth in the service industry, growth in small and private sector employment, workforce diversity, the decline in union density and technological advancement. Further, Evans and Gibbs (2009) add intensified global competition and organisational restructuring as drivers of the rise in non-standard work. In New Zealand, social and demographic factors that have fuelled these types of jobs are the growth in labour force participation by women, growth in tertiary education by young people and the aging population who choose to transition into their retirements by shedding off some hours (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).



Although non-standard work is not synonymous with poor job quality, most of its forms are precarious especially if it is not the choice of the employee (e.g. Whatman, 2004; Kalleberg, 2008). Although there is no one accepted definition of precarious work, its multidimensionality is recognized (Standing 2011). By the ILO standards, precarious work is characterised by ‘atypical employment contracts, limited or no social benefits and statutory entitlements, high degrees of job insecurity, low job tenure, low wages and high risks of occupational injury and disease’ (Evans and Gibb, 2009, p.4). Kalleberg (2008; p.1) also argues that ‘bad jobs are usually precarious’ and often characterised by insecurity and uncertainty, providing limited benefits and statutory entitlements, dangerous and offer limited career prospects. For instance, non-wage benefits such as paid holidays, redeployment benefits and medical coverage elude employees in this type of employment (Standing, 2014). Job insecurity or unstable labour and volatile wages are another defining feature of their work condition. Also, most of these employees are in jobs that underutilize their skills because they are overqualified (Standing, 2014; McDowell, Batnitzky and Dyer, 2009).

Called the ‘precariat’, Standing (2014) notes that employees with employment agencies, casuals, part-timers (involuntary), those with flexible labour contracts and in temporary jobs are at a higher risk of being in precarious jobs. On-call and independent contractors are some other examples of precarious non-standard work (Kalleberg, 2008). Kalleberg (2008), however, cautions that precarity is not only in non-standard jobs but can also be found in standard work arrangements especially when the jobs are uncertain. Statistics New Zealand (2014) confirms this assertion by acknowledging that many employees in standard work arrangements also face insecurity especially during economic downturns or bad market conditions. Non-standard work which is precarious can create insecurity and uncertainty for workers and subsequently affect their families. Not only are employees and their families affected, but also society because precarious work creates insecurity

and uncertainties and that has the tendency of increasing the risk of poverty (Evans and Gibbs, 2009). Features of insecure jobs according to Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt (2010) are that the desire of continuity is unavailable, there is the threat of discontinuity and it is risky. Employees in insecure jobs are reported to have more negative job-related attitudes and lower levels of satisfaction, which indirectly tend to affect organisations negatively (Reisel & Probst, 2010).

On the other hand, while non-standard work arrangements are mostly linked to bad job features, Kalleberg et al. (2000) and Tucker (2002) assert that, usually, non-standard work arrangements offer benefits to both employers and employees. Employers benefit from numerical and locational flexibility (Statistics New Zealand, 2014) with most of these practices offering cost advantages to organisations. Specifically, employers get to vary the number of workers thereby reducing labour cost and by rostering employees only when needed (e.g. Campbell and Chalmers, 2008; Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Tucker, 2002). Besides, Tucker (2002) notes that small businesses especially use this form of work arrangements to survive financially.

Similarly, some employees (especially those who are in this type of employment voluntarily) tend to benefit so long as they can control their schedules and make time for other activities (e.g., schooling, taking care of children) (e.g., Kalleberg et al. 2000; Dill et al. 2012; Statistics New Zealand, 2014). To some others, it could be a stepping stone leading to a permanent job (Tucker, 2002). This means nonstandard arrangements are not bad jobs in themselves but rather dependent on whether it is voluntary or involuntary. Therefore, non-standardized jobs are not synonymous with bad jobs if the decision to take one was an employee's preferred choice.

Like the definition and measurement of job quality, categorisation of contingent/non-standard employment varies according to the type of study and the context of the study. Kalleberg et al. (2000) using the US context takes nonstandard work to be on-call work and 'day labour',

temporary-help agency employment, employment with contract companies, independent contracting, other self-employment and part-time. Burgess and de Ruyter (2000), writing on the Australian experience provide that part-time, non-employee status, casual and temporary employment arrangements, working outside of a regulated workplace, fixed term contract are categories of contingent employment. To McGovern et al. (2004) evidence from the United Kingdom show that contingent work comprises of part-time, temporary and fixed-term employment. In the New Zealand context, any work that deviates from the standard, comprising part-time, self-employment (business owners and independent contractors), multiple job holding and temporary employment (casual, fixed-term, seasonal and temporary agency work) is seen at such (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). The inclusion of the self-employed is however debatable. In spite of the different contexts, on-call, temporary work, fixed-term, casual and part-time are the commonest forms of non-standard work. Despite these differences in classifications, there appears to be a consensus that non-standard arrangements are mostly of poor quality due to their characteristics, especially if they were not the choice of the individual worker (e.g. Kalleberg et al., 2000; McGovern et al., 2004; Mitlacher, 2008).

In *Bad Jobs in America*, Kalleberg et al. (2000) examined the relationship between the type of employment and exposure to ‘bad’ job characteristics. They conceptualise bad jobs as ones with low pay, without access to health insurance and pension benefits and the number of bad characteristics determining the ‘badness’ of the job. Using data from the *1995 Current Population Survey* on the relationship between work arrangements and bad job features, Kalleberg et al. (2000) found a positive correlation between nonstandard work arrangements and bad job quality – ‘every type of nonstandard employment is associated with more bad job characteristics than is standard full-time employment’ (p.267). They, however, note that not all employees classified under non-

standard work such as self-employment and contract company employment had bad jobs on all dimensions.

A similar study in 2004 was conducted in Britain by McGovern et al. (2004). Though not an exact replication because of differences in the job characteristics, the hypothesis was no different. Due to variations in context, McGovern et al. (2004) present level of income, continuity of income while sick or in retirement and promotional opportunities (i.e. prospect of income through promotion) as job quality dimensions. This is because Britain has a welfare system where there is the public provision of health care (The National Health Service). Consequently, employer provision of health insurance is less relevant to most employees. Another variation on the job dimensions is promotional opportunities which were missing in Kalleberg et al.'s (2000) work. McGovern et al. (2004) used a national survey, *Working in Britain (2000)*, comprising the employed and self-employed, totalling 2132. McGovern et al.'s (2004) finding was consistent with Kalleberg et al.'s (2000) research, that 'nonstandard jobs increase workers' exposure to bad characteristics net of controls for personal, occupational and some employer characteristics' (McGovern et al. 2004, p.243).

### **3.3 General overview of part-time employment**

The rise in part-time work is an undisputed fact (e.g. Glauber, 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2016; Statistics New Zealand, 2014). Part-time work, defined as working below a certain number of hours per week, is sometimes promoted by some governments as a strategy to attract groups of workers with low labour market participation (OECD, 2010). For employers, it offers some form of flexibility in meeting their staffing requirements whereas some employees use this form of work arrangement to enable them to combine with other activities (school, caring responsibility).

Despite this growth and benefits, it is well established from a variety of studies that employees in contingent part-time employment are exposed to many bad job characteristics (e.g. lower pay rates, higher job insecurity, poor career prospects, higher risk of in-work poverty) than many employees in standard work arrangements (e.g. Kalleberg et al, 2000; McGovern et al., 2004; OECD, 2010; Kauhanen and Natti, 2014; Glauber, 2013).

According to Statistics New Zealand (2014), the workforce statistics as at December 2012 was made up of 14.2% part-timers and 59.4% full-timers. Further, many of these workers in part-time employments have difficulties ‘in terms of the security and adequacy of employment; they are a population of considerable interest for researchers and policy makers’ (p.11). The ISSP surveys for 1997, 2005 and 2015 used for the quantitative section which focused on the perceptions of New Zealand employees (excluding the self-employed), had a majority of full-timers (76.5%, 79.1%, and 79.0%) respectively. However, a considerable portion of part-timers also responded (23.5%, 20.9%, and 21.0%) although in the minority. This aroused my interest to focus on this significant minority group with a particular situation. While there have been many studies on the unemployed, research on this group is not comparable although this group of workers has many similarities with the unemployed (Statistics, New Zealand, 2016). For instance, both the unemployed and involuntary part-timers lack hours but the only difference is that the unemployed have no hours while the involuntary part-timers lack sufficient hours. However, the under-employed are less likely to receive unemployment benefit than the unemployed. In this thesis, a distinction between these employment types and the nature of part-time workers’ job quality is provided.

In particular, in the qualitative fieldwork, the study focuses on involuntary part-timers who are categorised to have some worse form of precarious jobs (e.g. Carre et al., 2012; Kalleberg, 2008; Burgess et al., 2013). The qualitative section is not only concerned about the working conditions

of these workers, but their experiences, challenges and more importantly transitional strategies used by them to full-time jobs.

### **3.4 Part-time employment and job quality**

Of all the nonstandard forms of employment, part-time work is the most prevalent in New Zealand (Drwyer and Ryan, 2008; Carroll, 1999). Consistent with the international literature, part-time work has the largest percentage among the types of non-standard employment in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Tucker, 2002). Part-time work like any form of non-standard work usually offers flexibility to employers while at the same time used by some governments as a tool for combating unemployment (Eurofound, 2003). The use of part-time employment as argued by Campbell and Chalmers (2008) provides cost-saving advantages to employers. For instance, employers can schedule employees only when required, i.e. during peak seasons. The qualitative section of this research focuses on part-time employment which by definition is people employed who work less than a certain number of hours per week (Burgess and Connell, 2005). The number of hours defining part-time work varies nationally due to the context (e.g. Fagan et al. 2014, Kalleberg, 2000). It is normally less than 35 hours in countries such as Australia, the USA, Japan, and Austria. For New Zealand, the UK, Canada and Spain, it is normally less than 30 hours. Thus, employees who work less than 30 hours a week in New Zealand are classified as part-timers (Dwyer and Ryan, 2008; OECD, 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

Demographically, part-time work is mainly dominated by women (especially mothers between 25-45 year old and or with younger children), older (65+) and younger people (15-24 year-olds) because it affords them the opportunity to concentrate on other aspects of their lives such as family commitments and schooling obligations (e.g. Carroll, 1999; Fagan et al. 2014; Kalleberg, 2000;

OECD, 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Eurofound, 2001). This assertion was confirmed by Dwyer and Ryan (2008) in a report to National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, where they indicated that there is a relatively high proportion of women in part-time work in New Zealand as is elsewhere.

Unfortunately, part-time work has been associated with poorer work quality than full-time work (e.g. Fagan et al. 2014) in Europe. This is because their pay rates are lower and tend to have fewer opportunities for training and career advancement. Their jobs tend to be more insecure, have a higher risk of poverty due to the fewer hours worked and lower rates of pay (e.g. Dwyer and Ryan, 2008; OECD, 2010) and they get fewer benefits (Glauber, 2013). Fagan et al. (2014) also provide European evidence to show that although there are country differences, on average, part-timers usually have less job security and less likely to get unemployment insurance in case of job loss. Part-timers also tend to have less training, reduced career prospects and earn lower average hourly pay due to lower rates of union membership. The OECD (2014, p. 120) comparing workers across socio-economic groups notes that part-time work 'is associated with weaker outcomes in terms of earnings and labour market security, but a lower risk of job strain'. However, part-timers also benefit from reduced stress due to the reduced hours of work. For instance, a study by Le Levre et al., (2015) using two representative national surveys in 2005 and 2009 found that part-timers were less likely than full-timers to report greater stress (work intensity) at work.

Despite the assertion that part-time employment is of poorer quality, Fagan et al. (2014) argue that its quality varies among organisations and countries. Part-time employment can be used as either a marginalisation or integration strategy. The former leads to the creation of poorer jobs while the latter which can be a means of recruiting and retaining employees create better jobs. Fagan et al. (2014; p. vi) suggest that:

‘the amount and quality of jobs available depend largely upon the way employers’ use part-time working in their personnel and working-time policies, within the context of national policy frameworks. Where part-time employment is marginalized as a secondary form of employment, penalties are incurred in the form of lower hourly pay rates and inferior social protection or opportunities for progression over a working life. Conversely, it can be considered as integrated alongside full-time employment when the difference is simply that of reduced hours of work. It is this latter scenario of integration that usually offers the greater prospect of opportunities for good quality part-time work’.

Due to the implementation of equal treatment and regulatory mechanisms, employment quality of part-time employees in some countries is high. For instance, as at 2011, the Netherlands (37.2%) had the highest incidence of part-time employment although it was mainly feminized (Fagan et al, 2014). Fagan et al. (2014) further explain that the quality of part-time employment is better than the UK due to its regulations. This was because the Netherlands had implemented the equal treatment principle and given employees the right to request for part-time work to suit their needs. For instance, the risk of poverty experienced by involuntary part-timers varies by the context. Horemans et al.’s (2016) findings using the *European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* showed that in-work poverty rate did not differ between full-time and part-time workers for countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the Czech Republic although it did for Southern and Eastern European countries. Gash (2008) confirms earlier research that part-time jobs are not always of inferior job quality but rather dependent on the context.

In a similar vein, a study by the OECD (2013), drawing on data from the *EU-SILC (2007)*, the *European Structure of Earnings Surveys*, *European Working Conditions Survey (2005)* and the *International Social Survey Programme* to assess the quality of part-time employment found that in comparison with full-timers, the quality of part-timers’ work was poor in many but not all dimensions. Doing part-time work came with both penalties and premiums, but the former was greater. Employees in part-time jobs were worse off than full-timers with respect to hourly wages, promotion prospects, participation in training, job security and union membership. On the other



hand, workers in part-time jobs were better off in the control over working time and stress levels, leading to better health outcomes.

In the case of Ireland, O'Connell and Russell (2007) relied on data from the *2003 Changing Workplace Survey (CWS)* and *European Union surveys* such as the *International Social Survey Project (ISSP)*, *Eurobarometer* and *European Working Conditions Surveys*. The study compared employees in part-time and full-time jobs along four job quality features including autonomy, security, and work pressure and satisfaction levels. O'Connell and Russell (2007) found that part-time workers who worked less than 30 hours a week experienced lower levels of autonomy, but also enjoyed lower levels of work pressure and were more highly satisfied than employees in full-time jobs. Job insecurity was, however, higher for part-time workers than full-time employees. They note, however, that the part-time employees surveyed were mostly employed voluntarily, and this may explain why part-timers in Ireland are not worse off on all four job quality features.

In another study, McDonald et al. (2009) investigated full-timers' comprehension of and opinions about part-time job quality in Australia using job content, career prospects, work intensity, management-employee relations, co-worker relations and autonomy, control and independence. Data were retrieved from 40 respondents from an Australian governmental agency. McDonald et al. (2009) found evidence of differences in the job content of part-time and full-time employees with the former getting reduced responsibilities and having to deal with mainly routine and standardized work. Full-timers in the sample assumed that irrespective of skills, qualifications and previous experiences, part-time employees often have challenges with advancing in their careers. Due to the nature of work at the Agency, full-timers explained that part-time employees are also at a disadvantage in relation to work intensity and workplace support from both superiors and co-workers as they must struggle to do the same tasks within the few hours or days as their full-time

counterparts. This happens because management believes the tasks must be done irrespective of the hours or days the part-time employee is at work.

### **3.4.1 Voluntary and involuntary part-time employment**

It is widely recognised that working part-time voluntarily or involuntarily are two entirely different issues. Part-time employment can be distinguished based on whether the reason to work part-time is non-economic such as schooling, taking care of children or elders or because a person could not find a full-time job (economic) (e.g. Horemans et al., 2016; Glauber, 2013). That is, the reason for engaging in part-time work separates the two and determines whether it is a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ job. Loughlin and Murray (2013) emphasize this point by arguing that job status incongruence may determine the quality of an employee’s job. Tilly (1997) segregates good and bad part-time jobs on the basis of whether it was voluntary or involuntary. Being in part-time employment due to the inability to find a full-time job is referred to as involuntary part-time. Doing a part-time job voluntarily or for noneconomic reasons could be a personal preference due to family-related responsibilities, attending school, illness or disability or when transitioning to retirement (e.g. UNECE, 2010; Valletta and Bengali, 2013).

Voluntary part-time work is not seen to be of poor quality because it is what the worker wants and there is no working hours mismatch. For such employees, being in full-time work may affect their job quality negatively. As an example, O’Connell and Russell’s (2007) study of job quality of part-timers with Irish data found that part-time (mainly voluntary) employees were generally satisfied like full-time timers. Similar evidence provided by Siebern-Thomas (2005) using data from the *European Community Household Panel (1994-2001)* on EU15 shows a higher satisfaction for voluntary part-timers. Findings from the study showed that voluntary part-timers tended to have higher satisfaction with their working hours, working times, work content and working conditions

because it afforded them the opportunity to make time for other commitments. Their involuntary part-time counterparts, on the other hand, expressed strong dissatisfaction regarding working hours, job security, earnings and work content. Further, Loughlin and Murray (2013) explain how this work status mismatch may impact negatively on employees' well-being. For instance, being deprived financially due to lack of hours can affect a person's well-being generally.

Conversely, involuntary part-time work is seen to be bad because as Tilly (1996, p.2) posits, 'it is only half the job the employee wants'. Although part-time jobs are not inherently bad, involuntary part-time employment is bad because workers in these jobs earn lower than full-time employees. Involuntary part-timers, also called the underemployed are both available and desire to increase the number of hours they work but are unable to increase their working hours, implying a partial shortage of work, and therefore, having many similarities with the unemployed (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). Infact, Statistics New Zealand (2018) categorises the underemployed, unemployed and potential labour force as underutilized labour. Compared with full-timers, involuntary part-timers tend to accrue less human capital, have diminished economic capital (financial well-being) that reduces their consumer demand and subsequently affects a nation's economy (Young and Mattingly, 2016). Horemans et al. (2016) further reiterate that involuntary part-time workers are more likely to be poorer (in-work poverty) than full-timers due to the limited earnings and entitlements (e.g. unemployment benefits, sickness leave). Horemans et al.'s (2016) study comparing involuntary part-timers, voluntary part-timers, full-timers and the unemployed using the *European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* found that involuntary part-timers experienced lower living standards. There was also no statistically significant difference between involuntary part-timers and the unemployed in relation to in-work poverty for many European countries. Such workers as emphasized by Veliziotis et al. (2015), Campbell and Chalmers (2008)

and Glauber (2013) are under-employed and a form of ‘under-utilized labour’. In the words of Valletta and Van Der List (2015), involuntary part-timers represent ‘idle labour resources’ and as such imply that these resources are not working at full capacity (Lariau, 2016). The reason being that these employees were searching for full-time jobs or longer hours, but could find only part-time jobs (Tilly, 1996; UNECE, 2010; Eurofound, 2001).

Another strand of literature distinguishes involuntary part-time on the basis of business slack or inability finding a full-time job (Cajner et al., 2014; Veliziotis et al., 2015; Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016; Valletta and Bengali, 2016). For instance, Lariau’s (2016) study using data from the *Bureau of Labour Statistics* found evidence showing that in periods of uncertain economic conditions, employers used involuntary part-time employment as an alternative to reducing hours without necessarily reducing the number of employees. This offered flexibility to employers and also reduced cost associated with making employees redundant. Instead of firing employees, so they lose their total employment during business slacks, employers can reduce the number of hours. For instance, Kauhanen (2008), Valletta and Bengali (2013), Borowczyk-Martins and Lale (2016), Lariau (2016) and Young and Mattingly (2016) argue that part-time work for economic reasons rises in periods of recessions and falls during recoveries. In agreement, Curtarelli et al. (2014) provide evidence from the European context showing the rise in involuntary part-time employments during the global financial crises (2007 - 2011) because employers reduced cost by cutting hours of employees.

To Borowczyk-Martins and Lale (2016), involuntary part-time work and unemployment are closely related because they both present a limit on employees expected labour supply although the former is better than the latter. Despite this circumstance, Siebern-Thomas (2005) argues that there is evidence to show that involuntary part-timers transition easily into full-time work thus,

increasing their satisfaction. This is because involuntary part-time work is an alternative mode of re-entry into a full-time job and somehow better than being unemployed. Considering the above, Campbell and Chalmers (2008) provide evidence suggesting some remedies. These include, but are not limited to, combining with other jobs in the same sector and communicating to management one's availability. In addition, Kauhanen's (2008) study of part-timers in Finland found that involuntary part-timers were more likely to search for new jobs in order to increase their hours. Due to their desire to increase hours, the evidence showed that turnover was higher for this group than full-timers.

Due to the above conditions, involuntary part-time becomes 'bad' because the hours of work determine how much compensation one receives (Jackson and Kumar, 1998) and leads to income instability (Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016). As an example, in the USA, in a national survey of US households (*Current Population Survey*), Glauber (2013) found a strong association between involuntary part-time work and economic vulnerability because employees in such employment tend to have less money and fewer benefits. In the UK and Greece, Veliziotis et al. (2015) using the 2008 and 2013 *National Quarterly Labour Force Surveys* point that there are significant gaps in pay and job quality between voluntary and involuntary part-timers.

Also, using data from the *Finnish 2008 Quality of Work Life Surveys* from the years 1990, 2003 and 2008, Kauhanen and Natti (2014) studied the impact of job contract types on employees' perceived job quality. The study found that involuntary part-time employees in comparison to voluntary part-time and regular full-time employees' experiences were almost without exception, 'weaker with respect to core job quality indicators such as training possibilities, participation in employer-funded training, career possibilities, possibilities to learn and grow at work, job

insecurity and job autonomy’ (Kauhanen and Natti, 2014; p.784). From the above, it can be observed that involuntary part-timers are more vulnerable.

Eurofound (2007) and Fagan et al. (2014) advance this debate on the working conditions of part-timers by commenting that, on average, they experience lower income levels, poorer workplace relations, poorer career prospects and work content. Similarly, Levanoni and Sales’ (1990; p.235) study on the differences in job attitudes between full-timers and part-timers among Canadian employees found that part-timers were more likely to report greater satisfaction with supervisory relations and the ‘amount of social interaction on the job’ than full-timers. On the other hand, they also tended to have lower job security and lower income than their full-time counterparts. Part-timers had a higher likelihood of saying their skills were underutilised. This problem was directly linked to the nature of jobs reserved for part-time positions. Eurofound (2007) argues that part-time jobs usually do not involve many problem-solving activities, they are simpler and more monotonous. This notwithstanding, Eurofound (2007) explicitly states that part-time workers experience lower level of stress and better health outcomes. The level of stress experienced is linked to the shorter hours worked. Overall, from the above, there is some evidence to show that part-time jobs are also associated with some positives.

Involuntary part-time work is commonly found among particular socio-economic groups. Women, less educated, the youth and older workers (Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016; Kauhanen, 2008). Recently, Young and Mattingly’s (2016) study in the USA, drawing on data from *1971 to 2014 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement* confirmed previous work. They found that involuntary part-time work was more prevalent among employees with lower qualification (more for those with less than high school diploma and less than a bachelor’s degree).

Likewise, employees in low-skill jobs had a higher probability of being underemployed than their middle-skill and high-skill counterparts. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

H6 (a): Part-timers perceive lower job security than full-timers

H6 (b): Part-timers perceive lower income than full-timers

H6 (c): Part-timers perceive fewer opportunities for advancement than full-timers

H6 (d): Full-timers perceive better job content than part-timers ((i) interesting jobs, (ii) independent work, (iii) can help other people and (iv) usefulness to society)

H6 (e): Full-timers perceive more positive relationships (superiors and colleagues) than part-timers

H6 (f): Full-timers perceive higher level of work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work) than part-timers

### **3.4.2 The case of New Zealand**

Like the growth of part-time employment, involuntary part-time has also been growing in many economies (e.g. Kalleberg, 2000; Bhula-or and Yukio, 2014; Kauhanen and Natti, 2014). Both voluntary and involuntary part-time jobs are on the increase in New Zealand (Tucker, 2002). In the OECD, New Zealand has one of the highest percentages of involuntary part-timers although unemployment is low (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). As at 2011, New Zealand with Australia, Germany, and the Netherlands had a high incidence of part-time employment (Fagan et al. 2014). Although full-time employment has been rising over the years, a similar trend was recorded for part-time employment although not as rapid as the former. However, during the recovery following the recession, full-time employment was low although growth in part-time employment was relatively high. Besides, a significant proportion of employees (554,000) are in part-time employment compared with the majority of 2,062,000 in full-time employment as at the first quarter in 2018 (Tradingeconomics.com/Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

Although voluntary part-time does not call for any concern, involuntary does because it is a constraint and not the preference of the individual. Data in New Zealand also show that involuntary part-time work is on the increase (Tucker, 2002). Specifically, there has been a rapid growth in part-time jobs in the services sector, especially in the retail, banking and hospitality industries. Furthermore, evidence shows that female-dominated occupations have the largest numbers of part-time employment (Dwyer and Ryan, 2008). Besides, it is recognised that the concentration of part-time work in particular sectors varies by country. Fagan et al. (2014) report that depending on the country, part-time jobs are more likely to be in low-skilled jobs, lower occupational levels, routine service and intermediate clerical positions than in senior grades and management levels.

As with non-standard employment, women and those with low education are more likely than men and the highly educated to be found in involuntary part-time work (Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016; Kauhanen, 2008). However, in New Zealand, Dwyer and Ryan (2008) indicate that there is not much data on sectors dominated by part-time jobs, but the country is likely to follow the pattern in Australia. Australian data shows that part-time employment is common in retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants, education, health and community services, culture and recreation, and personal and other services.

Four main reasons why employees in New Zealand worked part-time in order of importance were – for caring responsibilities, education, preferring part-time work and the inability to find full-time jobs (Dwyer and Ryan, 2008). Involuntary part-time employment describes the last reason for being in that type of employment. In New Zealand, an increasing trend can be observed for the incidence of involuntary part-time workers although there was a decrease in 2005. New Zealand has a total population of 4.8 million people and a labour force participation rate (2017) of 70.8% (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). Although most part-time is for noneconomic reasons, a small



fraction (4.4% for the year ended December 2017) which is involuntary represents under-utilisation of human resources.

On a positive note, empirical evidence exists to show that on average involuntary part-timers can easily transition into full-time employment than the unemployed (Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016) hence the aim of this study is to provide strategies that can aid in the transitioning because it is sometimes seen as a stepping stone into full-time employment (Cajner et al, 2014).

In sum, non-standard work arrangements, part-time work, and involuntary part-time work are on the rise. These work arrangements have benefits to both the employee and the employer especially if it is the preference of the employee. If the employee's inability to find full-time jobs makes him/her accept any job, then it has repercussions. Most but not all non-standard work arrangements and specifically part-time employees' job quality is inferior compared to full-time employees. Employees in involuntary part-time are dissatisfied especially due to the drop in income levels and benefits. These studies also revealed that the indicators for determining job quality varied from country to country. From the review, it is well established that there are differences in the job quality of part-time employees and full-time employees and specifically between voluntary and involuntary part-timers. This thesis, therefore, explores the strategies for improving the quality of work of involuntary part-timers in the New Zealand context. It is hoped that findings from the research will illuminate the challenges, and the opportunities, that are experienced by employees in part-time employment.

## **Chapter 4: Research design and methods**

### **4.1 Introduction to the research design and methods**

This chapter presents the research methods used in answering the research questions on the perceptions of employees' job quality and strategies for dealing with jobs with inferior quality. Most research on job quality seems to be either quantitative or qualitative. However, this thesis demonstrates how both approaches (mixed methods) can be used to complement the other in examining relevant linkages.

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach to understanding employees' perceptions of their job quality and strategies for interventions. This chapter starts by discussing the research paradigm, research design and data analysis of the quantitative techniques. Next, the qualitative techniques used in explaining the emotional and financial challenges experienced by involuntary part-timers and strategies used in transitioning into better jobs are provided. Each of these is discussed in turn.

### **4.2 Research paradigm**

For Tracy (2013, p.38), researchers have different glasses, and it pays to 'understand how different people, wearing different glasses, see the world in such different ways'. She referred to these glasses as paradigms which are 'preferred ways of understanding reality, building knowledge, and gathering information about the world'. Creswell (2009, p. 6) uses worldview to mean the same thing and describes it as 'a basic set of beliefs that guide action'. The type of belief held by researchers determines the strategies of inquiry (qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods) used (Creswell, 2009), and how results should be interpreted (Bryman and Bell, 2003) as well as the methodological practices to use (Tracy, 2013).

Creswell (2009) provides four different worldviews, comprising the postpositivist (positivist), constructivism (interpretivism), advocacy/participatory and pragmatism. To Bryman and Bell (2003), these paradigms are inconsistent with each other due to their different assumptions and methods. Researchers using quantitative methods subscribe to the postpositivist view where the assumption is that reality already exists ‘out there’ in the world and it is waiting to be discovered (Tracy, 2013).

Qualitative researchers are aligned to constructivist or interpretivist philosophies because they assume that people develop subjective meanings of their experiences. This thesis espouses the pragmatic view where the research question is emphasised, and all available approaches to understanding the problem are used. As noted by Creswell (2009, p. 10), the pragmatic view is a philosophy underpinning mixed-methods research. Hence, it is ‘not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality but rather draws liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions’ (Creswell 2009, p. 10). With a focus on the research questions, the pragmatic worldview gives researchers the freedom of choice to use multiple methods, different paradigms, different assumptions and various forms of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). The justification for this decision is based on the nature of the research questions and hypotheses proposed.

Overall, the pragmatic worldview allowed the examination of employees’ perceptions of their job quality and enabled the collection of data on how employees in involuntary part-time employment have transitioned and can transitioned out of poor job quality. The thesis follows the deductive theory approach for the quantitative analysis by going through the process of reviewing the literature on job quality theory, formulating hypotheses, using secondary analysis, analysing findings, making me confirm and reject some hypotheses before reviewing the theory again. This

process fits into the description of deduction theory because, as suggested by Bryman (2008), it explains the relationship between theory and research. The inductive theory approach was applied to the qualitative part.

#### **4.3 Quantitative, qualitative research and mixed-methods**

Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin (2012; p. 66) define research design as ‘a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information’. To Creswell (2006; p.58) ‘procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data’ describes a research design. With the research objectives in mind, the research design determines the most appropriate sources of information, the design technique, and the sampling methodology. Three types of research designs were advanced by Creswell (2009) namely quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods. This thesis applied the mixed methods approach because it incorporates elements of both quantitative and qualitative approaches as necessitated by the nature of the proposed hypotheses and research questions. The mixed-methods approach, as Creswell (2009; p. 4) explains, has an advantage because ‘it involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research.’

This outcome is possible because both qualitative and quantitative approaches have drawbacks, so a blend of the two will help to counteract the biases of the other. For instance, while the quantitative is critiqued for lack of depth, the qualitative allows for in-depth exploration of peoples’ views. The quantitative provides a numeric description of responses from the sample, allowing generalisations and the qualitative relies on text with no intention of generalising results. For instance, researchers using qualitative approaches are criticised for the difficulty of replication due to the unstructured nature. This method is also critiqued for being subjective, coupled with the inability to generalise

because of the limited number of respondents. On the other hand, quantitative research has also been criticised for the use of artificial measurement processes (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

Specifically, this study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design involving two phases; the quantitative followed by the qualitative (Creswell, 2014). Regarding this, secondary data from a national survey (Work Orientation module of ISSP) was quantitatively analysed in the first phase, and then an aspect of the result was used to plan the qualitative process. Based on the quantitative analysis, involuntary part-timers were purposively selected for the qualitative data and analysis. The aim was to follow up the quantitative with a qualitative process to explain in more detail the plight of this group of workers. In the quantitative analysis, various socio-economic groups' job quality was analysed; hence the qualitative analysis provided an in-depth understanding of the quality of work of involuntary part-timers' working conditions, emotional and financial challenges and the personalized and collective strategies used in transitioning out of their involuntary situation.

The quantitative section was analysed and discussed first before the qualitative built on the quantitative. The decision to use a mixed-methods approach was based on the nature of the research questions posed at the beginning of the thesis. So, while the quantitative approach provided a snapshot view on employees' perceptions of their job values and job quality, an in-depth examination of the work experiences of involuntary part-timers is presented by the qualitative. The quantitative analysis laid the foundation by describing the nature of job quality and the differences among various groups but provided no explanations on how to improve an employee's job quality. However, the qualitative provided an in-depth exploration of one group of workers, thereby extending the quantitative studies and explaining why a group of workers is dissatisfied. Improvements in employees' job quality can best be known by conducting interviews in a bid to

know how a vulnerable group of workers may be helped. The quantitative section explains what good or bad jobs are but not ‘how’ to remedy the situation, which the qualitative does.

Most researchers, however, choose either the quantitative (e.g., Kalleberg and Vaisey, 2005, Gallie et al., 2012; Erlinghagen, 2007) or the qualitative (e.g., McDonald et al., 2009; Jones et al., 2017) but a few others like Campbell and Chalmers (2008) have used the mixed-method approach. For instance, in their study of part-timers’ job quality in the retail industry in Australia, both a quantitative survey and a qualitative semi-structured interview with managers and subordinates were utilised. Using this approach ensured that the employer rationale and employee ramifications of this type of employment were unearthed. By using the mixed-method, this thesis complements earlier studies.

#### **4.4 Research strategies**

Research strategies which determine the mode of collecting data can be grouped under these main categories in the social sciences: a case study, survey, experiment, ethnographies, quasi-experiments, history and archival analysis (Yin, 2003). The study used the survey for the quantitative analysis, which Babbie (2011, p. 270) suggests is an important tool for ‘measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population.’ Surveys used were aimed at describing the perceptions of the population on their job quality. Creswell (2014) further notes that surveys can be either cross-sectional or longitudinal. While the former solicits information on attitudes, opinions, and practices at one point in time, the latter collects data over time.

This study utilises a database, which employed a cross-sectional survey in collecting data on employees’ attitudes toward work. This design was used because it helped describe trends in New Zealand employees’ perceptions of their job values and job outcomes using multiple surveys

(waves) over time. As already mentioned, using the mixed-method approach suggests that data collection has to be from two different sources so while the quantitative part used the survey, the qualitative utilised a series of interviews. Utilizing the survey design enabled the presentation numeric descriptions of the trends and perceptions of New Zealand employees using a sample of the population. As argued by Creswell (2014), findings from the sample provide a basis for making inferences to the population, which was the goal of this thesis.

Qualitative methods are more suitable for providing ‘illumination and understanding of complex psychosocial issues and are most useful for answering humanistic ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions’ (Marshall, 1996; p. 522). The quantitative part emphasises the perceptions of employees’ quality of work and this type of question fits the description by Yin (2003) as the ‘what and who’. As the study sought answers to employees’ perceptions of their job quality and examine the groups of workers who experience better job quality, the survey design became more appropriate. As the study focused on ‘why’ employees in involuntary part-time jobs are emotionally and financially challenged and how they intend to transition into jobs of good quality, a qualitative method became more appropriate.

#### **4.5 Quantitative research design, data collection, and participants**

For Bryman and Bell (2003; p. 67), quantitative research is described as one ‘entailing the collection of numerical data and as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach and as having an objectivist conception of social reality’. Furthermore, quantitative approaches to research aim to ‘test pre-determined hypotheses, establish causality, and produce generalizable results by answering the ‘what’ questions’ (Marshall, 1996; Bryman, 2005). This explanation of quantitative methods

readily fits with Bryman and Bell's (2003) view that quantitative researchers are mainly preoccupied with measurement, causality, generalisation, and replication. Based on the above criteria, this thesis examined the perceptions of New Zealand employees' job quality.

The research commenced with a quantitative part where a secondary analysis of an existing dataset gathered by another institution, the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP:<http://www.issp.org>). Babbie (2011, p.306) describes secondary analysis as 'a form of research in which the data collected and processed by one researcher are reanalysed - often for a different purpose - by another. This is especially appropriate in the case of survey data'. The ISSP gathers data using surveys from independent national institutions from almost all OECD countries yearly, focusing on a different topic each year. It is a credible dataset used by many researchers due to its large membership. Membership has been on the increase as 26 member countries participated in computing data for 1997, 32 member countries for the 2005 survey and 37 countries in the 2015 survey (ISSP:<http://www.issp.org>). Of particular interest to this thesis is the 'Work Orientations' module of 1997, 2005 and 2015 in which employees provided information on a range of job values and characteristics. Since many aspects of a job matter in defining job quality, and the data from ISSP (1997, 2005 and 2015) asks questions about the desirability of specific job attributes, it became ideal for examining the quality of work of New Zealand workers.

Since there are eight years between the first two surveys and ten years between the last two, this thesis can identify any significant changes that have occurred. ISSP uses the subjective approach in analysing employees' job quality by asking employees what types of job attributes they consider important in describing a 'good' or a 'bad' job (i.e., it asks workers how much importance they attach to certain job attributes) and also provides data on employees' experiences on many job outcomes. This follows the pattern of the subjective view where employees' job values are first



analysed before their job outcomes. Employee satisfaction is therefore influenced by the extent of mismatch between preferences and experiences. The datasets also contain rich and useful background information on respondents. Using the secondary analysis presented a drawback on the appropriateness of how some questions were asked. A challenge was that some questions are open to wide interpretation, an apparent limitation identified by Babbie (2011). As an example, the question of flexibility could be interpreted differently because it was quite broad. Flexibility could be related to starting or finishing times or deciding the days of work. Another example was on the nature of the question posed for high income. A preference would be to have a question that asks respondents about the fairness of their income instead of them being asked about the ‘highness’ of their income. This is because the issue of income has to do with equity in the distribution of rewards. Siegrist (1996) posits that an imbalance between efforts (demands) and rewards (money) violates the social exchange process, leading to strain reactions. A balance between efforts and reward has an impact on employees’ job quality (Coats and Lekhi, 2008). Hence inequity in the distribution of compensation can influence job quality negatively. As inequity in the distribution of income can negatively affect job quality, the study suggests that we need a question on employees’ reaction to the issue of equity. That is, the better option would be asking a question that will allow employees to compare their inputs (e.g. time, effort, skills, experience etc.) to their outcomes (e.g. pay, benefits, job security, appreciation etc.). This way, we are better able to understand the perceptions of equity or inequity in their income.

#### **4.6 Description of participants**

The analysis incorporated only employed full and part-time workers (working below 30 hours) within the age range of 16-65 (excluding the self-employed and the unemployed) who were either male or female. Concerning the level of education and employment status, the study re-coded and

constructed four categories comprising primary, secondary, vocational and degree (bachelors and postgraduates) and two categories of full-time and part-time. The table below summarises the respondent characteristics of all three samples.

*Table: 4.1*

*Sample characteristics*

<b>Sample characteristics</b>	<b>1997 n=316</b>	<b>2005 n=875</b>	<b>2015 n=386</b>
Male (%)	46.2	46.2	50.7
Female (%)	53.8	53.8	49.3
Full-time (%)	76.5	79.1	79.0
Part-time (%)	23.5	20.9	21.0
Primary or less education (%)	20.0	20.7	11.8
Secondary education (%)	31.7	30.5	25.8
Vocational education (%)	33.4	27.3	24.7
Degree holders (both bachelors and postgraduate) (%)	14.9	21.5	37.7

Data on employees' job values and job outcomes were elicited from 316, 875 and 386 respondents for the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys respectively. This rich non-panel longitudinal data-set includes many pecuniary and non-pecuniary job values and job quality indicators. Since the ISSP dataset is a cross-sectional survey, causality could not be demonstrated (Gallie et al., 2017). Data-sets from ISSP are representative of the population because the sample is selected from the New Zealand Electoral Rolls using systematic random sampling for the 1997 survey and a random sampling for the 2005 and 2015 surveys. In using the data-sets from 1997, 2005 and 2015, the study tracked the changes in job values and job outcomes of New Zealanders over these periods. Assessing trends in overall job quality enabled the analyses of whether specific job quality indicators were improving or deteriorating.

It was mainly a postal survey for the three waves. However, in 2015, an online survey was also used. The response rate for the 2005 and 2015 surveys were 59% (n=1309) and 36% (n=901) respectively (COMPASS, 2017). No rate was provided for the 1997 survey. These datasets were weighted using the Census data to ensure representation of the entire population (COMPASS, 2017). Surveys on the Work Orientations modules for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were weighted using the New Zealand Censuses of Population and Dwellings of 2013, 2006 and 1996. According to COMPASS (2017), due to differences in coding and the lack of a question on ethnicity in the 1997 survey, there were restrictions on the number of variables that could be weighted. However, these 4 variables were used for the weighting:

- Gender
- Age group: 18-24, 25-44, 45-64, 65+
- Ethnic groups (2005 only, prioritised in this order): Maori, Pacific, Asian, Other, European
- Education levels: No qualification, secondary qualification, post-school non-university, university degree

Employees were given the opportunity to attach various degrees of importance to eight job values.

These values included:

- job security
- high income
- good opportunities for advancement
- an interesting job
- a job that allows someone to work independently
- a job that allows someone to help other people
- a job that is useful to society
- a job that allows someone to decide their times or days of work

Responses to these job values were obtained on a five-point Likert-type scales, from 1= very important to 5= not important at all. We should be mindful that with the ISSP scale, the lower the number, the more important the indicator is to employees concerning its value. Since three periods of datasets were used, I had to synchronise all the job values and use only job values that were

common to all three to ensure uniformity. In the three surveys, eight variables were common with two extra items concerned with skill utilisation and having personal contact with others in 2015. Quality of employment was grouped into four main dimensions; intrinsic, extrinsic, work intensity and interpersonal relations components. Responses to these job outcomes were obtained on a five-point Likert-type scales, from 1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree. These response options apply to the extrinsic and intrinsic job outcomes. The response categories for interpersonal relations with superiors and colleagues are 1= very good, 2= quite good, 3= neither good nor bad, 4 =quite bad and 5 = very bad. For work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work), the lower the number, the worse the perception of outcomes. The response categories were also obtained on a five-point Likert-type scale and read as 1= always, 2= often, 3= sometimes, 4= hardly ever and 5 = never. Although not an exhaustive list of all features, these indicators are well established in the literature as key features of job quality (e.g., Clark, 2005b; Handel, 2005). Regarding work intensity, to ensure consistency in the variables across the years, only two variables were selected since they were common to all three datasets. Employees were given the opportunity to rate how strongly they perceived these experiences at work. Specifically, these job outcomes comprised:

**Extrinsic job outcomes:**

- Job security                      ‘my job is secure’
- Income                            ‘my income is high’
- Career prospects                ‘my career prospects are high’

**Intrinsic job outcomes:**

- **Job content**                    ‘my job is interesting’  
                                          ‘I can work independently’  
                                          ‘in my job I can help other people’  
                                          ‘my job is useful to society’

- **Work intensity**                      ‘do you have to do hard physical work?’  
                                                 ‘do you find your work stressful?’
- **Interpersonal relations**           ‘how would you describe relations at your workplace:  
                                                 between management and employees and between  
                                                 workmates’
- **Job satisfaction**                    ‘how satisfied are you in your main job’? (A single  
                                                 question was used to measure job satisfaction of employees)

#### **4.7 Data analysis**

As argued by Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005), job quality can be conceptualized and measured using two approaches. The first approach analyses the quality of jobs along a variety of specific dimensions and then combines them into an overall measure of job quality. This is based on the notion that jobs are multidimensional. The advantage with this approach is that researchers get to know specific facets of the job that employees are happy about and those that they are dissatisfied with, thereby enabling the development of strategies to practically improve them. In using this approach in the analysis, as an example, this study found that in New Zealand, many employees were dissatisfied with their career prospects and incomes but more satisfied with working independently and being in jobs that are useful to the society. This approach was used by McGovern et al. (2004), and Clark (1998, 2005a, 2010, 2015).

The second approach outlined by Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005) was the global self-assessments by employees in their jobs. For instance, measuring the degree of job satisfaction. Acknowledging that the analysis did not exhaust all indicators of job quality, the study, therefore, measured employees’ overall satisfaction with their jobs to provide a holistic picture of employees’ job quality. The global self-assessments approach enabled the analyses of employees’ satisfaction levels which were quite high. For instance, in the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, about 90%, 79% and 82% respectively were either completely, very or fairly satisfied. Like Clark’s (1998) study of

OECD countries and their job quality, this study employed both approaches in the measurement of employees' job quality so as to benefit from the strengths of both approaches.

Several statistical techniques were used in testing the hypotheses outlined previously. These included descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, T-tests, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and linear regressions. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were applied to compute the demographic details of the samples and the identification of mismatches between employees' job values and job outcomes. In examining the differences between two groups of people, the study used T-tests in analysing the means of men and women and part-time and full-time employees. According to Field (2009), T-tests are the most appropriate statistical tool for comparing two groups of people aimed at finding out whether the two samples have equal means. This is a statistical tool that has been used by other researchers like Clark (1998, 2005a and 2010) for the testing of the means of two categories of workers. Differences in means show that the alternative hypothesis is to be accepted. T-tests can be done in two ways; the independent and repeated measures design. The independent-means T-test was used because this study wanted to test the differences between genders and employment status of the respondents on particular job values and job quality features. Explicitly, this tool enabled the testing of differences between men and women and full-time and part-time job values and job outcomes.

ANOVA was used in testing the differences among different educational groups. Educational credentials were recoded and grouped into primary, secondary, vocational and degree. However, since ANOVA, as described by Field (2009), is an omnibus test and so does not give every detail, this study further used pairwise comparisons to identify precisely which group's means were significantly different.

In testing the hypothesis that determined the effect of various job quality indicators on job satisfaction, regression analysis was employed. This is in line with Kalleberg and Vaisey's (2005, p.434) assertion that regression analysis is the most common way of examining the correlational causation of variables. To them, 'regression analysis is the most common way of relating measures of the overall goodness of jobs to the quality of specific dimensions of work'. For Bryman (2003; p.231), regression is used in 'summarising the nature of the relationship between variables and for making predictions of likely values of the dependent variable'. In this analysis, job satisfaction was defined as the dependent variable while the various job quality indicators were the independent variables.

Regression can be simple or multiple (Field, 2009). It is simple when the prediction of an outcome variable is from one predictor variable and multiple when several predictor variables are used in predicting the outcome variables. Multiple regression was the most appropriate type because the effect of several job indicators on employees' job satisfaction was tested. Most studies on job satisfaction have used this approach successfully, and since job satisfaction is an outcome of improved job quality, its use was expedient. Moreover, most studies (e.g., Jencks, Perman & Rainwater, 1988; Clark, 2005; Kalleberg and Vaisey, 2005; Green, 2013) on job quality have used regression analysis to establish the relationship between job quality and other variables like job satisfaction and demographic details of respondents. The same pattern of data analysis was used by Clark (2005) whose study on *'What makes a good job? Evidence from OECD countries'* used regression analysis by establishing the relationship between various variables. The aim for employing this analytical tool was to determine the effect of many independent variables (job outcomes) on the dependent variable (satisfaction). All these tests were done using the statistical programme for social sciences (SPSS) software. This software was used for all the analyses

because it was the most appropriate tool. All techniques needed for the analyses could be performed adequately using this software.

#### **4.8 Qualitative research design**

Qualitative research explores attitudes, behaviours, and experiences (Dawson, 2002), discovers inner meanings and develops understanding in greater depth of a phenomenon (Zikmund et al. 2012). As qualitative research explores and provides understanding to the meanings people ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009), this thesis makes interpretations from data gathered from respondents with a particular focus on involuntary part-time employees' job quality in New Zealand. This qualitative research has objectives of gaining greater understanding by interviewing a relatively small sample of both past and present involuntary part-time employees in quite specific depth with the hope of uncovering detailed insights that might not be gained from a survey.

According to Bryman and Bell (2003), if a researcher aims to see through the eyes of respondents, describe in detail, emphasise the context and apply flexibility, then qualitative research is the best. These descriptions of qualitative research fit the last research question of this thesis, which is to unravel strategies used by involuntary part-timers in transitioning into jobs of good quality. Qualitative research also enabled me to understand better the emotional experiences of employees caused by their working conditions. This notion is in line with Kalleberg's (2003) argument that some aspects of quality of work are not easy to measure. The emotional experiences were qualitatively measured because it brought the researcher closer to what people were feeling. Likewise, the strategies they intend to use or have used will not make much contribution if only a snapshot of information is provided.



#### **4.9 Sampling technique**

Flick (2007, p.80) argues that concerning interviews, ‘sampling is oriented to finding the right people – those who have made the experience relevant or the study in most cases purposeful and random or formal sampling is rather the exception’. Flick (2007) and Marshall (1996) suggest that random sampling is usually inappropriate for qualitative research because it provides for generalisations which is not the case for qualitative research. Since this qualitative research has no aim of generalising but rather to explain and describe what is happening within a smaller group of respondents, a non-random sampling method was most appropriate (Marshall, 1996).

Using the random sampling method which gives all respondents an equal probability of being selected will affect the quality of data. This is because not all participants may have rich experience in the case investigated. The random sampling approach is viewed by Marshall (1996; p.523) as more inappropriate for qualitative research because some participants have richer information than others and ‘that these people are more likely to provide insight and understanding for the researcher.’ In this respect, a non-random sampling technique where the probability of any particular member of the population being chosen is unknown was employed. For Zikmund et al. (2012), the purpose of the research should determine the sampling technique to be used. This non-random sampling approach is most appropriate to this thesis because its focus on involuntary participants helps illuminate their working conditions, challenges, and strategies for interventions.

Qualitative sampling techniques outlined by Marshall (1996) are convenience, judgment and theoretical. Judgemental sampling technique (purposeful sample) was appropriate for the study because the researcher ‘actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question’ (Marshall, 1996; p. 523) or respondents are chosen based on the researcher’s knowledge of those who will be most appropriate for the study. The snowball technique (chain referral

sampling) which allows respondents to make recommendations about other useful potential respondents was most helpful as it afforded the flexibility of contacting a few knowledgeable respondents who also make referrals to other willing respondents (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Marshall, 1996; Dawson, 2002; Bryman and Bell, 2003; Zikmund et al. 2012).

Present and past involuntary part-timers short working hours and the nature of their shifts posed a few challenges which necessitated the use of colleagues in similar situations. In order not to make employees feel compelled to participate, colleagues in a similar condition gave details of the researcher to others who were willing to grant an interview. A phone call to check interviewees' suitability preceded the interview. This was necessary because the study excludes full-timers and voluntary part-time employees. Its focus was only on two groups of workers; full-timers who previously were involuntary part-timers and current involuntary part-timers. It was therefore mandatory to ensure participants met this criterion.

#### **4.10 Participants and data collection**

The analyses of the findings are based on data derived from 20 interviews with both present and past involuntary part-timers. Of these participants, 10 were presently involuntary part-timers with less than 30 hours of work weekly, 6 were currently involuntary part-timers with more than 30 hours but less than 40 hours per week due to cuts in hours (business slack) and four were previously involuntary part-timers. Data collection stopped at this number because very similar answers were being provided by the interviewees (i.e. reached the saturation point). Most studies on job quality and non-standard work arrangements in general, and part-time work (voluntary and involuntary) in particular, have used quantitative approaches to determine the 'goodness' or 'badness' of jobs. However, due to the nature of the research questions, this study employed a qualitative approach.

To this end, the last research question (what strategies do workers adopt to deal with jobs with ‘inferior’ quality?) was answered qualitatively using interviews in soliciting data from involuntary part-time workers (refer to interview protocol). This, therefore, complemented other quantitative studies conducted on non-standard work arrangement and job quality and part-time employment in particular.

Yin (2003) proposes six main modes of collecting data, comprising documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts. The study utilised interviews which can be structured, semi-structured and structured (Dawson, 2002). Semi-structured interviews were used, with an interview guide designed, which enabled me to ask specific questions that can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. Interviewers also have the opportunity of probing further with this technique (Zikmund et al, 2012). This type of interview, as explained by Knox et al. (2015; p. 1553), allows questioning in line with specific research aims ‘whilst allowing interviewees to discuss additional issues’. Data comparison is easier because the same questions are posed to all interviewees so consistency can be ensured. This type of interview has clear advantages over the unstructured and structured. With the unstructured, there is the difficulty of ensuring consistency because the interviewees have the opportunity to recount events without any form of structure and the structured where interviewees are only limited to a set of limited questions (Dawson, 2002).

In ensuring consistency, participants were asked questions relating to four job quality indicators adapted from Eurofound (2012). Utilizing the deductive approach, this research used the well-developed job quality index so as to enable the coding of the responses on employees’ job conditions. This also ensured the standardization of questions. An interview guide was designed with questions relating to general background information (e.g., previous work experience, length

of tenure in current job, general feelings of current job), earnings and earning progression, prospects (job security, career progression and contract quality), intrinsic job quality (skill utilization, good social and physical environment) and working time quality (scheduling, flexibility over working time).

While most studies have looked at limited aspects of job quality, in this study, an elaborate picture of employees' job quality is provided. However, the inductive approach, related to the financial and emotional challenges and strategies provided respondents with flexibility in discussing relevant issues without any restrictions. The data itself was the basis for the development of themes. Further questions on emotional and financial challenges were sought specifically from currently involuntary part-timers. The last set of questions was related to how interviewees intend to transition or have transitioned into 'good jobs.' Particularly, what individual and collective strategies have they used or using to ameliorate their condition?

Face-to-face interviews were an ideal mode of data collection because it allowed the research question to be probed further to fully understand the emotional and financial challenges confronting currently involuntary part-timers arising from their working conditions. Secondly, the interest was also geared towards understanding how these challenges were remedied or are being remedied by both past and present involuntary part-timers. These objectives were better achieved using the face-to-face interview method of data collection.

These semi-structured interviews were conducted between September 2016 and February 2017 employing the same set of questions, but participants were given the opportunity to discuss general issues relating to the nature of their jobs. The timing of the interviews was based on the availability of the interviewees. Interviews conducted at work were usually done between 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on any working day at the request of interviewees. Thirteen interviews were done in the

company premises with permission being sought from the store manager. Interviews done in the store ranged from twenty-five minutes to about forty-five minutes in length. Three others were done at the homes of the interviewees because they worked fewer hours. It was quite difficult to get them at work; hence the interviewer caught up with them at their homes at their request. One was also at the park due to the busy schedule. Two others were at locations where respondents had their religious fellowships. The last two offered to come to the researcher's home because they lived in a remote part of Auckland and felt they could only be available anytime they were in the city. An observation made was that interviews conducted outside the workplace lasted a bit more than those done in the store. The length of these interviews was from 40 minutes to 70 minutes because they were very comfortable to discuss their employment conditions anywhere apart from their place of work.

Another observation made during the interviews was that those that were conducted in-house were not as forthcoming as those who had it in the comfort of their home or outside the store. Also, current involuntary part-timers who had been trapped in this situation for a long while spent more time recounting events during the interviews. The definition adopted for involuntary part-timers are employees experiencing a mismatch between their expected working hours and actual working hours. Most of the currently involuntary part-timers (10) were working for seven hours up to thirty hours. The other group (six employees) was made up of those whose hours have been cut due to business slack and were, therefore, working between 32 to 38 hours. The rest (4) were formerly involuntary part-timers who are currently working forty hours. Typical of the retail sector being dominated by women, the interviewees were mainly women (18) and 2 were men.

There was a good spread of ages because most were middle-aged. The length of service with their current organisation ranged from between 7 months to 15 years. All respondents had held more

than one job in the past and had been working for between two years to thirty-three years and come from diverse ethnic backgrounds. These respondents were drawn from six sectors but predominantly from the retail industry (14). As already provided in the literature, the retail sector is one of the sectors mainly concentrated with part-time employment. Other sectors were banking (1), rest homes (1), hospitality (1), manufacturing (1), health sector (1) and publishing (1). To protect their identity, pseudonyms were used as indicated on the consent form and participant information sheets.

#### **4.11 Reflections from the field trip**

Recruitment of participants first began by contacting two big unions in New Zealand: Unite and the First Union. After meeting several organisers responsible for particular sectors, the study narrowed down to the Fast Food restaurants and cafes because it had a substantial majority of part-timers. A poster was designed which was advertised on the union's facebook page for the recruitment of participants. After about two months, there was no positive feedback, so the researcher then had to approach the second union – First Union. The response was positive with the First Union as the researcher was invited by the Secretary for retail, finance, and commerce who then introduced me to one of the organisers with an oversight responsibility for some organisations. The organiser took me round to three of the sites (organisations covered by the union) under her supervision. The researcher, therefore, gained access to the participants mainly through the union organiser who introduced me first and then informed store managers of the nature of the study. Further, any burning issues and questions on the topic was clarified.

Following this, the organiser introduced me to workers (both unionised and non-unionized) and asked if they were interested in participating in the study after making me explain the nature of

study briefly. Surprisingly, not all recruited were unionised members. Permission was asked from the store managers by the union organiser for the interviews to be conducted in the organisation during paid work hours.

#### **4.12 Methods of data analysis**

All interviews were transcribed manually by the researcher in order to conduct the analyses. No computer-aided qualitative data analysis software was used because the sample size was relatively manageable. Utilizing a step-by-step and creative process, the researcher needed to move back and forth between the data and the literature to make meaning. In qualitative research, the data received is analysed by using either thematic, comparative, content or discourse analyses (Dawson, 2002). In a similar vein, Ryan and Bernard (2003; p. 85) suggest that qualitative analysis of data involves several exercises including ‘discovering themes and subthemes, winnowing themes to a manageable few, building hierarchies of themes or code books and linking themes into theoretical models.’ For this study, thematic analysis was adopted as meanings were identified based on the frequency with which the same term arises (Zikmund et al. 2012). This explanation is consistent with Braun and Clarke’s (2006; p. 6) view that thematic analysis is used for ‘identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data.’ Further, Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006; p.82) add that thematic analysis is a ‘form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis.’ As such, using this mode of analysis helps organise and describe data in rich detail as repeated patterns of meaning are searched for. For instance, a study by McDonald et al. (2009) on part-time and full-time job quality in Australia used the same type of analysis by exploring themes on how the nature and quality of part-time work were discussed by employees. Its advantage is the flexibility it offers researchers in deciding which theme is important to the research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguish between inductive and theoretical/deductive thematic analysis where the former's identification of themes is strongly linked to the data itself. Data is coded without trying to fit into an already existing coding frame. This implies that the researcher does not need to engage with literature at the early stages of analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). With the theoretical thematic analysis, theme identification is based on the researcher's theoretical interest in the area. Themes on job quality indicators like working relations, job security, pay, etc. were selected from both the literature and data. Based on the nature of this research, data analysis required both inductive and theoretical analyses. Themes from the data and the researcher's theoretical interest shaped the analysis.

Bryman (2008; p.554) argues that thematic analysis has 'no identifiable approach or has a distinctive cluster of techniques' but proposes that using the framework approach (developed by the National Centre for Social Research in the UK) is helpful. The framework involves 'constructing an index of central themes and subthemes, represented in a matrix..... displaying cases and variables' (Bryman, 2008). This framework helps in the management of themes and data but does not show how themes and subthemes are identified. Although this framework did not form the basis of conducting the analysis, its explanations was useful. Bruan and Clarke (2006) endorse this stance by noting that there is no consensus on what thematic analysis is and the process of analysing data thematically. This notwithstanding, for researchers to gain the best out of using this mode of analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) propose that these six phases must be adhered to – familiarising oneself with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing a report.

The themes and subthemes are identified after comprehensively reading and rereading each transcript (Bryman, 2008). 'Something important about the data in relation to the research



question' and that forms a pattern in a data encapsulates a theme (Braun and Clarke, 2006; p.8). Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggest that some techniques of identifying themes in data include but are not limited to repetitious topics, indigenous categories, metaphors, transitions, similarities and differences, missing data, linguistic connectors and theory-related material. After identifying the theme through reading and re-reading, appropriate quotes were cut and sorted. This implies verbatim transcription of respondents' views and experiences. Both similar and divergent views on employees' working conditions were analysed.

Using the deductive approach, interviews were conducted using specific questions on the job conditions of employees based on Eurofound's (2012) job quality index. The data concerning the working conditions were organised around six themes; namely, workplace relationship between managers and subordinates and among subordinates, job security (objective and subjective), pay and pay progression, intrinsic job quality, training and career progression and time flexibility. These themes were developed prior to the analysis based on the literature review. Discussions on employees' working conditions centred on these features only. The analysis was manually done with the phases and exercises suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Ryan and Bernard (2003) loosely guiding the process. Using the thematic approach meant that common and recurrent themes formed the basis of the analysis.

#### **4.12.1 Familiarising oneself with data**

All audio tapes were listened to on three occasions in order to comprehensively understand the depth and breath of the data. Further, all tapes were transcribed verbatim by the researcher in order to produce an accurate and specific account of the interview. These two phases (familiarizing and data transcription) enhanced understanding of the content of the data and formed the initial coding and analysis of the data. This is because separate notes of the themes were taken as the researcher

listened and transcribed the interviews. Interesting patterns were identified during this phase. For instance, initially, the researcher was drawn to the prevalence of negative emotions from current involuntary part-timers. However, the prevalence of negative emotions drew the researcher's attention to explore if there were positive emotions.

#### **4.12.2 Coding and analysis**

As already mentioned, this thesis utilized both deductive and inductive thematic analyses. With regards to the working conditions of part-timers, the initial codes were constructed based on a review of the job quality literature. The coding scheme used was based on the job quality index developed by Eurofound (2012) to allow for the standardization of responses (ensured each interviewee was asked the same question). These codes were therefore from the terms used in the literature. These comprised of security, management and collegial relations, pay, intrinsic job quality, training and career progression and time flexibility. Collation of all the responses relating to this question was done and coded using this list.

On the other hand, using Braun and Clarke's (2006) data-led approach of finding themes meant that the codes for the emotional experiences and strategies were based on terms used by the interviewees. This coding exercise enabled the management of the data and became the basis for developing themes. For instance, these codes became evident: frustration, concerned, anger, stress, anxiety and skepticism. These were some of the codes used for the emotional experiences of current involuntary part-timers. Guided by the research objective, the researcher had to engage in a selective process in managing the data. Through searching, reading and rereading the transcribed interviews, repeated patterns were identified. Specifically, themes were identified using repeated topics and terms, similarities and differences in the data (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). The prevalence and the frequency with which specific terms or words were used by participants mattered in the

analysis such that the inclusion of themes was dependent on how often participants identified with them. This implies that less prevalent themes were excluded. As indicated by Braun and Clarke (2006), researcher evaluation is important in determining what the themes were, so the researcher was cautious with the identification of the themes and interpretation of the data.

With the research question in mind, eight themes were identified as strategies that can aid in transitioning to full-time jobs. However, six themes (communicating with management, work ethic, selling oneself and taking initiatives, upgrading skills, multiple job holding and union intervention) emerged as prominent after a review of the themes. For instance, networking and establishing one's own business were dropped because only two participants, one each, were aiming to use these strategies. Appropriate data extracts were then used to explain the prevalence of the themes identified. Based on the research question, arguments were made in the write-up, narrating the story of involuntary part-timers. These stages were not straightforward but rather an iterative process where the researcher had to go back and forth between the data and interpretations to ensure an accurate and meaningful story.

#### **4.13 Ethical considerations**

It is appreciated that divulging sensitive information on how bad a person's job is could sometimes be problematic. Likewise sharing emotional and financial challenges confronting employees could be very personal and may feel embarrassed. Also, sharing information on strategies must certainly be a choice participant will willingly like to make. Due to the above, the researcher followed some ethical protocols in the conduct of the qualitative research. The study has an attachment of appendices of consent and information sheets given to research participants explaining the ethical principles of this research. Participants were given the information sheets before the interview which provided details of the nature of the research topic.

There was an invitation to participate, and participants' roles were mainly providing information on their job situation through a face-to-face interview. They had the right to choose the time and location convenient to them for the interviews. They were also informed it was purely an academic exercise, participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw but not after data analysis without it affecting their employment status anyway. Their permission was sought for audio recording and were given the opportunity to edit transcript. As such respondents were free to participate.

Confidentiality was maintained by using both a direct and an indirect approach to selecting the respondents. While the researcher had the opportunity to contact a few participants, other respondents had the option of contacting the researcher to participate instead of the other way around. With the second approach, respondents were not compelled to participate because they have been referred to by a colleague. Instead, the details of the researcher were given to those who were referring. Respondents were assured of confidentiality by anonymising the organisations and the respondents. Pseudonyms were also used to disguise respondents. Participants were made to sign the consent forms before the interviews signaling they agree to the conditions provided on the forms. Most of them allowed an audio recording, but a few were not comfortable with the process.

Information on measures for handling and the use of the audio recording was also relayed to participants. They knew that if they chose to be audio-taped, this data was to be stored securely with the university and will only be destroyed after the sixth year. They were also informed that collected data would be used for academic purposes (thesis) and future publications and presentations.

#### **4.14 Limitations**

Low generalisation and difficulty in replication are frequently heard criticisms of qualitative research (Bryman and Bell, 2003). This study is limited to the New Zealand context although the surveys were nationwide and representative of the population. Further, in interpreting the findings, it should be noted that the study is limited due to the sample of employees so the findings cannot be generalised to all employees in New Zealand, the sectors represented as well as the generalisation to the international context. On the other hand, while the quantitative allows generalisation to the New Zealand population, it also provides only snapshots of views. However, the use of the mixed-method approach suggests that the disadvantages of one will be counteracted by the strength of the other.

Another limitation of this analysis is that information was mainly sought from employees with no input from managers or unions. The unions, in particular, could have had some solutions due to the different groups of workers they interact with. This, therefore, does not provide a full set of solutions available to involuntary part-timers. However, since workers are in the best position to explain their experiences, it is natural to believe that they are better able to offer solutions to their challenges. Another limitation to be mentioned is that the data-set for the quantitative analysis is cross-sectional and does not show causality (e.g., Le Fevre et al., 2015; Weststar, 2009; Westover, 2016). Finally, this research project is limited by its New Zealand location and the sample size.

#### **4.15 Summary and conclusions**

Overall, this chapter describes comprehensively the research methodological designs of the thesis, which focuses mainly on the choice of using a mixed-methods approach. Using the pragmatic worldview enabled the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data on employees' perceptions

of job quality and their strategies for dealing with disappointing job quality. This involved secondary analyses using weighted ISSP datasets to ensure representativeness. The use of the three waves of the ISSP datasets (work orientation module of 1997, 2005 and 2015) allowed the examination and tracking of the perceptions of employees concerning their job quality over the twenty-year period. Data from these datasets were cross-sectional, so do not show causality. Analyses were done on the employed in either full or part-time jobs and of both genders yielding 316, 875 and 386 respondents for the 1997, 2005 and 2015 datasets respectively. Descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, T-tests, ANOVA, and regression were used for the analysis.

For the qualitative section, 20 participants were interviewed. Empirical material concerning the working conditions and emotional and financial challenges confronting involuntary part-timers were examined. Previous and ongoing strategies used by this group of workers were also investigated.

Also, justifications for the use of these methods have been outlined as well as the limitations. Details of how respondents were selected and nature of the conduct of interviews are also provided. Ethical measures taken in the conduct of the interviews were clarified. In the next chapter, the study discusses the empirical findings from participants.

## **Chapter 5: Results of quantitative analysis**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, results from the quantitative section of the study are presented. Briefly, the thesis's objectives are to understand employees' perceptions of their job quality and its effect on job satisfaction. Differences in groups of employees' experiences of job quality are also examined. The literature review chapters led to the development of several hypotheses on employees' job values and job outcomes.

In testing the proposed hypotheses, data on employees (i.e. those employed by others but excluding the self-employed) were drawn from all the three waves of the work orientations module of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) (1997, 2005 and 2015) in which a postal survey was mainly used in New Zealand. Though most studies have used panel data, this study like others such as Kalleberg and Marsden (2013), uses cross-sectional data from three waves of ISSP from 1997 to 2015. The ISSP has data on demographics and many job values as well as outcomes from both the working (employed and self-employed) and non-working population from OECD countries. Though the ISSP data set does not provide an exhaustive list of job quality indicators, it however uses both intrinsic and extrinsic job facets thereby bringing the multidimensional nature of job quality to bear and not limiting researchers to only the highly-publicised indicators. This is useful in establishing the fact that other features of work are also relevant to employees.

This chapter presents analyses of job value trends, group differences in job values, job quality trends and group differences in job quality, providing an understanding of perceptions of job quality.

## 5.2 Job values and gender

In this section, the results in relation to job values and gender are discussed. Tables 5.1 – 5.3 give the results of the independent sample t-tests comparing group means between males and females and their job values. It should be borne in mind that with the ISSP scale, the lower the number, the more important the indicator is to employees in terms of its value. The response categories for these variables range from very important (1) to not important at all (5).

*Table 5:1*

### **Differences between men and women in relation to job values (ISSP 1997)**

<b>Job Values</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men (A) n=144</b>	<b>Women (B) n=168</b>	<b>Mean Diff (A-B)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Job security	1.58	1.65	1.52	0.139	0.083	0.095
High income	2.24	2.31	2.13	0.172	0.089	0.054
Career prospects	1.94	1.98	1.88	0.092	0.081	0.256
Interesting job	1.51	1.54	1.47	0.067	0.065	0.303
Independent work	2.03	2.07	1.98	0.081	0.092	0.382
Help to others	2.12	2.15	2.09	0.052	0.094	0.581
Usefulness to society	2.15	2.16	2.12	0.040	0.097	0.684
Time flexibility	2.70	2.82	2.62	0.198	0.115	0.085

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n



Table 5:2

**Differences between men and women in relation to job values (ISSP 2005)**

<b>Job Values</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men (A) n=404</b>	<b>Women (B) n=471</b>	<b>Mean Diff (A-B)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Job security	1.62	1.66	1.56	0.103	0.044	0.020**
High income	2.11	2.04	2.11	-.076	0.057	0.182
Career prospects	1.90	1.87	1.87	-.001	0.053	0.991
Interesting job	1.45	1.45	1.45	-.001	0.040	0.985
Independent work	1.89	1.92	1.87	0.050	0.051	0.323
Help to others	1.95	2.07	1.85	0.225	0.052	0.000***
Usefulness to society	1.99	2.07	1.93	0.140	0.053	0.008***
Time flexibility	2.35	2.42	2.30	0.122	0.065	0.063

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5:3

**Differences between men and women in relation to job values (ISSP 2015)**

<b>Job Values</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men (A) n=195</b>	<b>Women (B) n=190</b>	<b>Mean Diff (A-B)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Job security	1.56	1.58	1.51	0.077	0.066	0.246
High income	2.29	2.22	2.29	-.067	0.085	0.432
Career prospects	2.18	2.21	2.10	0.113	0.087	0.193
Interesting job	1.59	1.62	1.59	0.033	0.067	0.622
Independent work	1.98	2.07	1.95	0.129	0.081	0.112
Help to others	1.87	2.04	1.77	0.270	0.078	0.001***
Usefulness to society	1.96	2.10	1.85	0.246	0.080	0.002***
Time flexibility	2.40	2.57	2.25	0.318	0.097	0.001***
Skill utilization	1.57	1.63	1.51	0.116	0.061	0.060

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

***H1(a): Men regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than women***

In 1997 and 2015, women placed a higher value on career prospects than men but the difference is not significant ( $p = 0.256$  and  $0.193$ ). In 2005, the mean scores for men and women were exactly the same. Thus, hypothesis 1(a) is not supported.

***H1(b): Men regard working independently as more important than women***

In all surveys, women placed a higher premium on working independently than men but the difference is not significant ( $p = 0.382, 0.323, 0.112$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 1(b) is not supported.

***H1(c): Men regard high income as more important than women***

In all surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), there is no significant difference in the value men and women place on high income ( $p = 0.054, 0.182$  and  $0.432$ ). In 1997, women placed more value on high income while in 2005 and 2015, men placed more value on high income than women but the differences are non-significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 1(c) is not confirmed.

***H1(d): Men are less likely than women to value job security as important***

In 1997 and 2015, women placed a higher value on job security than men but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.095$  and  $0.246$ ). Only in 2005 is there a significant difference in the value men and women place on job security ( $p=0.020$ ). This difference is as predicted: i.e in 2005, men placed less importance on job security than women. Therefore, hypothesis 1(d) is only supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H1(e): Men are less likely than women to value flexible working hours as important***

In 1997 and 2005, women placed a higher value on flexible working hours than men but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.085$  and  $0.063$ ). Only in 2015 is there a significant difference in the value men and women place on flexible working hours ( $p=0.001$ ). This difference is as

predicted: i.e in 2015, men placed less importance on flexible working hours than women. Thus, hypothesis 1(e) is only supported for 2015.

***H1(f): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that are interesting as important***

Women placed a higher value on having interesting jobs than men though the difference is non-significant ( $p = 0.303$  and  $0.622$ ) in 1997 and 2015 respectively. In 2005, the mean scores for men and women were identical. Thus, Hypothesis 1(f) is not supported.

***H1(g): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important***

In 1997, women placed a higher premium on jobs that allow help to be given to others but this difference is not significant ( $p=0.581$ ). However, there is significant difference in the value men and women place on jobs that allow help to be given to others for 2005 ( $p = 0.000$ ) and 2015 ( $0.001$ ), respectively. This difference is as predicted: i.e in 2005 and 2015, women placed a higher value on jobs that allow help to be given to others than men, thereby confirming hypothesis 1(g) for 2005 and 2015 but not for 1997.

***H1(h): Women are more likely than men to value jobs that are useful to society as important***

There is no significant difference in 1997 ( $p = 0.684$ ) in the value men and women place on jobs that are useful to society though women placed more value than men on this variable. In the 2005 and 2015 surveys, women placed a higher priority on jobs that are useful to society than men and the difference is significant ( $p = 0.000$  and  $p = 0.001$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 1(h) is supported for 2005 and 2015 but not for 1997.

An addition to the 2015 survey was the importance of being able to use one's own skills and experience, which was an omission from previous surveys. This variable was therefore analyzed with the objective of finding if it was gendered or not. Although no hypothesis was postulated

because this variable was not consistent across all three datasets, the result shows no significant difference ( $p=0.060$ ) but women attached more importance to this variable than men.

In sum, this thesis finds that there are appreciably no differences between men and women in relation these job values: career prospects, working independently, high income and the interesting nature of jobs. On the other hand, some differences are observed between men and women in relation to these job values for some of the surveys: job security, flexible working hours, jobs that allow help to be given to others and having jobs that are useful to society. Thus, hypotheses referring to these job values are partially supported (because significant differences can be found for some of the years). In particular, for the 1997 survey, women and men are similar in terms of importance attached to all job values because there is no significant difference between them. For the 2005 survey, significant differences between men and women in terms of what they find important in a job can be recorded for job security, jobs that allow help to be given to others and usefulness of job to society. For all variables, women placed a higher premium than men. Significant differences are also found between men and women in 2015 for time flexibility, usefulness of job to society and jobs that allow help to be given to others. For all variables, men were less likely to place a higher value than women.

### **5.3 Job values and employment status**

In this section, results on full-timers and part-timers' job values are presented. These results are in relation to tables 5.4 to 5.6 where the independent t-test was used in comparing group means between full-timers and part-timers in respect of their job values. It should be noted that with the ISSP scale, the lower the number, the more important the indicator is to employees in terms of its value. The response categories for these variables range from very important (1) to not important at all (5).

Table 5:4

**Mean differences in job values between full and part time workers (ISSP 1997)**

Job Values	Total	Full-time (A) n=157	Part-time (B) n=48	Mean Diff (A-B)	SE	p-value
Job Security	1.58	1.65	1.51	0.135	0.126	0.283
High income	2.22	2.19	2.24	-.058	0.132	0.668
Career prospect	1.94	1.97	1.95	0.021	0.124	0.869
Interesting job	1.51	1.50	1.45	0.047	0.097	0.625
Independent	2.03	2.05	1.90	0.149	0.133	0.264
Help to others	2.12	2.25	1.86	0.387	0.139	0.006***
Usefulness	2.15	2.23	2.00	0.231	0.145	0.113
Time flexibility	2.70	2.78	2.68	0.091	0.168	0.589

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5:5

**Mean differences in job values between full and part time workers (ISSP 2005)**

Job Values	Total	Full-time (A) n=528	Part-time (B) n=140	Mean Diff (A-B)	SE	p-value
Job Security	1.62	1.62	1.67	-.054	0.063	0.390
High income	2.11	1.99	2.36	-.347	0.080	0.000***
Career prospects	1.90	1.89	1.99	-.105	0.076	0.167
Interesting job	1.45	1.44	1.56	-.116	0.057	0.044*
Independent work	1.89	1.90	1.84	0.057	0.069	0.408
Help to others	1.95	1.99	1.82	0.172	0.072	0.017*
Usefulness	1.99	2.07	1.90	0.164	0.074	0.028*
to society						
Time flexibility	2.35	2.45	2.18	0.273	0.086	0.002***

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01\*\*\*, = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5:6

**Mean differences in job values between full and part time workers (ISSP 2015)**

Job Values	Total	Full (A) n=272	Part (B) n=72	Mean Diff (A-B)	SE	p-value
Job Security	1.56	1.51	1.64	-.132	0.084	0.118
High income	2.29	2.11	2.68	-.573	0.106	0.000***
Career prospects	2.18	2.06	2.47	-.419	0.108	0.000***
Interesting job	1.59	1.57	1.72	-.154	0.087	0.076
Independent work	1.98	2.03	2.09	-.060	0.105	0.568
Help to others	1.87	1.98	1.80	0.174	0.102	0.087
Usefulness to society	1.96	2.04	1.92	0.112	0.105	0.288
Time flexibility	2.40	2.48	2.37	0.110	0.129	0.395
Skills utilization	1.57	1.55	1.61	-.057	0.079	0.469

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

***H2(a): Full-timers regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than part-timers***

In 1997 and 2005, full-timers placed a higher value on advancement opportunities than part-timers but the differences are not significant ( $p=0.869$  and  $p = 0.167$ ). Only in 2015 is there a significant difference in the value full-timers and part-timers place on advancement opportunities ( $p = 0.000$ ) with full timers having a higher preference for that than part-timers. Therefore, Hypothesis 2(a) is supported for only 2015 but not for 1997 and 2005.

***H2(b): Full-timers regard working independently as more important than part-timers***

In the 1997 and 2005 surveys, part-timers placed a higher value on working independently than full-timers but the differences are non-significant ( $p=0.264$  and  $p=0.408$ ). In 2015, though there is no significant difference in the value full-timers and part-timers place on working independently ( $p=0.568$ ), full-timers have a higher preference for working independently than part-timers. Thus, Hypothesis 2(b) is not supported for any of the surveys.

***H2(c): Full-timers regard high income as more important than part-timers***

In 1997, full-timers placed a higher value on high income than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.668$ ). However, in 2005 and 2015 there is a significant difference in the value full-timers and part-timers place on high income ( $p = 0.000$  and  $p=0.000$ ) with full timers having a higher preference for high income than part-timers. Therefore, Hypothesis 2(c) is not supported for 1997 but supported for 2005 and 2015.

***H2(d): Part-timers are less likely than full-timers to value job security as important***

In 1997, part-timers placed more importance on job security than full-timers but there is no significant difference ( $p = 0.283$ ). In 2005 and 2015, full-timers placed a higher value on job security than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.390$  and  $0.118$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 2(d) is not supported.

***H2(e): Full-timers are less likely than part-timers to value flexible working hours as important***

In 1997 and 2015, part-timers placed a higher value on flexible working hours than full-timers but the differences are non-significant ( $p=0.589$  and  $0.395$ ). Only in 2005, is there a significant difference in the value part-timers and full-timers place on flexible working hours ( $p = 0.002$ ) with part-timers preferring flexible working hours more than full-timers. Thus, Hypothesis 2(e) is supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H2(f): Full-timers are more likely than part-timers to value jobs that are interesting as important***

In 1997, part-timers placed a higher value on having interesting jobs than full-timers but the difference is non-significant ( $p=0.625$ ). For the 2005 survey, full-timers valued having interesting jobs than part-timers and the difference is significant ( $p = 0.044$ ). In 2015, full-timers placed more highly importance on interesting jobs than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p = 0.076$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2(f) is supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H2(g): Part-timers are more likely than full-timers to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important***

For the 1997 and 2005 surveys, a significant difference is observed between full and part-timers with part-timers having a higher preference for jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.006$  and  $p=0.017$ ). Part-timers valued jobs that allow help to be given to others more than full-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p = 0.087$ ) for 2015. Therefore, Hypothesis 2(g) is supported for two of the surveys but not for the 2015 survey.

***H2(h): Part-timers are more likely than full-timers to value jobs that are useful to society as important***

For the 1997 and 2015 waves, part-timers placed a higher value on having jobs that are useful to society than full-timers but the difference is non-significant ( $p=0.113$  and  $p=0.288$ ). For the 2005 survey, part-timers valued jobs that are useful to society more than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p = 0.028$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 2(h) is supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

An addition to the 2015 survey was the importance of being able to use own skills and experience which was an omission from previous surveys. This variable was therefore analyzed with the objective of finding whether a difference exists between part-timers and full-timers' preference. Although no hypothesis was postulated due to the lack of consistency of this variable across all the years, the result shows no significant difference but, full-timers attached more importance to this variable than part-timers.

In summary, the study observes that there are significant differences between full-time workers and part-time workers in relation to these job values; good opportunities for advancement, high income, flexible working hours, interesting jobs and usefulness of job to society (significant for some of the surveys). Specifically, in 1997, significant difference is found between full and part timers in terms of relative importance attached to jobs that allow help to be given to others with



part-timers placing more value on that variable. For 2005, full-timers and part-timers differed in relation to these job values; high income, interesting job, jobs that allow help to be given to others, usefulness of job to society and flexible working hours. While full-timers attached more importance to high income and interesting job, part-timers placed more value on jobs that allow help to be given to others, are useful to the society and time flexibility. Significant difference is recorded between full and part timers in terms of the value assigned on high income and career prospects in 2015. For both variables, full-timers placed more value than part-timers. Full-timers are similar to part-timers on the value placed on working independently for all waves.

#### **5.4 Job values and the level of educational attainment**

Section 5.4 presents results on the level of education and employees' job values. Referring to tables 5.7 to 5.9, ANOVA and pairwise comparisons are used in comparing means among employees with primary, secondary, vocational and degree qualifications. It should be noted that with the ISSP scale, the lower the number, the more important the indicator is to employees in terms of its value. The response categories for these variables range from very important (1) to not important at all (5).

Table 5:7

**Mean differences in job values among workers with different educational attainments  
(ISSP 1997)**

<b>Job Values</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Vocational</b>	<b>Deg.</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Partial Eta</b>
Job security	1.58	1.80	1.43	1.61	1.92	0.003**	0.042
High income	2.24	1.80	2.43	2.23	1.95	0.003**	0.043
Career prospects	1.94	1.80	2.13	1.90	1.76	0.021*	0.029
Interesting job	1.51	1.80	1.70	1.46	1.29	0.000***	0.062
Independent work	2.03	1.80	2.17	2.01	1.92	0.219	0.014
Help to others	2.12	1.80	2.21	2.08	2.29	0.288	0.012
Usefulness to society	2.15	2.00	2.26	2.10	2.05	0.361	0.010
Time flexibility	2.70	2.60	2.88	2.69	2.57	0.272	0.012

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$   
N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.7.1

**Comparisons in job values among workers with different educational attainments (ISSP 1997)**

<b>Job security</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.374	0.328	(-.497, 1.245)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.188	0.325	(-.674, 1.050)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.121	0.341	(-1.026, .783)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.374	0.328	(-1.245, .497)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.186	0.089	(-.422, .049)	0.220
Secondary – degree	-.495	0.136	(-.857, -.133)	0.002**
Vocational – primary	-.188	0.328	(-1.050, .674)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.186	0.089	(-.049, .422)	0.220
Vocational – degree	-.309	0.128	(-.648, .030)	0.096
Degree – primary	0.121	0.341	(-.783, 1.026)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.495	0.136	(.133, .857)	0.002**
Degree – vocational	0.309	0.128	(-.030, .648)	0.096

<b>High income</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.634	0.341	(-1.539, .270)	0.382
Primary – vocational	-.433	0.337	(-1.328, .462)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.146	0.354	(-1.086, .795)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.634	0.341	(-.270, 1.539)	0.382
Secondary – vocational	0.201	0.093	(-.046, .448)	0.189
Secondary – degree	0.488	0.143	(.108, .869)	0.004**
Vocational – primary	0.433	0.337	(-.462, 1.328)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.201	0.093	(-.488, .046)	0.189
Vocational – degree	0.287	0.134	(-.069, .644)	0.198
Degree – primary	0.146	0.354	(-.795, 1.086)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.488	0.143	(-.869, -.108)	0.004**
Degree – vocational	-.287	0.134	(-.644, .069)	0.198

<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.327	0.330	(-1.202, .547)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.101	0.326	(-.967, .765)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.037	0.342	(-.872, .946)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.327	0.330	(-.547, 1.202)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.226	0.089	(-.010, .463)	0.189
Secondary – degree	0.364	0.137	(.001, .727)	0.069
Vocational – primary	0.101	0.326	(-.765, .967)	0.049*
Vocational – secondary	-.226	0.089	(-.463, .010)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.138	0.128	(-.203, .479)	0.069
Degree – primary	-.037	0.342	(-.946, .872)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.364	0.137	(-.727, -.001)	0.049*
Degree – vocational	-.138	0.128	(-.479, .203)	1.000

<b>Interesting job</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.100	0.249	(-.561, .761)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.341	0.246	(-.313, .995)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.511	0.258	(-.176, 1.197)	0.295
Secondary – primary	-.100	0.249	(-.761, .561)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.241	0.068	(.062, .420)	0.002**
Secondary – degree	0.411	0.104	(.136, .685)	0.001***
Vocational – primary	-.341	0.246	(-.420, -.062)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.241	0.068	(-.088, .427)	0.002**
Vocational – degree	0.170	0.097	(-1.197, .176)	0.486
Degree – primary	-.511	0.258	(-.685, -.136)	0.295
Degree – secondary	-.411	0.104	(-.427, .088)	0.001***
Degree – vocational	-.170	0.097	(-.030, .648)	0.486

<b>Working independently</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.372	0.360	(-1.329, .585)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.206	0.357	(-1.152, .741)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.121	0.374	(-1.114, .872)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.372	0.360	(-.585, 1.329)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.166	0.098	(-.095, .427)	0.554
Secondary – degree	0.251	0.150	(-.148, .649)	0.575
Vocational – primary	0.206	0.357	(-.741, 1.152)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.166	0.098	(-.427, .095)	0.554
Vocational – degree	0.085	0.140	(-.288, .457)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.121	0.374	(-.872, 1.114)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.251	0.150	(-.649, .148)	0.575
Degree – vocational	-.085	0.140	(-.457, .288)	1.000

<b>Can help others</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.408	0.370	(-1.391, .575)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.283	0.366	(-1.256, .689)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.489	0.384	(-1.510, .531)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.408	0.370	(-.575, 1.391)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.125	0.100	(-.142, .391)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.082	0.154	(-.490, .327)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.283	0.366	(-.689, 1.256)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.125	0.100	(-.391, .142)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.206	0.144	(-.589, .177)	0.924
Degree – primary	0.489	0.384	(-.531, 1.510)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.082	0.154	(-.327, .490)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.206	0.144	(-.177, .589)	0.924

<b>Usefulness to society</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.260	0.370	(-.1.242, .722)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.100	0.366	(-.1.072, .872)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.054	0.385	(-1.075, .967)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.260	0.370	(-.722, 1.242)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.160	0.101	(-.107, .427)	0.679
Secondary – degree	0.206	0.155	(-.207, .618)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.100	0.366	(-.872, 1.072)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.160	0.101	(-.427, .107)	0.679
Vocational – degree	0.046	0.146	(-.341, .433)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.054	0.385	(-.967, 1.075)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.206	0.155	(-.618, .207)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.046	0.146	(-.433, .341)	1.000
<b>Time flexibility</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.281	0.438	(-1.443, .881)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.094	0.433	(-1.244, 1.055)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.032	0.455	(-1.176, 1.241)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.281	0.438	(-.881, 1.443)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.187	0.119	(-.129, .502)	0.071
Secondary – degree	0.314	0.184	(-.174, .801)	0.531
Vocational – primary	0.094	0.433	(-1.055, 1.244)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.187	0.119	(-.502, .129)	0.701
Vocational – degree	-.127	0.172	(-.331, .585)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.032	0.455	(-1.241, 1.176)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.314	0.184	(-.801, .174)	0.531
Degree – vocational	-.127	0.172	(-.585, .331)	1.000

Table 5:8

**Mean differences in job values among workers with different educational attainments  
(ISSP 2005)**

Job Values	Total	Primary	Second	Vocation	Degree	p-value	Partial Eta
Job security	1.62	1.49	1.56	1.66	1.77	0.000***	0.022
High income	2.11	2.19	2.10	2.18	1.98	0.031*	0.009
Career prospects	1.90	1.93	1.83	1.93	1.92	0.363	0.003
Interesting job	1.45	1.58	1.41	1.43	1.40	0.006**	0.013
Independent work	1.89	1.78	1.94	1.90	1.92	0.112	0.006
Help to others	1.95	1.81	1.97	1.92	2.08	0.004**	0.014
Usefulness to society	1.99	2.02	1.97	1.99	1.98	0.936	0.000
Time flexibility	2.35	2.44	2.24	2.38	2.30	0.113	0.006

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.8.1

<b>Job security</b>	<b>mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
	<b>(a-b)</b>			
Primary – secondary	-.063	0.062	(-.228, .102)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.167	0.061	(-.329, -.005)	0.038*
Primary – degree	-.274	0.065	(-.447, -.101)	0.000***
Secondary – primary	0.063	0.062	(-.102, .228)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.104	0.055	(-.248, .040)	0.345
Secondary – degree	-.211	0.059	(-.368, -.054)	0.002**
Vocational – primary	0.167	0.061	(.005, .329)	0.038*
Vocational – secondary	0.104	0.055	(-.040, .248)	0.345
Vocational – degree	-.107	0.058	(-.261, .046)	0.391
Degree – primary	0.274	0.065	(.101, .447)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.211	0.059	(.054, .368)	0.002**
Degree – vocational	0.107	0.058	(-.046, .261)	0.391

<b>High income</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.085	0.079	(-.124, .294)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.011	0.078	(-.194, .217)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.206	0.083	(-.014, .426)	0.080
Secondary – primary	-.085	0.079	(-.294, .124)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.074	0.068	(-.254, .107)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.121	0.074	(-.076, .318)	0.627
Vocational – primary	-.011	0.078	(-.217, .194)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.074	0.068	(-.107, .254)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.195	0.073	(-.002, .387)	0.047*
Degree – primary	-.206	0.083	(-.426, .014)	0.080
Degree – secondary	-.121	0.074	(-.318, .076)	0.627
Degree – vocational	-.195	0.073	(-.387, -.002)	0.047*
<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.100	0.074	(-.096, .296)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.002	0.072	(-.194, .189)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.007	0.078	(-.198, .212)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.100	0.074	(-.296, .096)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.102	0.065	(-.273, .069)	0.694
Secondary – degree	-.093	0.070	(-.279, .093)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.002	0.072	(-.189, .194)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.102	0.065	(-.069, .273)	0.694
Vocational – degree	0.009	0.069	(-.173, .190)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.007	0.078	(-.212, .198)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.093	0.070	(-.093, .279)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.009	0.069	(-.190, .173)	1.000

<b>Interesting job</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.166	0.055	(.022, .311)	0.014*
Primary – vocational	0.150	0.054	(.008, .291)	0.032*
Primary – degree	0.180	0.057	(.030, .332)	0.010*
Secondary – primary	-.166	0.055	(-.311, -.022)	0.014*
Secondary – vocational	-.017	0.048	(-.142, .109)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.015	0.052	(-.122, .152)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.150	0.054	(-.291, -.008)	0.032*
Vocational – secondary	0.017	0.048	(-.109, .142)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.031	0.051	(-.102, .165)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.181	0.057	(-.332, -.030)	0.010*
Degree – secondary	-.015	0.052	(-.152, .122)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.031	0.051	(-.165, .102)	1.000
<b>Working independently</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.161	0.069	(-.344, .022)	0.122
Primary – vocational	-.120	0.068	(-.300, .060)	0.466
Primary – degree	-.142	0.073	(-.334, .050)	0.309
Secondary – primary	0.161	0.069	(-.022, .344)	0.122
Secondary – vocational	0.041	0.061	(-.119, .201)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.019	0.066	(-.155, .193)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.120	0.068	(-.060, .300)	0.466
Vocational – secondary	-.041	0.061	(-.201, .119)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.022	0.064	(-.192, .149)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.142	0.073	(-.050, .334)	0.309
Degree – secondary	-.019	0.066	(-.193, .155)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.022	0.064	(-.149, .192)	1.000



<b>Help to others</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.156	0.072	(-.347, .036)	0.190
Primary – vocational	-.106	0.071	(-.293, .082)	0.818
Primary – degree	-.272	0.076	(-.473, -.071)	0.002**
Secondary – primary	0.156	0.072	(-.036, .347)	0.190
Secondary – vocational	0.050	0.063	(-.117, .217)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.116	0.069	(-.298, .065)	0.542
Vocational – primary	0.106	0.071	(-.082, .293)	0.818
Vocational – secondary	-.050	0.063	(-.217, .117)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.166	0.067	(-.344, .011)	0.081
Degree – primary	0.272	0.076	(.071, .473)	0.002**
Degree – secondary	0.116	0.069	(-.065, .298)	0.542
Degree – vocational	0.166	0.067	(-.011, .344)	0.081
<b>Usefulness to society</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.046	0.074	(-.149, .242)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.023	0.073	(-.168, .215)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.035	0.077	(-.170, .240)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.046	0.074	(-.242, .149)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.023	0.064	(-.193, .147)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.011	0.070	(-.196, .174)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.023	0.073	(-.215, .168)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.023	0.064	(-.147, .193)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.012	0.068	(-.169, .193)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.035	0.077	(-.240, .170)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.011	0.070	(-.174, .196)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.012	0.068	(-.193, .169)	1.000

<b>Time flexibility</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.196	0.088	(-.036, .429)	0.088
Primary – vocational	0.063	0.086	(-.166, .292)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.139	0.092	(-.105, .383)	0.789
Secondary – primary	-.196	0.088	(-.429, .036)	0.156
Secondary – vocational	-.133	0.077	(-.336, .070)	0.499
Secondary – degree	-.057	0.083	(-.277, .163)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.063	0.086	(-.292, .166)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.133	0.077	(-.070, .336)	0.499
Vocational – degree	0.076	0.082	(-.140, .292)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.139	0.092	(-.383, .105)	0.789
Degree – secondary	0.057	0.083	(-.163, .277)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.076	0.082	(-.292, .140)	1.000

*Table 5.9*

**Mean differences in job values among workers with different educational attainments  
(ISSP 2015)**

<b>Job Values</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Vocational</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Partial Eta</b>
Job security	1.56	1.27	1.47	1.61	1.67	0.001*	0.040
High income	2.29	2.28	2.35	2.41	2.15	0.066	0.017
Career prospects	2.18	1.89	2.23	2.34	2.10	0.015*	0.025
Interesting job	1.59	1.74	1.66	1.69	1.44	0.001**	0.037
Independent work	1.98	1.89	2.06	1.94	1.99	0.567	0.005
Help to others	1.87	1.60	1.88	1.92	1.93	0.053	0.018
Usefulness to society	1.96	1.89	2.02	2.12	1.85	0.030*	0.021
Time flexibility	2.40	2.53	2.36	2.42	2.38	0.752	0.003
Skill utilization	1.57	1.40	1.67	1.59	1.51	0.035*	0.020

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.9.1

<b>Job security</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.201	0.112	(-.498, .095)	0.436
Primary – vocational	-.335	0.113	(-.633, -.036)	0.019**
Primary – degree	-.402	0.107	(-.685, -.120)	0.001***
Secondary – primary	0.201	0.112	(-.095, .498)	0.436
Secondary – vocational	-.134	0.089	(-.369, .101)	0.796
Secondary – degree	-.201	0.081	(-.415, .013)	0.080
Vocational – primary	0.335	0.113	(.036, .633)	0.019**
Vocational – secondary	0.134	0.089	(-.101, .369)	0.796
Vocational – degree	-.067	0.082	(-.284, .149)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.402	0.107	(.120, .685)	0.001***
Degree – secondary	0.201	0.081	(-.013, .415)	0.080
Degree – vocational	0.067	0.082	(-.149, .284)	1.000
<b>High income</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.075	0.144	(-.124, .294)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.137	0.144	(-.194, .217)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.123	0.137	(-.014, .426)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.075	0.144	(-.294, .124)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.062	0.113	(-.254, .107)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.198	0.103	(-.076, .318)	0.330
Vocational – primary	0.137	0.144	(-.217, .194)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.062	0.113	(-.107, .254)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.260	0.104	(-.002, .387)	0.078
Degree – primary	-.123	0.137	(-.426, .014)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.198	0.103	(-.318, .076)	0.330
Degree – vocational	-.260	0.104	(-.387, -.002)	0.078

<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.338	0.149	(-.732, .056)	0.140
Primary – vocational	-.445	0.150	(-.842, -.049)	0.019*
Primary – degree	-.211	0.142	(-.587, .164)	0.821
Secondary – primary	0.338	0.149	(-.056, .732)	0.140
Secondary – vocational	-.107	0.116	(-.414, .200)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.127	0.105	(-.153, .406)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.445	0.150	(.049, .842)	0.019*
Vocational – secondary	0.107	0.116	(-.200, .414)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.234	0.107	(-.050, .517)	0.175
Degree – primary	0.211	0.142	(-.164, .587)	0.821
Degree – secondary	-.127	0.105	(-.406, .153)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.234	0.107	(-.517, .050)	0.175
<b>Interesting job</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.087	0.109	(-.202, .376)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.059	0.109	(-.231, .349)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.305	0.104	(.030, .580)	0.021*
Secondary – primary	-.087	0.109	(-.376, .202)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.028	0.085	(-.255, .198)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.218	0.078	(.011, .425)	0.033*
Vocational – primary	-.059	0.109	(-.349, .231)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.028	0.085	(-.198, .255)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.246	0.079	(.038, .455)	0.011*
Degree – primary	-.305	0.104	(-.580, -.030)	0.021*
Degree – secondary	-.218	0.078	(-.425, -.011)	0.033*
Degree – vocational	-.246	0.079	(-.455, -.038)	0.011*

<b>Working independently</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.173	0.139	(-.542, .196)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.052	0.140	(-.423, .320)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.096	0.133	(-.448, .257)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.173	0.139	(-.196, .542)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.121	0.108	(-.166, .409)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.077	0.099	(-.185, .339)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.052	0.140	(-.320, .423)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.121	0.108	(-.409, .166)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.044	0.100	(-.309, .221)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.096	0.133	(-.257, .448)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.077	0.099	(-.339, .185)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.044	0.100	(-.221, .309)	1.000
<b>Help to others</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.285	0.130	(-.630, .060)	0.175
Primary – vocational	-.319	0.131	(-.666, .027)	0.090
Primary – degree	-.334	0.124	(-.663, -.005)	0.044*
Secondary – primary	0.285	0.130	(-.060, .630)	0.175
Secondary – vocational	-.034	0.102	(-.304, .236)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.049	0.093	(-.296, .198)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.319	0.131	(-.027, .666)	0.090
Vocational – secondary	0.034	0.102	(-.236, .304)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.015	0.094	(-.264, .234)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.334	0.124	(.005, .663)	0.044*
Degree – secondary	0.049	0.093	(-.198, .296)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.015	0.094	(-.234, .264)	1.000

<b>Useful to society</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.125	0.135	(-.483, .234)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.229	0.136	(-.589, .131)	0.555
Primary – degree	0.048	0.129	(-.294, .391)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.125	0.135	(-.234, .483)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.104	0.106	(-.385, .176)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.173	0.097	(-.084, .430)	0.448
Vocational – primary	0.229	0.136	(-.131, .589)	0.555
Vocational – secondary	0.104	0.106	(-.176, .385)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.277	0.098	(.018, .536)	0.028*
Degree – primary	-.048	0.129	(-.391, .294)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.173	0.097	(-.430, .084)	0.448
Degree – vocational	-.277	0.098	(-.536, -.018)	0.028*

<b>Time flexibility</b>	<b>mean diff (a-b)</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.172	0.169	(-.275, .620)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.110	0.170	(-.340, .560)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.155	0.161	(-.272, .582)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.172	0.169	(-.620, .275)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.062	0.131	(-.408, .285)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.017	0.119	(-.333, .299)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.110	0.170	(-.560, .340)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.062	0.130	(-.285, .408)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.045	0.120	(-.274, .364)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.155	0.161	(-.582, .272)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.017	0.119	(-.299, .333)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.045	0.120	(-.364, .274)	1.000

Skill utilization	mean diff (a-b)	SE	95% CI	p-value
Primary – secondary	-.268	0.103	(-.541, .004)	0.056
Primary – vocational	-.190	0.103	(-.464, .084)	0.398
Primary – degree	-.109	0.098	(-.368, .151)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.268	0.103	(-.004, .541)	0.056
Secondary – vocational	0.078	0.080	(-.134, .291)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.160	0.073	(-.035, .354)	0.179
Vocational – primary	0.190	0.103	(-.084, .464)	0.398
Vocational – secondary	-.078	0.074	(-.291, .134)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.082	0.120	(-.115, .278)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.109	0.098	(-.151, .368)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.160	0.073	(-.354, .035)	0.179
Degree – vocational	-.082	0.074	(-.278, .115)	1.000

**H3(a):** *The more highly educated regard good opportunities for advancement as more important than the less educated*

In 1997 and 2015, the level of education has a significant effect on the importance placed on good opportunities for advancement ( $p=0.021$  and  $p=0.015$ ). In 1997, employees with degrees placed a higher importance on good opportunities for advancement than those with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.049$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. In 2005, the level of education has no significant effect on the premium placed on good advancement opportunities ( $p=0.363$ ). In 2015, employees with primary qualifications placed a higher value on good opportunities for advancement than those with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.019$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. This result provided is not clear-cut but looks like the less educated (employees with primary and secondary qualifications) place higher priority on career prospects. Thus, hypothesis 3(a) is partially supported.

***H3(b): The more highly educated regard working independently as more important than the less educated***

In all surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), the level of education has no significant effect on the premium placed on working independently ( $p=0.219$ ,  $p=0.112$  and  $p=0.567$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 3(b) is not supported.

***H3(c): The more highly educated regard high income as more important than the less educated***

In 1997 and 2005, the level of education has a significant effect on the importance attached to high income ( $p=0.003$  and  $p=0.031$ ). In 1997, employees with degrees placed a higher importance on high income than those with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.004$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. In 2005, employees with degrees placed a higher priority on high income than those with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.047$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. In 2015, the level of education has no significant effect on the premium placed on high income ( $p=0.066$ ). Thus, hypothesis 3(c) is partially supported for 1997 and 2005 but not for 2015.

***H3(d): The more highly educated are less likely than the less educated to value job security as important***

In all three surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), the level of education has a significant effect on the premium placed on job security ( $p=0.003$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.001$ ). In 1997, employees with secondary qualifications placed a higher priority on job security than employees with degrees ( $p=0.002$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. In 2005, employees with primary qualifications placed a higher value on job security than employees with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.038$ ) and degree holders ( $p=0.000$ ). Also, employees with secondary qualifications placed higher importance on job security than degree holders ( $p=0.002$ ). In 2015, employees with primary qualifications placed greater importance on job security than those with



vocational qualifications ( $p=0.019$ ) and those with degrees ( $p=0.001$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. Therefore, hypothesis 3(d) is totally supported.

***H3(e):** The more highly educated are less likely than the less educated to value flexible working hours as important*

In all surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), the level of education has no significant effect on the value attached to flexible working hours ( $p=0.272$ ,  $p=0.113$  and  $p=0.752$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 3(e) is not supported.

***H3(f):** The highly educated are more likely than the less educated to value jobs that are interesting as important*

In all three surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), the level of education has a significant effect on the premium placed on having interesting jobs ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p=0.006$  and  $p=0.001$ ). In 1997, employees with vocational qualifications placed a higher priority on having interesting jobs than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.002$ ). Degree holders placed a higher importance on having interesting jobs than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.001$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories.

In 2005, employees with secondary qualifications placed a higher value on having interesting jobs than employees with primary qualifications ( $p=0.014$ ). Also, employees with vocational qualifications placed a higher importance on having interesting jobs than those with primary qualifications ( $p=0.032$ ). Likewise, degree holders placed a higher premium on having interesting jobs than employees with primary qualifications ( $p=0.010$ ).

In 2015, employees with degrees placed greater importance on having interesting jobs than those with primary qualifications ( $p=0.021$ ), secondary qualifications ( $p=0.033$ ) and vocational qualifications ( $p=0.011$ ). Thus, hypothesis 3(f) is substantially supported.

***H3(g): The less educated are more likely than the highly educated to value jobs that allow help to be given to others as important***

In 1997 and 2015, the level of education has no overall significant effect on the importance placed on having jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.288$  and  $p=0.053$ ). In 2005, the level of education has a significant effect on the premium placed on having jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.004$ ). Employees with primary qualifications placed a higher priority on having jobs that allow help to be given to others than those with degrees ( $p=0.002$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. Thus, hypothesis 3(g) is supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H3(h): The more highly educated are more likely than the less educated to value jobs that are useful to society as important***

In 1997 and 2005, the level of education has no significant effect on the importance attached on jobs that useful to society ( $p=0.361$  and  $p=0.936$ ). In 2015, the level of education has a significant effect on the importance placed on jobs that are useful to society ( $p=0.030$ ). Employees with degrees placed a higher priority on jobs that are useful to society than those with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.028$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories. Therefore, hypothesis 3(h) is partially supported for 2015 only but not for 1997 and 2005.

The study also notes that in the 2015 survey, the level of education has a significant effect on the value attached on the ability to use own skills and experience such that employees with secondary qualifications placed a high priority on skill utilization than those with primary qualifications ( $p=0.035$ ).

In sum, this thesis observes that employees' level of education does not provide a clear picture on the value placed on some job characteristics. While job security and having an interesting job are supported for all surveys, time flexibility and working independently are not. There is partial

support for some of the surveys: career prospects, jobs allowing people to help others and usefulness of job society. Specifically, in 1997, significant differences are found among employees with different qualifications in terms of the relative importance they assign to job security, high income, career prospects and having an interesting job. Degree holders placed a higher importance on good career prospects, having an interesting job and high income than those with secondary qualifications. Regarding job security, employees with secondary qualifications placed a higher premium than those with degrees.

In 2005, significant differences are found in relation to the relative importance attached to job security, high income, having an interesting job and helping others. Employees with degrees placed a higher priority on high income than those with vocational qualifications. Those with primary qualifications also attached a high premium to job security than those with vocational qualifications. Degree holders and those with vocational qualifications valued having interesting jobs than those with primary and secondary qualifications. Employees with primary qualifications placed a higher priority on having jobs that allow help to be given to others than those with degrees.

In 2015, significant differences are observed in terms of the relative importance assigned to job security, career prospects, interesting job, usefulness of job to society and ability to use skills and own experience. For instance, employees with primary qualifications placed greater importance on job security and good career prospects than those with vocational and degree qualifications. Degree holders placed a greater importance on having interesting jobs than those with primary, secondary and vocational qualifications. Regarding the usefulness of the job to society, degree holders placed a higher priority than those with vocational qualifications. Employees with secondary qualifications attached greater importance to having jobs that allowed the use of own skills and experience than those with primary qualifications.

## 5.5 Observations on changing job values

In this section, the study discusses observations on changing job value trends. The results from table 5:10 are in relation to changes in employees' job values over the years and the overall ranking in terms of relative importance. ANOVA and pairwise comparisons are used in comparing means among the years. It should be noted that with the ISSP scale, the lower the number, the more important the indicator is to employees in terms of its value. The response categories for these variables ranges from very important (1) to not important at all.

*Table 5.10*

### Changes of employees' job values over the years (1997, 2005 and 2015)

Job values	1997 n=316	Ranking	2005 n=875	Ranking	2015 n=386	Ranking
Job security	1.58	2	1.62	2	1.56	1
High income	2.24 <sup>a</sup>	7	2.11 <sup>a,c</sup>	7	2.29 <sup>c</sup>	8
Career prospects	1.94 <sup>b</sup>	3	1.90 <sup>c</sup>	4	2.18 <sup>b,c</sup>	7
Interesting job	1.51	1	1.45 <sup>c</sup>	1	1.59 <sup>c</sup>	3
Working independently	2.03 <sup>a</sup>	4	1.89 <sup>a</sup>	3	1.98	6
Help to others	2.12 <sup>a,b</sup>	5	1.95 <sup>a</sup>	5	1.87 <sup>b</sup>	4
Usefulness to society	2.15 <sup>a,b</sup>	6	1.99 <sup>a</sup>	6	1.96 <sup>b</sup>	5
Time flexibility	2.70 <sup>a,b</sup>	8	2.35 <sup>a</sup>	8	2.40 <sup>b</sup>	9
Skill utilization					1.57	2

Note: Differences in means with the same letter are significant at the 0.05 percent level  
N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

In 1997, job security is ranked at 1.58 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance dropped (i.e. rose to 1.62). In 2015, priority for job security rose (1.56) but none of the years is significantly different.

In 1997, high income is ranked at 2.24 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 2.11. In 2015, priority for high income dropped to 2.29. There is a significant

difference in the importance put on high income between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.043$ ) and also between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.001$ ) but none between 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, good advancement opportunities are ranked at 1.94 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 1.90. In 2015, priority for good advancement opportunities dropped to 2.18. There are significant differences in the importance attached to good advancement opportunities between 1997 and 2015 ( $p=0.000$ ) and also between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.000$ ) but not between 1997 and 2005.

In 1997, having an interesting job is prioritized at 1.51 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, its importance rose to 1.45. In 2015, priority for interesting jobs dropped to 1.59. There is a significant difference on the importance put on interesting jobs between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.000$ ) but not between 1997 and 2005 and not between 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, working independently is ranked at 2.03 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 1.89. In 2015, priority for working independently dropped to 1.98. Significant difference in the importance put on working independently is found between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.010$ ) but not between 2005 and 2015 and not between 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, having a job that enables workers to help others is ranked at 2.12 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 1.95. In 2015, priority further improved to 1.87. There is a significant difference in the importance attached to jobs that enable help to be given to others between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.002$ ) and also between 1997 and 2015 ( $p=0.000$ ) but not between 2005 and 2015.

In 1997, usefulness to society is ranked at 2.15 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 1.99. In 2015, priority for usefulness to society further rose to 1.96.

Significant differences in the importance put on usefulness to society are observed between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.004$ ) and also between 1997 and 2015 ( $p=0.004$ ) but not between 2005 and 2015.

In 1997, the priority put on time flexibility is 2.70 out of 5 on the scale. In 2005, the premium put on its importance rose to 2.35. In 2015, priority for time flexibility dropped to 2.40. There is a significant difference in the importance put on time flexibility between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.000$ ) and also between 1997 and 2015 ( $p=0.000$ ) but not between 2005 and 2015.

On the whole, for the 1997 survey, interesting job, job security and good career prospects were job values ranked with high importance. Working independently, having a job that allows help to be given to others and usefulness of the job to society were in the mid-range of importance. High income and time flexibility were the values with low importance ranking. For the 2005 survey, interesting job, job security and working independently were highly ranked while good career prospects, having a job that allows help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society were in the mid-range of importance. High income and time flexibility were again the least ranked in importance. In 2015, with the introduction of skill utilization variable, some changes are found as job security, skill utilization and interesting job are ranked with high importance. This was followed by having a job that allows help to be given to others, the usefulness of the job to society and working independently (mid-range importance). Career prospects, high income and time flexibility were least ranked in importance.

In sum, this study observes that the relative importance placed on jobs that allow help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society are the only job values with slightly positive movements over the years with higher importance assigned from 1997 through to 2015. For career prospects, a downward trend (decrease in importance) is found between 1997 and 2015 and

between 2005 and 2015, an upward trend (increase in importance) is found for time flexibility between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015. For the others, the changes recorded fluctuate such that no consistent trend is found. Interestingly, for all the surveys, while high income and time flexibility are the least ranked, interesting job and job security are the first or second highly ranked. Another observation is the high importance placed on skill utilization in the 2015 survey. Skill utilization placed second after job security but before interesting job.

## **5.6 Job outcomes and gender**

In this section, analysis of results of employees' perceptions of their job quality is examined. These results from Table 5.11 to 5.13 explain the group means of men and women in relation to their job outcomes. Independent t-tests are used in comparing means between the two groups. It should however be noted that with the ISSP scale, for some of the variables, for example, high income, job security, career prospects, interesting job, working independently, help to others, usefulness to society and good relations with superiors and colleagues, the lower the number, the better the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these variables range from strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (4) to strongly disagree (5). Additionally, the response categories for good relations with superiors and colleagues are very good (1), quite good (2), neither good nor bad (3), quite bad (4) and very bad (5). For work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work), the lower the number, the worse the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these are always (1), often (2), sometimes (3), hardly ever (4) and never (5).

Table 5.11

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between male and female (ISSP, 1997)**

Job Outcomes	Total n=144	Male (A) n=168	Female (B) (A-B)	Mean Diff	SE	p-value
Job is secure	2.43	2.50	2.29	0.217	0.143	0.131
Income is high	3.51	3.42	3.63	-.204	0.138	0.140
Career prospects	3.24	3.18	3.29	-.109	0.147	0.458
Interesting job	1.98	2.03	1.95	0.087	0.086	0.312
Work independent	1.86	1.88	1.83	0.052	0.099	0.598
Can help others	1.99	2.12	1.87	0.252	0.114	0.028*
Usefulness to society	2.11	2.19	2.09	0.097	0.130	0.454
Hard physical effort	3.49	3.27	3.63	-.368	0.161	0.023*
Stressful work	2.86	2.89	2.81	0.078	0.125	0.533
Good mgt relations	1.98	2.01	1.94	0.068	0.128	0.592
Good colleagues	1.57	1.61	1.57	0.041	0.086	0.633

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.12

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between male and female (ISSP, 2005)**

Job Outcomes	Total mean	Men (A) n=404	Women (B) n=471	Mean Diff (A-B)	SE	p-value
Job is secure	2.29	2.31	2.23	0.083	0.077	0.279
Income is high	3.29	3.17	3.41	-.247	0.078	0.002**
Career prospects	3.18	3.09	3.17	-.074	0.080	0.358
Interesting job	2.16	2.22	2.15	0.072	0.069	0.296
Work independent	2.04	2.07	2.03	0.040	0.072	0.574
Can help others	2.01	2.09	1.94	0.155	0.066	0.019**
Usefulness to society	2.23	2.33	2.17	0.158	0.075	0.034*
Hard physical effort	3.54	3.28	3.67	-.397	0.091	0.000***
Stressful work	2.96	2.98	2.95	0.031	0.068	0.649
Good mgt relations	2.03	2.02	2.04	-.016	0.072	0.829
Good colleagues	1.70	1.70	1.72	-.019	0.056	0.730

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n



Table 5.13

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between male and female (ISSP, 2015)**

Job Outcomes	Total mean	Men n=195(B)	Women n=190	Mean Diff. (A-B)	SE	p-value
Job is secure	2.25	2.10	2.38	-.278	0.102	0.006**
Income is high	3.19	2.92	3.42	-.498	0.107	0.000***
Career prospects	3.24	3.13	3.29	-.162	0.108	0.135
Interesting job	2.04	2.02	2.09	-.071	0.083	0.395
Work independent	2.00	2.01	1.95	0.063	0.088	0.478
Can help others	1.88	1.97	1.78	0.194	0.080	0.016*
Usefulness to society	2.03	2.18	1.87	0.321	0.096	0.001**
Hard physical effort	3.40	3.16	3.58	-.424	0.133	0.002**
Stressful work	2.79	2.77	2.75	-.029	0.084	0.729
Good mgt relations	2.01	1.96	2.02	-.061	0.095	0.521
Good colleagues	1.69	1.70	1.71	-.012	0.075	0.871
Can use skills	1.77	1.75	1.78	-.022	0.085	0.794

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

***H4(a): Men perceive higher income than women***

In 1997, men were more likely than women to rate their income as high but the difference is not significant (p=0.140). In 2005 and 2015, men were more likely than women to rate their income as high and the difference is significant (p=0.002 and p=0.000). Thus, hypothesis 4(a) is supported for 2005 and 2015 but not for 1997.

***H4(b): Men perceive better job security than women***

In 1997 and 2005, men rated their job security lower than women but the difference is not significant (p=0.131 and p=0.279). Only in 2015 is there a significant difference in the rating men and women report on job security (p=0.006). This difference is as predicted: i.e. in 2015, women report lower job security than men. Thus, Hypothesis 4(b) is supported only for 2015 but not for 1997 and 2005.

***H4(c): Men perceive better opportunities for advancement than women***

In all surveys, men report better opportunities for advancement than women but there is no significant difference ( $p=0.458$ ,  $p=0.358$  and  $p=0.135$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4(c) is not supported.

***H4(d): Women perceive better job content ((i) My job is interesting, (ii) In my job I can help other people, (iii) I can work independently, (iv) my job is useful to society) than men***

In 1997 and 2005, women rated their jobs as more interesting than men but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.312$  and  $p=0.296$ ). In 2015, men rated their jobs as more interesting than women but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.395$ ). Thus, hypothesis 4(di) is not supported.

In all surveys, women rated higher that their jobs enable them to be of help to other people than men and this difference is significant ( $p=0.028$ ,  $p=0.019$  and  $p=0.016$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4(dii) is supported.

Women rated higher that their jobs allow them to work independently than men for all waves but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.598$ ,  $p=0.574$  and  $p=0.478$ ). Thus, hypothesis 4(diii) is not supported.

In 1997, women rated higher that their jobs are useful to society than men but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.454$ ). In 2005 and 2015, women are more likely than men to report that their jobs are useful to society and the difference is significant ( $p=0.034$  and  $p=0.001$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4(div) is supported for 2005 and 2015 but not for 1997.

***H4(ei): Women perceive better relations with superiors than men***

In the 1997 survey, men rated relations with superiors worse than women, but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.592$ ). In 2005 and 2015 men rated relations with superiors better than women

but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.829$  and  $p=0.521$ ). Thus, hypothesis 4(ei) is not supported.

***H4(eii): Women perceive better relations with colleagues than men***

In 1997, women rated relations with colleagues better than men but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.633$ ). For 2005 and 2015, men rated relations with colleagues better than women but the difference is non-significant ( $p=0.730$  and  $p=0.871$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4 (eii) is not supported.

***H4(f): Men perceive greater work intensity ((i) hard physical work and (ii) stressful work) than women***

In all three surveys, men report higher exertion of physical effort than women and the difference is significant ( $p=0.023$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.002$ ). Thus, hypothesis 4(fi) is supported.

Men report more stressful work than women (although almost identical) but the difference is not significant for all the surveys ( $p=0.533$ ,  $p=0.649$  and  $p=0.729$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4(fii) is not supported.

An addition to the 2015 survey was the variable, perception of utilizing skills and experience at work which was omitted from previous surveys. This variable was therefore analyzed with the objective of finding out if gender was related to this variable. Though no hypothesis was postulated, the result shows no significant difference ( $p=0.749$ ) although men report that their jobs allow them to use more of their skills and experience than women.

In a nutshell, the thesis finds that employees' gender was related to the amount of physical efforts exerted and the type of job they did (jobs that allow help to be given to others). Men reported more physical effort than women but women tended to be in jobs that allow help to others more than men. Gender was unrelated to career prospects, having an interesting job, working independently,

skill utilization, better relations with management and with colleagues and stressful work. Thus, hypotheses regarding these outcomes are not supported. Also, there were substantial support for higher income and usefulness of the job to society for some of the years. Regarding the usefulness of the job to society, women were more likely than men to report this job outcome. For all three surveys, men were more advantaged than women regarding high income although no significant difference was found for 1997. Gender tended to be related to high income for 2005 and 2015. There was partial support for job security such that in 2015, men were more likely to report higher job security than women and the difference was significant.

### **5.7 Job outcomes and employment status**

In this section, the study examines results on employees' perceptions of their job quality and the type of employment contract. Referring to Table 5.14 to 5.16, results on group means of full-timers and part-timers in relation to their job outcomes are explained. Independent t-tests are used in comparing means between the two groups. It should however be noted that with the ISSP scale, for some of the variables, for example high income, job security, career prospects, interesting job, working independently, help to others, usefulness to society and good relations with superiors and colleagues, the lower the number, the better the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these variables range from strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (4) and to strongly disagree (5). Additionally, the response categories for good relations with superiors and colleagues are very good (1), quite good (2), neither good nor bad (3), quite bad (4) and very bad (5). For work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work), the lower the number, the worse the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these range from always (1), often (2), sometimes (3), hardly ever (4) and to never (5).

Table 5.14

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between Full and Part time employees (ISSP, 1997)**

<b>Job Outcomes</b>	<b>Total n=157</b>	<b>Full (a) n=48</b>	<b>Part (b) (a-b)</b>	<b>Mean Diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Job is secure	2.43	2.41	2.37	0.04	0.180	0.850
Income is high	3.51	3.33	3.88	-.545	0.133	0.000***
Career prospects	3.24	3.28	3.10	0.174	0.176	0.326
Interesting job	1.98	1.96	2.06	-.105	0.108	0.333
Work independently	1.86	1.88	1.86	0.014	0.126	0.914
Can help others	1.99	2.06	1.88	0.177	0.146	0.226
Usefulness to society	2.11	2.25	1.89	0.355	0.142	0.014*
Hard physical effort	3.49	3.48	3.70	-.226	0.194	0.246
Stressful work	2.86	2.69	3.27	-.576	0.144	0.002**
Good mgt relations	1.98	2.08	1.80	0.277	0.131	0.037*
Good colleagues	1.57	1.59	1.61	-.017	0.107	0.873

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.15

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between Full and Part time employees (ISSP, 2005)**

<b>Job Outcomes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Full n=528</b>	<b>Part n=140</b>	<b>Mean Diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Job is secure	2.29	2.23	2.31	-.082	0.100	0.413
Income is high	3.29	3.21	3.56	-.353	0.092	0.000*
Career prospects	3.18	3.08	3.27	-.191	0.105	0.068
Interesting job	2.16	2.20	2.03	0.173	0.085	0.042*
Work independently	2.04	2.14	1.92	0.218	0.094	0.020*
Can help others	2.01	2.06	1.87	0.193	0.087	0.026*
Usefulness to society	2.23	2.29	2.09	0.198	0.095	0.038*
Hard physical effort	3.54	3.50	3.51	-.010	0.120	0.931
Stressful work	2.96	2.87	3.01	-.141	0.084	0.094
Good mgt relations	2.03	2.10	1.94	0.153	0.093	0.102
Good colleagues	1.70	1.73	1.66	0.067	0.072	0.350

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.16

**Job outcomes: Mean differences between Full and Part-time employees (ISSP, 2015)**

Job Outcomes	Total	Full (a) n=272	Part (b) n=72	Mean Diff (a-b)	SE	p-value
Job is secure	2.24	2.14	2.50	-.364	0.131	0.006*
Income is high	3.19	2.94	3.80	-.854	0.133	0.000*
Career prospects	3.24	3.06	3.47	-.407	0.138	0.003*
Interesting job	2.04	1.98	2.14	-.162	0.103	0.116
Work independently	2.00	1.94	1.92	0.022	0.107	0.838
Can help others	1.88	1.88	1.83	0.044	0.102	0.668
Usefulness to society	2.03	2.02	2.18	-.163	0.133	0.226
Hard physical effort	3.40	3.43	3.26	0.163	0.171	0.344
Stressful work	2.79	2.71	2.88	-.171	0.106	0.105
Good mgt relations	2.01	2.04	1.77	0.267	0.125	0.034*
Good colleagues	1.69	1.71	1.63	0.076	0.096	0.428
Can use skills	1.77	1.66	1.96	-.299	0.104	0.004*

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

***H7(a): Part-timers perceive lower job security than full-timers***

In 1997, part-timers were more likely to rate their jobs as secure than full-timers but there is no significant difference (p=0.850). In 2005, full-timers rated their jobs as more secure than part-timers but the difference is not significant (p=0.413). In 2015, full-timers rated their jobs as more secure than part-timers and the difference is significant (p=0.006). Thus, hypothesis 7(a) is supported only for 2015 but not for 1997 and 2005.

***H7(b): Part-timers perceive lower income than full-timers***

In all three surveys, full-timers were more likely than part-timers to rate their income as high and this was significant for all the years (p=0.000, p=0.000 and p=0.000). Thus, hypothesis 7(b) is supported for all the surveys.

***H7(c): Part-timers perceive fewer opportunities for advancement than full-timers***

In 1997, full-timers were more likely to rate their career prospects as better than part-timers but there is no significant difference ( $p=0.326$ ). In 2005, full-timers rated their career prospects as better than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.068$ ). In 2015, full-timers were more likely to rate their career prospects as better than part-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.003$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7c is supported only for 2015 but not for 1997 and 2005.

***H7(d): Full-timers perceive better job content than part-timers ((i)interesting jobs, (ii) independent work, (iii) can help other people and (iv) usefulness to society)***

In 1997 and 2015, full-timers were more likely to rate their jobs as interesting than part-timers but there are no significant differences ( $p=0.333$  and  $p=0.116$ ). In 2005, part-timers rated their jobs as more interesting than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.042$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(di) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997 and 2015, part-timers were more likely to rate their jobs as giving them more independence than full-timers but there are no significant differences ( $p=0.914$  and  $p=0.838$ ). In 2005, part-timers rated their jobs as giving them more independence than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.020$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(dii) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997 and 2015, part-timers are more likely to rate their jobs as giving them the opportunity to help others than full-timers but there are no significant differences ( $p=0.226$  and  $p=0.668$ ). In 2005, part-timers are more likely to rate their jobs as giving them the opportunity to help others than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.026$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(eiii) is not supported for all the years.

In 1997 and 2005, part-timers are more likely to rate their jobs as being useful to society than full-timers and the differences are significant ( $p=0.014$  and  $p=0.038$ ). In 2015, full-timers are more likely to rate their jobs as being useful to society than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.226$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(div) is not supported for all the years.

***H7(f): Full-timers perceive more positive relationships (superiors and colleagues) than part-timers***

In 1997 and 2015, part-timers rated relations with superiors better than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.037$  and  $p=0.034$ ). In 2005, part-timers rated relations with superiors better than full-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.102$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(fi) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997, full-timers rated relations with colleagues better than part-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.873$ ). In 2005 and 2015, part-timers rated relations with colleagues better than full-timers but the differences are not significant ( $p=0.350$  and  $p=0.428$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(fii) is not supported for all the surveys.

***H7(g): Full-timers perceive higher level of work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work) than part-timers***

In 1997 and 2005, full-timers rated their jobs as involving harder physical effort than part-timers but the differences are not significant ( $p=0.246$  and  $p=0.931$ ). In 2015, part-timers rated their jobs as involving harder physical efforts than full-timers but the difference is not significant ( $p=0.344$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(gi) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997, part-timers rated their jobs as less stressful than full-timers and the difference is significant ( $p=0.002$ ). In 2005 and 2015, part-timers rated their jobs as less stressful than full-timers but the



differences are not significant ( $p=0.094$  and  $p=0.105$ ). Thus, hypothesis 7(gii) is supported for 1997 but not for 2005 and 2015.

An addition to the 2015 survey was the perception of utilizing skills and experience at work which was omitted from previous surveys. This variable was therefore analyzed with the objective of finding out if it is affected by employees' employment status. Though no hypothesis was postulated, the result shows a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.004$ ) as full-timers' perception was higher than part-timers. Full-time workers were more likely to use their skills and experiences than their part-time counterparts.

In sum, the study finds support for high income in all surveys with full-timers reporting to earn higher income than part-timers. There is partial support for job security, career prospects (support for some of the surveys) and skill utilization. Full-timers were more likely to report higher job security, better career prospects and more skill utilization than part-timers for 2015. There is no support for having interesting jobs, working independently, being in jobs that allow help to be given to others and usefulness to society. Also, there is no support for good relations with superiors and collegial relations and work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work).

## **5.8 Job outcomes and educational attainments**

Section 5.8 discusses results of employees' perceptions of their job quality in relation to the level of their qualifications. Referring to Tables 5.17 to 5.19, ANOVA and pairwise comparison are used in comparing means among employees with primary, secondary, vocational and degree qualifications. It should however be noted that with the ISSP scale, for some of the variables, for example high income, job security, career prospects, interesting job, working independently, help to others, usefulness to society and good relations with superiors and colleagues, the lower the

number, the better the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these variables includes strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (4) and strongly disagree (5). Additionally, the response categories for good relations with superiors and colleagues are very good (1), quite good (2), neither good nor bad (3) quite bad (4) and very bad (5). For work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work), the lower the number, the worse the perception of its outcomes. The response categories for these are always (1), often (2), sometimes (3), hardly ever (4) and never (5).

*Table 5.17*

**Job Quality differences and the level of educational attainment (ISSP, 1997)**

<b>Job Outcomes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Vocational</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Partial Eta</b>
			<b>n=93</b>	<b>n=150</b>	<b>n=44</b>		
Job is secure	2.43	n/a	2.70	2.36	2.19	0.040*	0.027
Income is high	3.51	n/a	3.83	3.39	3.08	0.001***	0.060
Career prospects	3.24	n/a	3.49	3.19	2.94	0.032*	0.030
Interesting job	1.98	n/a	2.11	1.97	1.86	0.141	0.017
Work independently	1.86	n/a	1.88	1.89	1.86	0.974	0.000
Can help others	1.99	n/a	2.23	1.91	2.03	0.054	0.025
Usefulness to society	2.11	n/a	2.25	2.12	1.89	0.190	0.014
Hard physical effort	3.49	n/a	3.29	3.55	3.83	0.076	0.022
Stressful work	2.86	n/a	3.06	2.82	2.39	0.001**	0.057
Good mgt relations	1.98	n/a	1.61	2.20	2.06	0.000***	0.069
Good colleagues	1.57	n/a	1.58	1.63	1.50	0.522	0.006

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 20.1

<b>My job is secure</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary – vocational	0.345	0.162	(-.046, .737)	0.104
Secondary – degree holders	0.510	0.222	(-.025, 1.046)	0.067
Vocational – secondary	-.345	0.162	(-.737, .046)	0.104
Vocational – degree holders	0.165	0.198	(-.311, .642)	1.000
Degree holders – secondary	-.510	0.222	(-1.046, .025)	0.060
Degree holders – vocational	-.165	0.198	(-.642, .311)	1.000
<b>My income is high</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.444	0.152	(.076, .811)	0.012*
Secondary – degree holders	0.750	0.207	(.250, 1.250)	0.001***
Vocational – secondary	-.444	0.152	(-.811, -.076.)	0.012*
Vocational – degree holders	0.306	0.184	(-.138, .751)	0.293
Degree holders – secondary	-.750	0.207	(-1.250, -.025)	0.001***
Degree holders – vocational	-.306	0.184	(-.751, .138)	0.293
<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.307	0.158	(-.075, .689)	0.163
secondary – degree holders	0.547	0.216	(.027, 1.068)	0.036*
Vocational – secondary	-.307	0.158	(-.689, .075)	0.163
Vocational – degree holders	0.241	0.193	(-.224, .705)	0.638
Degree – secondary	-.547	0.216	(-1.068, -.027)	0.036*
Degree holders – vocational	-.241	0.193	(-.705, .224)	0.638
<b>Interesting job</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.143	0.097	(-.092, .378)	0.428
Secondary – degree holders	0.254	0.133	(-.068, .576)	0.176
Vocational – secondary	-.143	0.097	(-.378, .092)	0.428
Vocational – degree holders	0.110	0.119	(-.176, .397)	1.000
Degree holders – secondary	-.254	0.133	(-.576, .068)	0.176
Degree holders – vocational	-.110	0.119	(-.397, .176)	1.000

<b>Working independently</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	-.010	0.115	(-.287, .268)	1.000
Secondary – degree holders	0.022	0.157	(-.357, .402)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.010	0.115	(-.268, .287)	1.000
Vocational – degree holders	0.032	0.140	(-.305, .368)	1.000
Degree holders – secondary	-.022	0.157	(-.402, .357)	1.000
Degree holders – vocational	-.032	0.140	(-.368, .305)	1.000

<b>Help to others</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.319	0.131	(.003, .635)	0.048
Secondary – degree holders	0.198	0.180	(-.236, .632)	0.818
Vocational – secondary	-.319	0.131	(-.635, -.003)	0.048
Vocational – degree holders	-.121	0.161	(-.508, .267)	1.000
Degree holders – secondary	-.198	0.180	(-.632, .236)	0.818
Degree holders – vocational	0.121	0.161	(-.267, .508)	1.000

<b>Useful to society</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.122	0.143	(-.223, .467)	1.000
Secondary – degree holders	0.357	0.195	(-.114, .828)	0.207
Vocational – secondary	-.122	0.143	(-.467, .223)	1.000
Vocational – degree holders	0.235	0.174	(-.185, .655)	0.535
Degree holders – secondary	-.357	0.195	(-.828, .114)	0.207
Degree holders – vocational	-.235	0.174	(-.655, .185)	0.535

<b>Hard physical effort</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary – vocational	-.256	0.176	(-.680, .168)	0.438
Secondary – degree	-.543	0.241	(-1.125, .038)	0.076
Vocational – secondary	.256	0.176	(-.168, .680)	0.438
Vocational – degree	-.287	0.215	(-.806, .233)	0.554
Degree – secondary	.543	0.241	(-.039, 1.125)	0.076
Degree – vocational	.287	0.215	(-.233, .806)	0.554

<b>Stressful work</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	0.244	0.131	(-.072, .561)	0.192
Secondary – degree holders	0.676	0.180	(.241, 1.110)	0.001***
Vocational – secondary	-.244	0.131	(-.561, .072)	0.192
Vocational – degree holders	0.431	0.161	(.044, .819)	0.023**
Degree holders – secondary	-.676	0.180	(-1.110, -.241)	0.001***
Degree holders – vocational	-.431	0.161	(-.819, -.044)	0.023**
<b>Good management relations</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	-.587	0.142	(-.931, -.244)	0.000***
Secondary – degree holders	-.443	0.195	(-.912, .026)	0.071
Vocational – secondary	0.587	0.142	(.244, .931)	0.000***
Vocational – degree holders	0.144	0.174	(-.275, .564)	1.000
Degree holders – secondary	0.443	0.195	(-.026, .912)	0.071
Degree holders – vocational	-.144	0.174	(-.564, .275)	1.000
<b>Good colleague relations</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Secondary - vocational	-.049	0.098	(-.285, .187)	1.000
Secondary – degree holders	0.083	0.133	(-.238, .404)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.049	0.098	(-.187, .285)	1.000
Vocational – degree holders	0.132	0.118	(-.153, .418)	0.793
Degree holders – secondary	-.083	0.133	(-.404, .238)	1.000
Degree holders – vocational	-.132	0.118	(-.418, .153)	0.793

Table 5.18

**Job Quality differences and the level of educational attainment (ISSP, 2005)**

Job Outcomes	Total	Primary n=178	Secondary n=263	Vocational n=235	Degree n=185	p-value	Partial Eta
Job is secure	2.29	2.39	2.25	2.29	2.27	0.626	0.002
Income is high	3.29	3.58	3.22	3.36	3.01	0.000***	0.032
Career prospects	3.18	3.38	3.09	3.22	3.04	0.018*	0.012
Interesting job	2.16	2.36	2.12	2.13	2.12	0.052	0.009
Work independently	2.04	2.07	1.92	1.99	2.25	0.003**	0.017
Can help others	2.01	2.22	1.93	2.00	1.98	0.018*	0.012
Usefulness to society	2.23	2.27	2.28	2.22	2.18	0.716	0.002
Hard physical effort	3.54	2.97	3.50	3.42	4.21	0.000***	0.107
Stressful work	2.96	3.00	3.07	2.99	2.76	0.004**	0.016
Good mgt relations	2.03	1.96	1.97	1.98	2.22	0.022*	0.012
Good colleagues	1.70	1.74	1.70	1.65	1.70	0.627	0.002

Note:\*= p<0.05, \*\* = p<0.01, \*\*\* = p<0.001

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.18.1

<b>My job is secure</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.143	0.111	(-.152, .437)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.097	0.108	(-.189, .383)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.117	0.115	(-.187, .421)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.143	0.111	(-.437, .152)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.046	0.096	(-.300, .209)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.026	0.104	(-.300, .249)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.097	0.108	(-.383, .189)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.046	0.096	(-.209, .300)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.020	0.100	(-.245, .286)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.117	0.115	(-.421, .187)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.026	0.104	(-.249, .300)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.020	0.100	(-.286, .245)	1.000

<b>My income is high</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.359	0.111	(.067, .651)	0.007
Primary – vocational	0.214	0.107	(-.070, .497)	0.279
Primary – degree	0.565	0.114	(.262, .867)	0.000***
Secondary – primary	-.359	0.111	(-.651, -.067)	0.007**
Secondary – vocational	-.149	0.095	(-.396, .105)	0.753
Secondary – degree	.206	0.103	(-.066, .477)	0.275
Vocational – primary	-.214	0.107	(-.497, .070)	0.279
Vocational – secondary	0.145	0.095	(-.105, .396)	0.753
Vocational – degree	0.351	0.099	(.088, .613)	0.003**
Degree – primary	-.565	0.114	(-.867, 2.262)	0.000***
Degree – secondary	-.206	0.103	(-.477, .066)	0.275
Degree – vocational	-.351	0.099	(-.613, -.088)	0.003**
<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.287	.113	(-.012, .586)	0.068
Primary – vocational	0.161	.110	(-.130, .452)	0.862
Primary – degree	0.338	.117	(.028, .648)	0.024*
Secondary – primary	-.287	.113	(-.586, .012)	0.068
Secondary – vocational	-.126	.097	(-.383, .131)	1.000
Secondary – degree	.051	.106	(-.228, .330)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.161	.110	(-.452, .130)	0.862
Vocational – secondary	0.126	.097	(-.131, .383)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.177	.102	(-.093, .447)	0.498
Degree – primary	-.338	.117	(-.648, -.028)	0.024*
Degree – secondary	-.051	.106	(-.330, .228)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.177	.102	(-.447, .093)	0.498

<b>My job is interesting</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.239	.097	(-.018, .496)	0.085
Primary – vocational	0.221	.094	(-.029, .471)	0.117
Primary – degree	0.235	.101	(-.031, .501)	0.120
Secondary – primary	-.239	.097	(-.496, .018)	0.085
Secondary – vocational	-.018	.084	(-.240, .204)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.004	.091	(-.245, .236)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.221	.094	(-.491, .029)	0.117
Vocational – secondary	0.018	.084	(-.204, .240)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.014	.088	(-.219, .246)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.235	.101	(-.501, .031)	0.120
Degree – secondary	.004	.091	(-.236, .245)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.014	.088	(-.246, .219)	1.000
<b>Can work independently</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.150	0.100	(-.114, .414)	0.799
Primary – vocational	0.085	0.097	(-.171, .341)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.179	0.103	(-.452, .094)	0.502
Secondary – primary	-.150	0.100	(-.414, .114)	0.799
Secondary – vocational	-.065	0.086	(-.292, .163)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.329	0.093	(-.575, -.083)	0.003**
Vocational – primary	-.085	0.097	(-.341, .171)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.065	0.086	(-.163, .292)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.264	0.090	(-.502, -.026)	0.020*
Degree – primary	0.179	0.103	(-.094, .452)	0.502
Degree – secondary	0.329	0.093	(.083, .575)	0.003**
Degree – vocational	0.264	0.090	(.026, .502)	0.020*



<b>Can help other people</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary - secondary	0.288	0.094	(.038, .538)	0.014*
Primary - vocational	0.221	0.092	(-.022, .463)	0.098
Primary – degree	0.236	0.097	(-.021, .494)	0.093
Secondary – primary	-.288	0.094	(-.538, -.038)	0.014*
Secondary – vocational	-.067	0.081	(-.281, .146)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.052	0.087	(-.282, .179)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.221	0.092	(-.463, .022)	0.098
Vocational – secondary	0.067	0.081	(-.146, .281)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.016	0.084	(-.207, .239)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.236	0.097	(-.494, .021)	0.093
Degree – secondary	0.052	0.087	(-.179, .282)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.016	0.084	(-.239, .207)	1.000
<b>Hard physical work</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary - secondary	-.532	0.126	(-.865, -.198)	0.000***
Primary – vocational	-.455	0.122	(-.779, -.132)	0.001***
Primary – degree	-1.243	0.130	(-1.588, -.899)	0.000***
Secondary – primary	0.532	0.126	(.198, .865)	0.000***
Secondary – vocational	0.076	0.108	(-.210, .363)	1.000
secondary – degree	-.712	0.117	(-1.021, -.402)	0.000***
Vocational – primary	0.455	0.122	(.132, .779)	0.001***
Vocational – secondary	-.076	0.108	(-.363, .210)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.788	0.113	(-1.087, -.489)	0.000***
Degree – primary	1.243	0.130	(.899, 1.588)	0.000***
Degree – secondary	0.712	0.117	(.402, 1.021)	0.000***
Degree – vocational	0.877	0.113	(.489, 1.087)	0.000***

<b>Stressful work</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary - secondary	-.071	0.095	(-.324, .181)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.008	0.093	(-.237, .253)	1.001
Primary – degree	0.241	0.099	(-.020, .502)	0.089
Secondary – primary	0.071	0.095	(-.181, .324)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.079	0.082	(-.138, .296)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.312	0.089	(.077, .547)	0.003
Vocational – primary	-.008	0.093	(-.253, .237)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.079	0.082	(-.296, .138)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.233	0.086	(.006, .460)	0.041
Degree – primary	-.241	0.099	(-.502, .020)	0.089
Degree – secondary	-.312	0.089	(-.547, -.077)	0.003
Degree – vocational	-.233	0.086	(-.460, -.006)	0.041

<b>Good management relations</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary - secondary	-.011	0.104	(-.285, .263)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.019	0.101	(-.285, .247)	1.001
Primary – degree	-.262	0.107	(-.545, .022)	0.090
Secondary – primary	0.011	0.104	(-.263, .285)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.008	0.088	(-.242, .225)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.251	0.096	(-.504, .002)	0.054
Vocational – primary	0.019	0.101	(-.247, .285)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.008	0.088	(-.225, .242)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.243	0.093	(-.487, .002)	0.054
Degree – primary	0.262	0.107	(-.022, .545)	0.090
Degree – secondary	0.251	0.096	(-.002, .504)	0.054
Degree – vocational	0.243	0.093	(-.002, .487)	0.054

<b>Relations with colleagues</b>	<b>Mean diff</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.045	0.080	(-.167, .258)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.099	0.078	(-.107, .305)	1.001
Primary – degree	0.044	0.083	(-.175, .263)	1.000
Secondary– primary	-.045	0.080	(-.258, .167)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.053	0.068	(-.127, .233)	1.000
Beyond primary – degree	-.001	0.074	(-.196, .193)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.099	0.078	(-.305, .107)	1.001
Vocational – secondary	-.053	0.068	(-.233, .127)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.055	0.071	(-.242, .132)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.044	0.083	(-.263, .175)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.001	0.074	(-.193, .196)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.055	0.071	(-.132, .242)	1.000

*Table 5.19*

**Job Quality differences and the level of educational attainment (ISSP, 2015)**

<b>Job Outcomes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Primary n=45</b>	<b>Secondary n=99</b>	<b>Vocational n=95</b>	<b>Degree n=145</b>	<b>p.value</b>	<b>Partial Eta</b>
Job is secure	2.25	2.44	2.19	2.17	2.29	0.407	0.007
Income is high	3.19	3.73	3.29	3.25	2.92	0.000***	0.056
Career prospects	3.24	3.35	3.35	3.24	3.12	0.273	0.010
Interesting job	2.04	2.12	2.09	2.04	1.97	0.592	0.005
Work independently	2.00	1.95	2.03	1.93	2.05	0.728	0.003
Can help others	1.88	1.98	1.82	1.86	1.87	0.767	0.003
Usefulness to society	2.03	2.22	2.03	2.06	1.95	0.390	0.008
Hard physical effort	3.40	2.49	3.29	3.04	3.99	0.000***	0.163
Stressful work	2.79	2.76	2.73	2.83	2.80	0.789	0.003
Good mgt relations	2.01	1.98	1.91	2.10	2.03	0.527	0.006
Good colleagues	1.69	1.72	1.63	1.72	1.71	0.759	0.003
Can use skills	1.77	1.93	1.77	1.74	1.70	0.387	0.008

Note: \* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

N for each variable might vary slightly from the total n

Table 5.19.1

<b>My job is secure</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.256	0.179	(-.220, .732)	0.932
Primary – vocational	0.267	0.179	(-.208, .742)	0.822
Primary – degree	0.152	0.170	(-.300, .603)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.256	0.179	(-.732, .220)	0.932
Secondary – vocational	0.012	0.138	(-.354, .377)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.104	0.126	(-.438, .230)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.267	0.179	(-.742, .208)	0.822
Vocational – secondary	-.012	0.138	(-.377, .354)	1.000
vocational – degree	-.116	0.125	(-.448, .217)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.152	0.170	(-.603, .300)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.104	0.126	(-.230, .438)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.116	0.125	(-.217, .448)	1.000
<b>My income is high</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.438	0.191	(-.069, .945)	0.136
Primary – vocational	0.479	0.191	(-.027, .986)	0.075
Primary – degree	0.816	0.182	(.334, 1.297)	0.000***
Secondary – primary	-.438	0.191	(-.945, .069)	0.136
Secondary – vocational	0.042	0.144	(-.341, .425)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.378	0.132	(.028, .728)	0.026*
Vocational – primary	-.479	0.191	(-.986, .027)	0.075
Vocational – secondary	-.042	0.144	(-.425, .341)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.336	0.131	(-.012, .685)	0.065
Degree – primary	0.816	0.182	(-1.297, -.334)	0.000***
Degree – secondary	-.378	0.132	(-.728, -.028)	0.026*
Degree – vocational	-.336	0.131	(-.685, .012)	0.065

<b>Career prospects</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.003	0.192	(-.512, .506)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.107	0.192	(-.401, .616)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.234	0.182	(-.250, .718)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.003	0.172	(-.506, .512)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.110	0.144	(-.271, .491)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.237	0.131	(-.111, .585)	0.431
Vocational – primary	-.107	0.192	(-.616, .401)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.110	0.144	(-.491, .271)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.127	0.131	(-.220, .473)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.234	0.182	(-.718, .250)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.237	0.131	(-.585, .111)	0.431
Degree – vocational	-.127	0.131	(-.473, .220)	1.000
<b>Interesting job</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.034	0.145	(-.351, .418)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.083	0.145	(-.301, .467)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.148	0.138	(-.218, .513)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.034	0.145	(-.418, .351)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.049	0.110	(-.241, .340)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.114	0.100	(-.151, .379)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.083	0.145	(-.467, .301)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.049	0.110	(-.340, .241)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.065	0.100	(-.200, .329)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.148	0.138	(-.513, .218)	1.000
Degree – secondary	-.114	0.100	(-.379, .151)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.065	0.100	(-.329, .200)	1.000

<b>Working independently</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.078	0.161	(-.504, .348)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.021	0.161	(-.406, .447)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.094	0.153	(-.498, .311)	1.000
Secondary – primary	0.078	0.161	(-.348, .504)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.099	0.122	(-.225, .422)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.016	0.111	(-.309, .278)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.021	0.161	(-.447, .406)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.099	0.122	(-.422, .225)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.114	0.111	(-.409, .180)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.094	0.153	(-.311, .498)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.016	0.111	(-.278, .309)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.114	0.111	(-.180, .409)	1.000
<b>Can help others</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.152	0.142	(-.226, .530)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.113	0.142	(-.265, .491)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.107	0.136	(-.252, .467)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.152	0.142	(-.530, .226)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.039	0.108	(-.325, .247)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.045	0.099	(-.306, .217)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.113	0.142	(-.491, .265)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.039	0.108	(-.247, .325)	1.000
Vocational – degree	-.006	0.099	(-.267, .256)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.107	0.136	(-.467, .252)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.045	0.099	(-.217, .306)	1.000
Degree – vocational	0.006	0.099	(-.256, .267)	1.000

<b>Usefulness to society</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.190	0.171	(-.264, .644)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.159	0.172	(-.297, .615)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.271	0.163	(-.160, .702)	0.578
Secondary – primary	-.190	0.171	(-.644, .264)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.031	0.131	(-.378, .315)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.081	0.118	(-.232, .394)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.159	0.172	(-.615, .297)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.031	0.131	(-.315, .378)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.112	0.119	(-.204, .428)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.271	0.163	(-.702, .160)	0.578
Degree – secondary	-.081	0.118	(-.394, .232)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.112	0.119	(-.428, .204)	1.000
<b>Hard physical work</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	-.805	0.209	(-1.361, -.250)	0.001***
Primary – vocational	-.551	0.210	(-1.107, .006)	0.054
Primary – degree	-1.505	0.198	(-2.031, -.979)	0.000***
Secondary – primary	0.805	0.209	(.250, 1.361)	0.001***
Secondary – vocational	0.255	0.164	(-.181, .690)	0.733
Secondary – degree	-.699	0.149	(-1.096, -.303)	0.000***
vocational – primary	0.551	0.210	(-.006, 1.107)	0.054
vocational – secondary	-.255	0.164	(-.690, .181)	0.733
vocational – degree	-.954	0.150	(-1.351, -.557)	0.000***
Degree – primary	1.505	0.198	(.979, 2.031)	0.000***
Degree – secondary	0.699	0.149	(.303, 1.096)	0.000***
Degree – vocational	0.954	0.150	(.557, 1.351)	0.000***

<b>Stressful work</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.031	0.147	(-.359, .420)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.077	0.147	(-.466, .312)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.043	0.139	(-.412, .327)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.031	0.147	(-.420, .359)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.108	0.111	(-.403, .187)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.073	0.101	(-.342, .195)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.077	0.147	(-.312, .466)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.108	0.111	(-.187, .403)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.035	0.101	(-.234, .303)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.043	0.139	(-.327, .412)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.073	0.101	(-.195, .342)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.035	0.101	(-.303, .234)	1.000
<b>Good management relations</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.068	0.165	(-.369, .505)	1.000
Primary – vocational	-.119	0.164	(-.554, .316)	1.000
Primary – degree	-.055	0.156	(-.469, .358)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.068	0.165	(-.505, .369)	1.009
Secondary – vocational	-.187	0.130	(-.531, .157)	0.902
Secondary – degree	-.124	0.120	(-.441, .193)	1.000
Vocational – primary	0.119	0.164	(-.316, .554)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.187	0.130	(-.157, .531)	0.902
Vocational – degree	0.064	0.119	(-.251, .378)	1.000
Degree – primary	0.055	0.156	(-.358, .469)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.124	0.120	(-.193, .441)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.064	0.119	(-.378, .251)	1.000



<b>Good colleague relations</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.096	0.130	(-.248, .440)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.001	0.129	(-.341, .342)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.012	0.122	(-.311, .336)	1.000
Secondary – primary	-.096	0.130	(-.440, .248)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	-.095	0.101	(-.363, .173)	1.000
Secondary – degree	-.084	0.092	(-.328, .161)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.001	0.129	(-.342, .341)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	0.095	0.101	(-.173, .363)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.011	0.091	(-.173, .253)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.012	0.122	(-.336, .311)	1.000
Degree – secondary	0.084	0.092	(-.161, .328)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.011	0.091	(-.253, .230)	1.000
<b>Can use skills</b>	<b>Mean diff.</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Primary – secondary	0.157	0.145	(-.228, .543)	1.000
Primary – vocational	0.197	0.145	(-.189, .582)	1.000
Primary – degree	0.235	0.138	(-.130, .600)	0.531
Secondary – primary	-.157	0.145	(-.543, .228)	1.000
Secondary – vocational	0.039	0.113	(-.260, .338)	1.000
Secondary – degree	0.078	0.103	(-.195, .350)	1.000
Vocational – primary	-.197	0.145	(-.582, .189)	1.000
Vocational – secondary	-.039	0.113	(-.338, .260)	1.000
Vocational – degree	0.039	0.103	(-.234, .311)	1.000
Degree – primary	-.235	0.138	(-.600, .130)	0.531
Degree – secondary	-.078	0.103	(-.350, .195)	1.000
Degree – vocational	-.039	0.103	(-.311, .234)	1.000

***H5(a): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of higher income***

In 1997, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of higher income ( $p=0.001$ ). Employees with vocational qualifications are more likely to rate their income as high than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.012$ ). Degree holders are more likely to rate

their income as high than those with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.001$ ). There is a lack of significant differences between vocational and degree holders ( $p=0.293$ ).

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of higher income ( $p=0.032$ ). Employees with secondary qualifications are likely more to rate their income as high than those with primary education ( $p=0.007$ ). Also, degree holders are more likely to rate their income as high than employees with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.003$ ) and primary qualifications ( $p=0.000$ ). There is a lack of significant differences between primary and vocational ( $p=0.279$ ) and between vocational and secondary ( $p=0.753$ ).

In 2015, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of higher income ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with degrees are more likely to rate their income as high than those with primary qualifications ( $p=0.000$ ) and secondary qualifications ( $p=0.026$ ). There is a lack of significant differences between primary and secondary ( $p=0.136$ ), between primary and vocational ( $p=1.000$ ) and between degree and vocational ( $p=0.065$ ). Thus, hypothesis 5a is partially supported for all surveys.

***H5(b): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of better job security***

In 1997, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of their job security ( $p=0.040$ ). However, comparisons between the various educational levels did not show any significant differences. Thus, this difference could be to chance.

In 2005 and 2015, the level of education has no significant effect on the perception of job security ( $p=0.626$  and  $p=0.407$ ). There is a lack of significant differences between all categories. Thus, hypothesis 5(b) is not supported for all surveys.

***H5(c): The higher the level of education, the stronger the perception of good advancement opportunities***

In 1997, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of good career prospects ( $p=0.032$ ). Employees with degrees are more likely to rate their advancement opportunities as good than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.036$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for all other categories.

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of good advancement opportunities ( $p=0.018$ ). Employees with degrees are more likely to rate good advancement opportunities as good than employees with primary qualifications ( $p=0.024$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for all other categories.

In 2015, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of good career prospects ( $p=0.273$ ). Thus, hypothesis 5(c) is partially supported for 1997 and 2005 but not for 2015.

***H5(d): The higher the level of education, the weaker the perception of intrinsic job quality (i) good job content, (ii) good interpersonal relationships and (iii) high work intensity***

In the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of having interesting jobs ( $p=0.141$ ,  $p=0.052$  and  $p=0.592$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 5(di) is not supported for the surveys.

In 1997, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of having jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.054$ ). Pairwise comparisons however, reveal a significant difference between secondary and vocational categories ( $p=0.048$ ) with the latter more likely to rate this variable high than the former but there are no differences for the other categories.

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of having jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.018$ ). Employees with secondary qualifications are more likely to

rate higher having jobs that allow help to be given to others than those with primary qualifications ( $p=0.014$ ). There are no significant differences on the other categories.

In 2015, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of having jobs that allow help to be given to others ( $p=0.767$ ) and there is a lack of significant difference for all categories.

In 1997 and 2015, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of working independently ( $p=0.974$  and  $p=0.728$ ).

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of working independently ( $p=0.003$ ). Employees with vocational qualifications are more likely to rate having jobs that allowed them to work independently than employees with degrees ( $p=0.020$ ). Employees with secondary qualifications are more likely to rate working independently than employees with degrees ( $p=0.003$ ) but there are no significant differences on the other categories.

In the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, the level of education had no significant effect on the perception of having jobs that are useful to the society ( $p=0.190$ ,  $p=0.176$  and  $p=0.390$ ). Thus, hypothesis 5(di) is not supported.

In 1997, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of good management relations ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with secondary qualifications are more likely to rate having good management relations than employees with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.000$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for all other categories.

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perception of good management relations ( $p=0.022$ ). However, comparisons on the various levels of education did not show any significant difference. Thus, this could have happened due to chance.

In 2015, the level of education had no significant effect on the perceptions of good management relations ( $p=0.527$ ).

In the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, the level of education had no significant effect on the perceptions of good relations with colleagues ( $p=0.522$ ,  $p=0.627$  and  $p=0.759$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 5(e) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997, the level of education had a significant effect on the perceptions of stressful work ( $p=0.001$ ). Employees who are degree holders were more likely to rate their jobs as stressful than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.001$ ) and those with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.023$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for all other categories.

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perceptions of stressful work ( $p=0.004$ ). Employees who are degree holders were more likely to rate their jobs as stressful than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.003$ ) and those with vocational qualifications ( $p=0.041$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for all other categories.

In 2015, the level of education had no significant effect on the perceptions of stressful work ( $p=0.789$ ). Thus, hypothesis 5(diii) is supported for 1997 and 2005 but not for 2015.

In 1997, the level of education had no significant effect on the perceptions of hard physical effort exertion ( $p=0.076$ ).

In 2005, the level of education had a significant effect on the perceptions of hard physical effort exertion ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with primary qualifications were more likely to rate their jobs as requiring the exertion of hard physical effort than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.000$ ), vocational qualifications ( $p=0.001$ ) and degree holders ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with vocational qualifications were also more likely to rate their jobs as requiring physical exertion than degree holders ( $p=0.000$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories.

In 2015, the level of education had a significant effect on the perceptions of hard physical effort ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with primary qualifications were more likely to rate their jobs as requiring

hard physical effort than employees with secondary qualifications ( $p=0.001$ ) and degree holders ( $p=0.000$ ). Employees with vocational qualifications were also more likely to rate their jobs as requiring physical exertion than degree holders ( $p=0.000$ ). There is a lack of significant differences for other categories.

An addition to the 2015 survey was the perception of utilizing skills and experience at work which was omitted from previous surveys. This variable was therefore analyzed with the objective of finding out if its use is associated with employees' level of education. The level of education has no significant effect on the perceptions of utilizing skills and experience ( $p=0.387$ ).

In sum, the study finds that for all surveys, while employees' level of education was associated with the perception of high income, it did not affect the perceptions of good collegial relations, skill utilization, usefulness of job to society and having an interesting job. For all surveys, employees with higher qualifications (vocational and degree) were more likely to rate their income as high than those with primary and secondary qualifications. For all other indicators, there is support for some of the years and no support for other years. Regarding the level of education and good career prospects, there were significant effects for 1997 and 2005 but none for 2015 such that employees with degrees were more likely to rate their advancement opportunities as better than those with primary and secondary qualifications. The level of education had no significant effect on perceptions of having to work independently for 1997 and 2015 although an effect was found for 2005 with employees possessing vocational and secondary qualifications more likely to rate their jobs as allowing them to work independently. Also, the level of education had a significant effect on perceptions of having good management relations and perceptions of stressful work for 1997 and 2005 but not for 2015. Employees with secondary qualifications were more likely to have better relations at work than any other group of workers. Employees who were

degree holders were more likely to rate their jobs as stressful than those with secondary and vocational qualifications for both 1997 and 2005. The level of education had a significant effect on perceptions of hard physical effort for 2005 and 2015 but not for 1997. For these two surveys, employees with primary qualifications were more likely to rate their jobs as requiring the exertion of hard physical effort than any other category of workers.

## 5.9 Effect of job quality on job satisfaction

In this section, the results of employees' perceptions of the impact of job quality on their job satisfaction are discussed. In reference to Table 5.20, regression analysis is done with the aim of analysing which job outcome variables predict satisfaction. The response categories for job satisfaction variables range from completely satisfied (1), very satisfied (2), fairly satisfied (3), neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (4), fairly dissatisfied (5), very dissatisfied (6) to completely dissatisfied (7).

Table 5.20

### The effects of job quality indicators on employee satisfaction

Job quality	1997			2005			2015		
	B	Beta	p-value	B	Beta	p-value	B	Beta	p-value
Job security	.077	.085	.176	.051	.051	.107	.025	.024	.594
High income	-.011	-.011	.864 <sup>b</sup>	.010	.011	.752	.122	.123	.008 <sup>b**</sup>
Good advancement	.095	.103	.177	.110	.114	.001***	.054	.053	.287
Interesting job	.504	.337	.000***	.341	.304	.000***	.465	.353	.000***
Work independently	-.009	-.007	.913	.043	.039	.242	-.076	-.062	.153
Can help others	.056	.051	.481	-.057	-.049	.198	.068	.051	.402
Usefulness to society	-.057	-.057	.411	.073	.070	.048*	.062	.055	.278
Hard physical effort	.063	.079	.186	.036	.042	.166	.057	.070	.102
Stressful work	-.140	-.130	.030*	-.155	-.139	.000***	-.219	-.168	.000***
Good mgt relations	.348	.339	.000***	.413	.381	.000***	.363	.322	.000***
Good colleagues	.121	.078	.237	.036	.025	.480	.057	.039	.429
Can use skills							.021	.016	.779

Note: means with the same letter are significantly different at the 0.05 level

\* =  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

***H6(a): Perceived higher income is positively related to employee satisfaction***

In 1997 and 2005, employees report that higher income did not significantly affect their satisfaction ( $p=0.864$  and  $p=0.752$ ). However, in 2015, employees' satisfaction was significantly influenced by higher income ( $p=0.007$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(a) is only supported for 2015 but not for 1997 and 2005.

***H6(b): Perceived better opportunities for advancement is positively related to employee satisfaction***

In 1997 and 2015, good advancement opportunities did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.177$  and  $p=0.289$ ). However, in 2005, employees' satisfaction is significantly influenced by good advancement opportunities ( $p=0.001$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(b) is only supported for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H6(c): Perceived greater job security is positively related to employee satisfaction***

In all the surveys, job security did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.176$ ,  $p=0.107$  and  $p=0.590$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(c) is not supported for all surveys.

***H6(d): Perceived better job content ((i) My job is interesting, (ii) In my job I can help other people, (iii) I can work independently, (iv) my job is useful to society) is positively related to employee satisfaction***

In all the surveys, having an interesting job significantly affected employee satisfaction ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.000$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(di) is supported for all surveys.

In all the surveys, jobs that allow help to be given to others did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.481$ ,  $p=0.198$  and  $p=0.323$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(dii) is not supported for all surveys.



In all the surveys, jobs that allow employees to work independently did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.913$ ,  $p=0.242$  and  $p=0.160$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(diii) is not supported for all surveys.

In 1997 and 2015, having a job that is useful to society did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.411$  and  $p=0.265$ ). However, in 2005, employees' satisfaction was influenced by usefulness of jobs to society. Thus, hypothesis 6(div) is supported only for 2005 but not for 1997 and 2015.

***H6(e): Perceived better interpersonal relationships ((i) superiors and (ii) colleagues) is positively related to employee satisfaction***

In all the surveys, better relations with management significantly affected employee satisfaction ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.000$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(ei) is supported for all surveys.

Better relations with colleagues did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.237$ ,  $p=0.480$  and  $p=0.440$ ) for all surveys. Therefore, hypothesis 6(eii) is not supported for all surveys.

Ability to use skills and experience did not significantly affect employee satisfaction for the 2015 survey ( $p=0.779$ ).

***H6(f): Perceived higher levels of work intensity ((i) hard physical effort (ii) stressful work) are negatively related to job satisfaction***

In all the surveys, hard physical effort did not significantly affect employee satisfaction ( $p=0.186$ ,  $p=0.166$  and  $p=0.104$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6(fi) is not supported for all surveys.

In all the surveys, stressful work significantly affected employee satisfaction ( $p=0.030$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $p=0.000$ ). Thus, hypothesis 6(fii) is supported for all surveys.

***H6(h): Perceived job satisfaction is more strongly associated with intrinsic job quality (good job content, good interpersonal relationships and high work intensity) than extrinsic job quality (income, job security and opportunities for advancement)***

In 1997, only three intrinsic job quality indicators are significantly related to job satisfaction: (interesting job ( $p=0.000$ ), good management relations ( $p=0.000$ ) and less stressful work ( $p=0.030$ ). None of the extrinsic indicators is significant. Hence as predicted, intrinsic job quality is more strongly associated with satisfaction. Thus, hypothesis 6(h) is supported for 1997.

In 2005, four intrinsic job quality indicators are significantly related to job satisfaction: (having an interesting job ( $p=0.000$ ), usefulness to society ( $p=0.048$ ), good management relations ( $p=0.000$ ) and stressful work ( $p=0.000$ ). Having good career prospects is the only extrinsic job quality indicator that is significantly related to job satisfaction. Hence as predicted, intrinsic job quality is more strongly associated with satisfaction. Thus, hypothesis 6(h) is supported for 2005.

In 2015, three intrinsic job quality indicators are significantly related to job satisfaction: having an interesting job ( $p=0.000$ ), less stressful work ( $p=0.000$ ) and good management relations ( $p=0.000$ ). Having high income is the only extrinsic job quality indicator that is significantly related to job satisfaction. Hence, as predicted, intrinsic job quality is more strongly associated with satisfaction. Thus, hypothesis 6(h) is supported for 2015.

In a nutshell, the impact of jobs that are less stressful, having an interesting job and with good management relations on employee satisfaction are consistent across the years. Employee satisfaction is therefore mostly dependent on these three features. As such positive attitudes and behaviours developed by satisfied employees affecting organisational performance are determined by interesting and less stressful jobs and also good management relations. All three attributes were related to the nature of the job itself thereby supporting the hypothesis that perceived job satisfaction is more strongly associated with intrinsic job quality than extrinsic job quality. In 1997, interesting job, stressful work, and good management relations predicted satisfaction. For 2005, good advancement opportunities, interesting job, useful to society, stressful work and good

management relations predicted satisfaction. In 2015, high income, interesting job, stressful job and good management relations predicted satisfaction.

### 5.10 Observations on job quality trends

In this section, observations on job quality changes are discussed. The results from table 24 relates to these changes as well the ranking of these outcomes. ANOVA and pairwise comparisons are employed in comparing means among the years.

*Table 5.21*

#### Comparison over the years in job quality indicators (Employees only)

Job Quality	1997 n=316	Rank	2005 n=875	Rank	2015 n=386	Rank
Job is secure	2.43	6	2.29	7	2.25	8
Income is high	3.51 <sup>a,b</sup>	8	3.29 <sup>a,b</sup>	9	3.19 <sup>b</sup>	9
Career prospects	3.24	7	3.18	8	3.24	10
Interesting job	1.98 <sup>a</sup>	3	2.16 <sup>a</sup>	5	2.04	7
Working independently	1.86 <sup>a</sup>	2	2.04 <sup>a</sup>	4	2.00	4
Can help others	1.99	4	2.01 <sup>c</sup>	2	1.88 <sup>c</sup>	3
Usefulness to society	2.11	5	2.23 <sup>c</sup>	6	2.03 <sup>c</sup>	6
Good management relations	1.98	3	2.03	3	2.01	5
Good collegial relations	1.57 <sup>a</sup>	1	1.70 <sup>a</sup>	1	1.69	2
Skill utilization					1.57	1
-----						
*Hard physical effort	3.49	1	3.54	1	3.40	1
*Stressful work	2.86	2	2.96 <sup>c</sup>	2	2.79 <sup>c</sup>	2

Note: differences in means with the same letter are significant at the 0.05 level

A different ranking for hard physical effort and stressful work is used due to the nature of the of responses (i.e. the higher the number, the better the perception of its outcomes). The response categories for these range from always (1), often (2), sometimes (3), hardly ever (4) to never (5).

In 1997, employees rated their job security at 2.43 out of 5 on the scale (i.e. close to the midpoint).

Perceptions of job security improved to 2.29 in 2005 and 2.25 in 2015 but none of these differences

was significant. Therefore, employees' perception of high job security has been improving over the years.

In 1997, employees rated 'my income is high' at 3.51 out of 5 on the scale. Perceptions of high income improved to 3.29 in 2005 and then to 3.19 in 2015. Employees received the highest income in 2015, followed by 2005 and 1997. There are no significant differences for 2005 and 2015 but significant changes in employees' income are observed between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.014$ ) and also between 1997 and 2015 ( $p=0.001$ ). Thus, employees' perception of high income has been improving over the years.

In 1997, employees rated their career prospects at 3.24 out of 5 on the scale. Perceptions of career prospects improved in 2005 (3.18) but deteriorated in 2015 (3.24) although none of these differences was significant. Therefore, there has been no significant changes in employees' evaluations of good career prospects over the years.

In 1997, employees rated their jobs as interesting at 1.98 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of having interesting jobs deteriorated in 2005 (2.16) but improved in 2015 (2.04). A significant difference was observed between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.012$ ) only but none between 2005 and 2015 and 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, employees rated their jobs as enabling them to be working independently at 1.86 out of 5 on the scale. Perceptions of working independently worsened in 2005 (2.04) but improved in 2015 (2.00). A significant difference was observed between 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.014$ ) but none between 1997 and 2015 and between 2005 and 2015.

In 1997, employees ranked their jobs as giving them the opportunity to help others at 1.99 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of being in jobs that enabled them to help others

deteriorated in 2005 (2.01) but improved in 2015 (1.88). A significant difference is found between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.017$ ) but not between 1997 and 2005 and not between 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, employees ranked their jobs as being useful to society at 2.11 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of being in jobs that allow them to be useful to society deteriorated in 2005 (2.23) but improved in 2015 (2.03). A significant difference is found between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.002$ ) but not between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015.

In 1997, employees ranked their jobs as requiring the exertion of physical effort at 3.49 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of being in jobs that require the exertion of physical effort improved to 3.54 in 2005 but deteriorated in 2015 (3.40). A significant difference is not found for any of the years.

In 1997, employees ranked their jobs as being stressful at 2.86 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of being in stressful jobs improved in 2005 (2.96) but deteriorated in 2015 (2.79). A significant difference is found between 2005 and 2015 ( $p=0.003$ ) but not between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015.

Employees ranked relations with managers at 1.98 out of 5 on the scale in 1997. Perceptions of better relations with managers deteriorated in 2005 (2.03) but improved in 2015 (2.01). However, no significant difference is found for any of the years.

In 1997, employees rated relations with colleagues at 1.57 out of 5 on the scale. Employees' perceptions of better relations with colleagues deteriorated in 2005 (1.70) but improved in 2015 (1.69). A significant difference is found for 1997 and 2005 ( $p=0.046$ ) but not between 1997 and 2015 and between 2005 and 2015.

On the whole, in terms of overall ranking of job outcomes for the 1997 survey, perceptions of good collegial relations, working independently, having an interesting job and good management relations were highly reported to have been experienced. Perceptions of having a job that allows help to be given to others, the usefulness of the job to society and job security were of rated mid-ranged. Perceptions of good career prospects and high income were outcomes with the least experience. Perceptions of having jobs that require hard physical effort are rated lower than being in a stressful work.

For the 2005 survey, perceptions of good collegial relations, having a job that allows help to be given to others and good management relations were highly reported to have been experienced. Perceptions of working independently, having an interesting job and the usefulness of the job to society were rated mid-ranged. Perceptions of job security, good career prospects and high income were outcomes with the least experience. Perceptions of having jobs that require hard physical effort are rated lower than being in a stressful work.

In 2015, perceptions of skill utilization, good collegial relations, having a job that allows help to be given to others are outcomes highly reported to have been experienced. Perceptions of working independently, good management relations and the usefulness of the job to society were outcomes reported mid-ranged in terms of experience. Perceptions of having an interesting job, being in a secure job, high income and good career prospects are outcomes reported with the least of experience. Perceptions of having jobs that require hard physical effort are rated lower than being in a stressful work.

Summarizing, the study finds some improvements in employees' job quality. Specifically, income has changed for the better since 1997 with significant changes recorded between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015. Regarding having interesting job, good collegial relations and

working independently, significant positive changes are recorded between 1997 and 2005. Additionally, having a job that allows help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society made significant positive improvement between 2005 and 2015. On the contrary, regarding stressful work, a significant negative change is observed between 2005 and 2015.

Generally, good collegial relations are the highest reported in all the surveys with high income being one of the worst experienced. Overall, intrinsic job quality indicators were the most likely to be reported as experienced (social relations, usefulness to society, help to others, interesting job and working independently) than the extrinsic indicators (job security, high income and career prospects). In all the surveys, good collegial relations were one of the indicators with the highest ranking.

## **5.11 Conclusions**

In sum, this chapter has analysed the three waves (1997, 2005 and 2015) of the work orientations module of the ISSP data sets with a focus on New Zealand. Results on employees' job values, outcomes and effects on job satisfaction were presented. The data were analysed using t-test, ANOVA and linear regression with the SPSS software.

In 1997, findings are that, there is no variation by gender in relation to job values. However, in 2005 and 2015, significant differences are found for job security, social aspects (helping others and usefulness to society) and time flexibility where women assigned more importance to them than men. Furthermore, in terms of employment contract, part-timers attached more significance than full-timers to jobs that allow help to be given to others in 1997. In 2005, full-timers assigned more importance to high income and having an interesting job than part-timers. On the other hand, part-timers placed more value on the social aspects (helping others and usefulness to society) and

time flexibility than full-timers. For the 2015 survey, full-time workers attached more importance than part-timers to high income and career prospects but there are no differences between the two groups on the other values. Regarding the level of education and job values, significant differences are observed for job security, high income, career prospects and interesting jobs in the 1997 survey. In the 2005 survey, job security, high income, interesting job and helping others are significant. In 2015, differences are recorded for job security, career prospects, interesting job, skill utilizations and usefulness to society.

Additionally, observations on changing work values are that, for all surveys, while having interesting jobs and job security are the highest ranked aspects of job values, high income and time flexibility are the least ranked aspects. In 1997, workers placed the highest value on having an interesting job and job security and the lowest value on high income and time flexibility. Career prospects, working independently and the social aspects were ranked average in importance. Similarly, in the 2005 survey, having an interesting job and job security are given the topmost priority, while high income and time flexibility are the least ranked. For the 2015 survey, the highest premium is put on job security, followed by an interesting job. High income and time flexibility are again the least ranked. These findings suggest that employees' job values have not shifted much over the 20 years' period.

Regarding employees' experiences at work, notable findings are that, in the 1997 survey, women are more likely to report having jobs that allow help to be given to others and are also in jobs that require less physical effort. For the 2005 survey, women have worse income but also more likely to have jobs that require less physical efforts, are in jobs that allow help to be given to others and are useful to society. In the 2015 survey, males have better jobs than do women in terms of job security and high income. Males are also less likely to have jobs that allow help to be given to



others and are useful to society but more likely to consider their jobs as requiring hard physical effort.

In terms of job outcomes and employment status, in 1997, part-time workers are less likely to report high income but more likely to report better management relations, less stressful work and also having jobs that are useful to the society. In 2005, too, part-timers report getting lesser income but also tend to indicate having interesting jobs, being in jobs that allow helping others, are useful to society and working independently. For the 2015 survey, full-timers are more likely to have jobs with good security, high income and good career prospects but are less likely to have good relations with management.

Additionally, the level of education was associated with whether employees are in good jobs or not. For 1997, significant differences are found for job security, high income, career prospects, stressful work and good management relations. In 2005, appreciable variations are recorded for high income, career prospects, working independently, good management relations, helping others and work intensity and in 2015, significant differences are reported for high income and hard physical efforts.

Turning to the effect of job outcomes on employee satisfaction, this study finds that in 1997, having an interesting job, less stressful work and good management relations impacted on satisfaction. The other indicators are not significantly associated with employee satisfaction. In 2005, five indicators comprising; good career prospects, having an interesting job, usefulness to society, less stressful work and good management relations affected satisfaction. However, in 2015, high income, having an interesting job, less stressful work and good management relations influenced satisfaction. Overall, having an interesting job, less stressful work and good management relations

are the commonest predictors of satisfaction for all waves. Below are tables summarizing all the hypotheses tested.

*Table 5.22*

*Job values and gender*

<b><i>Indicators</i></b>	<b><i>No support</i></b>	<b><i>Partial support</i></b>	<b><i>Substantial support</i></b>	<b><i>Total support</i></b>	<b><i>p-value</i></b>
Career prospects	✓				0.256 0.991 0.193
Working independently	✓				0.382 0.323 0.112
High income	✓				0.054 0.182 0.432
Interesting job	✓				0.303 0.985 0.622
Job security (women valued this more highly, 2005)		✓			0.095 0.020 0.246
Flexibility (women valued this more highly, 2015)		✓			0.085 0.063 0.001
Help to others (women valued this more highly, 2005 and 2015)			✓		0.581 0.000 0.001
Utility to society (women valued this more highly, 2005 and 2015)			✓		0.684 0.008 0.002
Skill utilization (2015)	✓				0.060

Table 5.23

*Job values and employment status*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>No support</i>	<i>Partial support</i>	<i>Substantial support</i>	<i>Total support</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Working independently	✓				0.264 0.408 0.568
Career prospects (full-timers valued this more highly, 2015)		✓			0.869 0.167 0.000
High income (full-timers valued this more highly, 2005 & 2015)			✓		0.668 0.000 0.000
Interesting job (full-timers valued this more highly, 2005)		✓			0.625 0.044 0.076
Skill utilization	✓				0.469
Job security	✓				0.283 0.390 0.118
Flexibility (part-timers valued this more highly, 2005)		✓			0.589 0.002 0.395
Help to others (part-timers valued this more highly, 1997 and 2005)			✓		0.006 0.017 0.087
Utility to society (part-timers valued this more highly, 2005)		✓			0.113 0.028 0.288

Table 5.24

*Job values and Educational attainments*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>No support</i>	<i>Partial support</i>	<i>Substantial support</i>	<i>Total support</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Working independently	✓				0.219 0.112 0.567
Career prospects (degree holders valued this more highly, 1997 & 2015)		✓			0.021 0.363 0.015
High income (degree holders valued this more highly, 1997 & 2005)			✓		0.003 0.031 0.066
Interesting job (vocational and degree holders valued this more highly)				✓	0.000 0.006 0.001
Skill utilization (secondary holders valued this more highly, 2015)				✓	0.035
Job security (primary and secondary holders valued this more highly)				✓	0.003 0.000 0.001
Flexibility	✓				0.272 0.113 0.752
Help to others (primary holders valued this more highly, 2005)		✓			0.288 0.004 0.053
Utility to society (degree holders valued this more highly, 2015)		✓			0.361 0.936 0.030

Table 5.25

*Job outcomes and gender*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>No support</i>	<i>Partial support</i>	<i>Substantial support</i>	<i>Total support</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Working independently	✓				0.598 0.574 0.478
Career prospects	✓				0.458 0.358 0.135
High income (higher for men, 2005 & 2015)			✓		0.140 0.002 0.000
Interesting job	✓				0.312 0.296 0.395
Skill utilization (2015 only)	✓				0.794
Job security (higher for men, 2015)		✓			0.131 0.279 0.006
Help to others (higher for women)				✓	0.028 0.019 0.016
Utility to society (higher for women, 2005 & 2015)			✓		0.454 0.034 0.001
Management relations	✓				0.592 0.829 0.521
Collegial relations	✓				0.633 0.730 0.871
Stressful work	✓				0.533 0.649 0.729
Hard physical effort (higher for men)				✓	0.023 0.000 0.002

Table 5.26

*Job outcomes and employment status*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>No support</i>	<i>Partial support</i>	<i>Substantial support</i>	<i>Total support</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Working independently (part-timers more likely to experience, 2005)	✓				0.914 0.020 0.838
Career prospects (full-timers rated higher, 2015)		✓			0.326 0.068 0.003
High income (full-timers rated higher)				✓	0.000 0.000 0.000
Interesting job (part-timers more likely to have, 2005)	✓				0.333 0.042 0.116
Skill utilization (full-timers more likely to experience, 2015)				✓	0.004
Job security (full-timers rated higher, 2015)		✓			0.850 0.413 0.006
Help to others (part-timers more likely to provide, 2005)		✓			0.226 0.026 0.668
Utility to society (part-timers more likely to experience, 1997 & 2005)	✓				0.014 0.038 0.226
Management relations (part-timers perceived better, 1997 & 2005)	✓				0.037 0.102 0.034
Collegial relations	✓				0.873 0.350 0.428
Stressful work (part-timers rated their work less stressful, 1997)		✓			0.002 0.094 0.105
Hard physical effort	✓				0.246 0.931 0.344

Table 5.27

*Job outcomes and educational attainments*

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>No support</b>	<b>Partial support</b>	<b>Substantial support</b>	<b>Total support</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Working independently (vocational holders rated this higher than degree holders, 2005)		✓			0.974 0.003 0.728
Career prospects (degree holders rated this higher, 1997 & 2005)			✓		0.032 0.018 0.273
High income (degree holders rated this higher)				✓	0.001 0.000 0.000
Interesting job	✓				0.141 0.052 0.592
Skill utilization (2015 only)	✓				0.387
Job security (1997)		✓			0.040 0.626 0.407
Help to others (primary holders rated this higher, 2005)		✓			0.054 0.018 0.767
Utility to society	✓				0.190 0.716 0.390
Management relations (secondary holders rated these better than vocational holders, 1997 & 2005)			✓		0.000 0.022 0.527
Collegial relations	✓				0.522 0.627 0.759
Stressful work (degree holders rated their jobs as more stressful, 1997 & 2005)			✓		0.001 0.004 0.789
Hard physical effort (primary qualification holders rated this higher, 2005 & 2015)			✓		0.076 0.000 0.000

## **Chapter 6: Discussion of employees' perceptions of job quality**

The previous chapter provided findings on the stated hypotheses. Specifically, the analyses were related to movements over the years in employees' job values and job outcomes. Comparisons by gender, employment status and the level of education in employees' job values and outcomes were included. Also, the results of the effect of job quality measures on job satisfaction were provided. This chapter now discusses these findings and synthesizes with existing literature to identify the implications of the current study for theory and practice. This thesis' results are consistent with Carre et al., (2012), Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010), Kalleberg (2011) and Boxall and Purcell (forthcoming) who argue that employees' job quality tends to vary by demographics. Some differences were observed between men and women, the highly educated and less educated and full-timers and part-timers. This chapter presents discussions on the differences in job values and job quality by gender, employment status and educational attainments of New Zealand employees and discusses trends in job quality over time.

### **6.1 Gender, job values and job outcomes**

#### **6.1.1 Job values and gender**

Regarding that there are gender differences in job values, this study like other international studies confirms small variations in employees' job preferences by gender. Women were more likely than men to value having jobs that allowed them to help others and jobs that are useful to the society (for the 2005 and 2015 surveys). More than men, women valued jobs that enabled them to showcase their altruistic drive and make them feel they are contributing to society. The analysis of this study concurs with Marini et al.'s (1998), Tolbert and Moen's (1998) and Daehlen's (2007)



results, which pointed to women having a higher preference for altruistic values in work than men. This finding is consistent with the view that men are less concerned about helping others through their jobs than women.

In answer to the hypothesis on job security, there was a significant effect (for the 2005 survey) between genders, with men less likely than women to place importance on security, consistent with Sutherland's (2012) results in the UK and Chow and Ngo's (2002) results in China. On the other hand, this finding is different from Jurgenson's (1947) study in the USA because men prioritized job security more than women. This result by Jurgenson was different possibly due to the time frame in which the research was conducted (almost six decades ago). Changes in economic, social, technological and political conditions (Karl and Sutton, 1998; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2012) could have made significant changes in employees' values since then. More specifically, social changes in the work orientation of women have been significant. Women were more concerned about their job security possibly due to the need for financial security to support their spouses because of the high cost of living at the time of the 2005 survey.

In the other surveys (1997 and 2015), there was no significant difference because job security was important to all. It ranked number one in the 2015 survey and the second in the 1997 and 2005 surveys after having an interesting job and skill utilization. Both genders valued job security highly. Job security is either the first or second most important job value for both men and women, so as expected there will possibly be less or no gender difference. The social situation warranting this preference has changed drastically. The shift from the traditional male breadwinner could account for this change. Currently, with the reality of dual-earner families, this value seems to be converging and becoming increasingly important to both genders. As both men and women have become breadwinners, they seem to worry about the security of their jobs because job security

guarantees income stability. As suggested by Boxall and Purcell (forthcoming), employees must earn money to live, and that is more certain with secure work. With the rising cost of living, both members of the family might work for the sake of economic necessity to support the family so the family's standard of living can improve. This possibly explains the lack of differences between men and women on this value for the 1997 and 2015 surveys.

Confirming Clark's (2005) and Sutherland's studies, the finding of this thesis shows that women were more likely than men to value time flexibility (2015 survey). Perhaps a change in the social norm now where more women have become more career-oriented accounts for this difference in job preference. Women will tend to desire this flexibility to balance work and family responsibilities. However, in previous years, there was no significant difference suggesting that both genders valued flexibility highly. The family structure has been deviating from the male-breadwinner tradition where men were involved in paid work and women were mainly responsible for keeping homes. The trend now is the dual-earner couple where both partners are actively engaged in paid employment (Haddock et al., 2006; Kalleberg, 2011; Radcliffe and Cassell, 2015). Impliedly, men and women alike are now challenged with integrating caring responsibilities, work demands and the career goals of their spouses, all demanding more flexibilities (Haddock et al., 2006; Radcliffe and Cassell, 2015).

However, contrary to other studies (e.g., Daehlen, 2007; Jurgenson, 1947) that found some differences in job values between men and women, in the 1997 analysis, men and women did not differ on eight job values as important differences in gender were not found. It can, therefore, be concluded that women and men were similar regarding what matters (what they prefer) in their jobs, at least for that year, similar to Clark's (2015) study. This is similar to Marini et al.'s (1998) findings of no significant differences between men and women for extrinsic job values (promotion,

money, respect and status and prestige) and influence (participation and challenging work). In addition to the lack of differences in these extrinsic rewards, the study also found no differences in the intrinsic work values of working independently, having interesting jobs, jobs that allow them to help others and jobs that are worthwhile to society. Perhaps, with the growth in women's labour force participation, differences in job values were becoming less significant by 1997. However, for subsequent years (2005 and 2015), substantial and partial support was found for gender differences in altruistic job values (utility to society and help to others), flexibility and job security. Like Marini et al. (1998) and Daehlen (2007), this thesis finds that the biggest gender differences are the value placed on altruistic values (significant for 2005 and 2015). These results regarding having an interesting job and jobs utilizing skills are different from Marini et al. (1998) who found women placed more emphasis on these than men.

Across the 2005 and 2015 surveys, women placed more importance on flexibility, security and the social aspects of jobs (utility to society and jobs that allow help to be given to others) than men. Overall, for all three surveys, men and women had similar job values for career prospects, working independently, high income, having an interesting job and using skills. These findings challenge the results of Jurgenson (1947) in the USA, who found that while women placed more importance on having interesting jobs, men were more concerned about career advancement opportunities and benefits. It also challenges the findings of Lowe (2007) whose study in the Canadian setting found that men put a higher premium on pay and career prospects than women. Further, this finding is different from Tolbert and Moen's (1998) study which found that in the USA, men were more likely than women to value jobs that earned them high income. As argued above, changes in environmental factors (technological, political, social and economic) and the period in which the study was conducted could have influenced the current shifts in employees' job values.

Overall, only slight differences are observed between men and women's job values, confirming the assertion by Tolbert and Moen (1998) that quite small differences are found in their job preferences. These slight differences are related to the altruistic drive of women at work (2005 and 2015), their desire for flexibility (2005) and job security (2005). Gender, therefore, seems less of an important factor in determining job values because these values are converging.

### **6.1.2 Job outcomes**

Some variations between male and female were found regarding employees' job experiences, thereby confirming the gendered nature of job quality. This study confirms the different level of perception of high-income between men and women like other international studies cited earlier using the ISSP datasets and others (e.g., Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; Clark, 1998). Findings from this study confirms the assertion that men tend to receive higher income from their work than women. The New Zealand case is no different from what pertains in the Ghanaian context. For instance, Morton's (2004) study in Ghana confirms this position because the majority of women were not satisfied with their remuneration because they assert that men received higher income comparatively. This evidence was substantially supported for the 2005 and 2015 datasets although there is no evidence for the 1997 survey. In this regard, men are better off on this job quality indicator.

The findings on job security confirm others that show mixed results on the difference between men and women. This study finds no significant difference between men and women for 1997 and 2005. The finding (for the 1997 and 2005 surveys) is therefore consistent with prior research by Muhlau (2011), Clark (1998 & 2005a, b), Erlinghagen (2007) Stier and Yaish (2014), the OECD (2014), Mustosmäki, Oinas & Anttila's (2017) and Green et al. (2001) of the lack of variation between men and women regarding job security. In 2015, however, statistical evidence existed to

show that men reported higher job security than women, thereby showing a different view of others but concurring with findings from Hauret and Williams' (2017) study. Their findings show that men experienced higher levels of job security than women in some southern European countries and currently this is the position in New Zealand (for the 2015 survey).

In stark contrast, findings regarding career prospects challenge other studies in that there was a lack of difference between New Zealand men and women. For instance, Clark's (1998, 2005a), Hauret and Williams' (2017), Stier and Yaish's (2014) and Muhlau's (2011) studies show better career prospects for men than women, but this study does not find any such difference. The evidence to me suggests that men and women perceive the same degree of opportunities in advancing their careers in New Zealand.

Positive relations at work, either with superiors or colleagues, are known to be an important resource with the potential of improving employees' job quality (Eurofound, 2012). This study finds no significant differences between men and women, different from what other studies have found. On relationships with superiors and colleagues, although studies by Fisapal-Cusi et al. (2015) and Clark (2005a) have shown that women rated better relations at work than men, this study shows otherwise. This suggests that relationships between managers and subordinates and among colleagues are generally cordial in New Zealand without much discrimination on the basis of gender.

On the measure of working hard (physical effort), there is a significant difference between the genders. Men reported more physical effort than women. This result is consistent with Clark (1998, 2005a) whose analysis shows that men were more likely to report hard work than women. More men are more often found in jobs that require hard physical effort than women, making women better off regarding this outcome.

Confirming prior studies by Stier and Yaish (2014) and Clark (1998, 2005a), there are mainly no differences between men and women regarding two of the four aspects of job content. Specifically, concerning having an interesting job and working independently, no gender differences were recorded. This suggests that New Zealand men and women have similar experiences regarding these outcomes, contrary to other studies (e.g., Ficapal-Cusi et al., 2015) that show women to be better off. Only with being in jobs that allow help to be given to others does this thesis find that women were more likely than men to report being in such jobs for all surveys. Also, across 2005 and 2015, there was substantial support for the usefulness of the job to society with men less likely to report this outcome. It appears women more than men are in jobs that enable them to improve the well-being of others and show concern for the welfare of others, as desired. There is, therefore, a stronger match between what women value and what they experience because women tend to be in jobs that allow them to improve others' happiness due to their altruistic drive.

Clark (2005b) says men have worse jobs than women, but this thesis cannot agree with this because it seems men have a better income than women on average and greater job security (in 2015) but apart from that their job experiences are very similar. These findings instead concur with the claims of others who argue that men have better jobs than women on extrinsic characteristics (high income and job security) (e.g., Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; Clark, 1998). Also, due to the similarities in their experiences, this finding does not support previous studies from the USA, Italy, Europe and Spain by Kalleberg (2011), Boccuzzo and Gianecchini (2014) Muhlau (2011) and Ficapal-Cusi (2015) respectively who found that men clearly have better job quality than women. Like Guergoat-Lariviere (2010), this thesis finds that both men and women were better off on some dimensions, disadvantaged on others and with no differences on others. Women tend to be better

off in having jobs that are useful to society and that help others, both intrinsic job quality dimensions.

This picture is therefore not clear-cut but more complex. In most respects, they are the same, especially on the intrinsic indicators, but there is still an enduring difference in perceptions of higher income, hard physical effort, the usefulness of the job to society and helping others. On the other hand, this study did not find any gender differences in career prospects and several areas of job content (interpersonal relations, skill utilization, stressful work, interesting jobs, working independently). There is, therefore, a need to re-evaluate our views on gender differences and job quality in New Zealand. The experience of work seems to be similar except for hard physical effort, the usefulness of work to society, high income, job security and work enabling help to be given to others (for all surveys).

## **6.2 Employment status, job values and job outcomes**

### **6.2.1 Job values and employment status**

Consistent with the assertion that the employment status of employees influences their job value preferences, the thesis finds that full-timers placed a higher importance on career prospects than part-timers for one of the surveys (2015). A finding consistent with Sutherland's (2012) results of the UK situation which found that full-timers, were more likely to place a higher value on promotion opportunities than part-timers. A possible explanation for this is that full-timers are more interested in building a career in whatever job they have found for themselves. As explained by Eurofound (2007), working part-time makes it more difficult to build a career because employees in part-time jobs are seen as less committed, so have fewer promotional opportunities.

On the other hand, more people in full-time positions might have made a career choice to be in those jobs and will, therefore, be very interested in progressing in that career.

It is not unusual to have full-timers attach more importance to having jobs that are interesting because they are doing more hours in a week and the same job all day. Having jobs that can stimulate employees will be preferred to ones that are boring and unchallenging. This is less likely to be a problem for many part-timers who are working shorter hours than full-timers and are therefore more able to cope with boredom. Also, from the analysis, it finds that part-timers were more likely than full-timers to value jobs that are useful to society. Obviously, this difference could be due in part to some part-timers engaging in volunteer jobs with the motive of helping others or using their skills to improve the welfare of society.

This rationale for working ties in with Rose's (2003; p.226) view that some people might have an expressive rationale for working where they tend to put more emphasis on working for 'self-actualizing values such as doing something worthwhile, for the intrinsic rewards of working or using their abilities'. Some peoples' rationale for working part-time could be different from the provisioning motive of earning money or the secondary economic motive (earning money for extras) of supporting themselves and their families. Hence a desire to render help to others in the society, using one's abilities or just enjoy working could be the reason part-timers have a higher preference for this value than full-timers.

Full-time workers placed a higher importance on high income than part-timers (2005 and 2015). Since full-timers are working more hours, the likelihood of them wanting more money (high income) for the job they do is higher. In fact, full-timers might be in full-time positions due to their desire to get high income, a finding that ties in well with Sutherland's (2012) result in the UK. On the other hand, part-timers might need the time for other responsibilities (e.g., childcare,



education or transitioning into retirement), thus, attaching more importance to time flexibilities (Glauber, 2013). These findings are similar in that full-timers were less likely to put value on time flexibilities. Full-timers could be trading their time flexibilities (deciding one's times and days of work) for more money, and that explains why they are less likely to put a high priority on flexibility.

Full-timers and part-timers' values at work were not different for the four job values of working independently, job security, help to others and skill utilization. These job values seem to matter to everybody whether in a full or part-time job. Concerning the similarity in value on job security, this study's result is different from Sutherland's (2012) finding which showed full-timers had a higher preference. There was, however, a discernible pattern of differences in job values for these three surveys. While full-time workers placed more importance on career prospects, higher income and having interesting jobs, part-timers were more concerned about the social impact (usefulness of the job to society and help to others) of their jobs and time flexibilities.

### **6.2.2 Job experiences and employment status**

Full-timers and part-timers' experiences at work were very different on six intrinsic job quality dimensions with the latter having better job quality. Thus, this thesis agrees with the stance by the Eurofound (2007) that part-time jobs have several positive aspects. Indeed, on certain intrinsic job quality measures, for one survey (either the 1997 or 2005 survey), part-timers had better workplace experiences than their full-time counterparts. This study observes that for the 2005 survey, part-timers were better off regarding having interesting jobs, good management and collegial relations, working independently and having jobs that allowed them to help others.

Concerning relationships with superiors, the finding is different from McDonald et al.'s (2009) analysis of an Australian case where they show that part-timers had poorer workplace relationships (both with superiors and colleagues). Fagan et al. (2014) also report similar findings showing part-timers usually have fewer friends at work. The analysis shows better relationships between managers and subordinates for part-timers than full-timers for the 1997 and 2005 surveys, confirming Levanoni and Sales (1990) findings. It appears there is, generally, a cordial management relationship at work for most workers and especially for part-timers. Good management relations might serve as a resource which tends to lead to employee satisfaction because employees' relatedness needs are met (Boxall and Purcell, forthcoming).

Further, being in jobs that allow employees to be useful to the society was rated higher by part-timers than full-timers for the 1997 and 2005 surveys. As part-timers put a higher priority on this value, it appears they have found jobs in the labour market that give them the opportunity to help society. Often their rationale for working part-time is doing something worthwhile like helping people in the society and not mainly for earning income (Rose, 2003).

Another important finding was that these findings were similar to the results of Eurofound (2007) and Lowe (2007) in that part-timers were more likely to report in 2015 that their skills are under-utilized than their full-time counterparts. Reasons for this finding could be that most part-timers are not career-oriented or are trusted with less important jobs or assignments than their full-time counterparts. The nature of tasks assigned to many part-timers is a contributing factor likely to be leading to the under-utilization of their skills. Empirical evidence exists from the Eurofound (2007) to suggest that in Europe, most part-time jobs are monotonous and simple. These jobs do not involve many problem-solving activities or require the use of their higher cognitive abilities, thus leading to the underutilization of skills.

Further, in 2015, full-timers had the opportunity of utilizing their experiences and skills at work better than their part-time colleagues. This finding is consistent with Lowe's (2007) analysis which, analyzing the Canadian situation found that part-timers were at a disadvantage in this respect. This finding suggests that part-time employees' job quality is poorer because most employees perceive their jobs to be of poor quality when their skills are underutilized (Humphrys and O'Brien, 1986). This, therefore, has the potential of leading to job satisfaction and performance problems (Lowe, 2007).

Concerning collegial relations and hard physical effort, both categories of workers had similar experiences suggesting that irrespective of employment status, both groups of workers tend to get along well generally.

In the first two surveys (1997 and 2005), whether or not a person had a full-time or part-time job is not significant for good career prospects. In this case, the result is different from McDonald et al.'s. (2009), the OECD's (2013), the Eurofound's (2007) and Fagan et al.'s. (2014) findings that irrespective of skills, qualifications and previous experiences, part-time employees often have challenges with advancing in their careers. However, the most recent survey (2015) finds evidence to confirm previous research (McDonald et al. 2009; OECD, 2013; Eurofound, 2007, and Fagan et al., 2014) which showed that full-timers were better off when it comes to career progression. A possible explanation might be that full-timers tend to benefit more from employer-assisted training programmes than part-timers (Eurofound, 2007). Another possibility may be that full-timers are more easily promoted into managerial positions so they can supervise both full and part-time workers. It is quite unusual to have a part-time manager have oversight responsibilities on employees than a full-time manager.

Further, as was expected, full-timers reported greater job security than part-timers in the 2015 survey. On this point, the result is consistent with the findings of O'Connell and Russell (2007) who, using Irish data, found higher insecurity for part-timers. This is also consistent with the OECD's (2013, 2014), Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010) and Gallie et al.'s (2017) analyses that provide evidence to show that employees in part-time jobs experience higher insecurity and also with Erlinghagen's (2007) results. For the first two surveys (1997 and 2005), the lack of difference could be a result of the economic context or the sample. It seems likely that the economic context was generally more secure between 1997 and 2005. For instance, the unemployment rates in New Zealand dropped from 7.7% in 1998 to 3.7% in 2007 (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). The 2008-9 recession had a negative toll on the labour market with signs of falls in both the number of hours worked and employment rates. According to Statistics New Zealand (2012), although the country did better in comparison to other OECD countries, the unemployment rate rose after the Global Financial Crisis of 2008-9.

Further, the finding that a higher proportion of full-timers report that they have high income was confirmed strongly (all surveys) in this thesis. This is similar to prior research by Levanoni and Sales (1990), Fagan et al. (2014), Eurofound (2007) and the OECD (2013) who found a higher proportion of full-timers report that they have high income than their part-time counterparts.

Findings concerning the amount of stress experienced by full and part-timers are consistent with O'Connell and Russell's (2007) study in Ireland where they found part-timers enjoy a lower level of work pressure. The OECD (2010 & 2013) confirms this finding by explaining that part-timers trade lower income and less security with less stress than full-timers. Obviously, this may be because they are working shorter hours as compared to their full-time counterparts. In line with this, this thesis' result also confirms Le Fevre et al.'s (2015) findings in New Zealand, which

showed full-timers to be reporting greater stress than part-timers. New Zealand evidence confirms the Eurofound's (2007) study that reported part-timers having an advantage over full-timers regarding stress levels, hence better health outcomes. This advantage is gained somehow because part-timers tend to have shorter working time and so can better balance work and other commitments (Eurofound, 2007; Kalleberg, 2011; Fagan et al., 2014). Obviously, part-timers working fewer hours are likely to benefit from lower stress levels.

This analysis finds some significant differences between full-timers and part-timers' job quality. Interestingly, some of these differences were to the advantage of part-timers, especially with the intrinsic job quality dimensions. This suggests that part-time jobs are not necessarily a secondary form of employment in New Zealand. Part-timers' job quality regarding six intrinsic job quality measures was better than full-timers for at least one of the years. Full-time employees were better off on the measures of skill utilization (2015), high income (all surveys), job security (2015) and career prospects (2015).

Part-timers' experiences were better on the intrinsic job quality indicators of having an interesting job (2005), less stressful work (1997) and working independently (2005). Also, they were at an advantage in respect of being in jobs that allowed help to be given to others (2005), jobs that were useful to the society (1997 and 2015) and they enjoyed better management relations (1997 and 2005). The employment status of employees had no relationship with collegial relations and hard physical effort. Part-time work in New Zealand is therefore not synonymous with bad job quality. These results challenge international literature that suggests the clustering of all part-time jobs as peripheral, contingent or secondary (e.g., Kalleberg, 2000; McGovern et al., 2004). While all full-time jobs are not necessarily 'good jobs', all part-time jobs are not necessarily inferior.

Categorising all part-time jobs as ‘bad jobs’ is therefore unhelpful. This finding challenges the assumption of dual labour market theory that proposes that bad or good job attributes have the propensity to cluster in a way that a job that is good or bad on one dimension tends to be good or bad on others (e.g., Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Wachter et al., 1974; Kalleberg et al., 2000; Dahl et al., 2009). These findings are not consistent with Blaawu and Uys’ (2006) analysis in South Africa among formal and informal car guards. While their findings supported all the tenets of the theory, this study finds otherwise. For instance, they found that the labour market was fragmented with those in the formal sector having access to training and were highly educated. Although there was similarity in the task performed, income disparity was present. Mobility was also limited for employees in the informal car guards sector.

In this study, part-time jobs are not bad on all dimensions as suggested by this model. These findings, therefore, fit the description by Munro (2012) whose study in England and Scotland showed that it is possible to have jobs with mixed characteristics of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ features. This finding also mirrors Hudson’s (2007) results in the USA where there was evidence showing that the largest group of employees’ jobs fits the intermediary segment. This intermediary segment was composed of jobs with both primary and secondary features. This study also supports Tilly’s (1997, p.270) views that ‘there is no reason to expect that a job that is bad in one way will also be bad in other ways’. The OECD (2010) further advances this position, asserting that there are trade-offs for working full-time and part-time. As Kalleberg (2008) argued, precarity, a feature of some part-time jobs is not limited to non-standard jobs but could also apply to standard work arrangements when the economic environment is uncertain.

## **6.3 Education, job values and job outcomes**

### **6.3.1 Job values and education**

Consistent with Jurgenson's (1978) finding in the USA, the study highlights that education influences the preferences for particular job features. Like Jurgenson (1978), in the 1997 survey, employees with degrees (bachelor's and postgraduate's certificates) valued career prospects more strongly than the less educated (secondary qualifications). Contrary to what Kalleberg and Marsden (2012) and Tolbert and Moen found but consistent with Jurgenson's (1978) analysis, employees with higher qualifications (degrees) placed a higher priority on high income (1997 and 2005) than those with lesser education.

This study supports the claim by Tolbert and Moen (1998) and Gallie et al. (2012) that the less educated value higher job security. In all surveys, there is substantial evidence to show that employees with primary and secondary qualifications attached greater importance to having highly secure jobs than those with degrees and vocational qualifications. Possibly, the less educated feel more vulnerable due to their lack of higher qualifications. Kalleberg (2011) argues that although job insecurity is currently a global challenge, low-skilled employees (due to less education) are more vulnerable.

This finding challenge other international studies that show that the less educated value extrinsic job values more than intrinsic job values (e.g., Gallie et al., 2012). Of the three extrinsic job values, job security was valued more by the less educated than the highly educated. However, concerning career prospects and high income, the highly educated emphasized these more than the less educated. Thus, the broad generalization on values seems to be too simplistic. Intrinsic rewards or values can comprise many job attributes including meaningful work, ability to use skills,

interesting jobs, working independently, etc. depending on the type of survey used. Likewise, extrinsic job values are varied, comprising high income, job security, promotional opportunities, etc.

Each of these components is different and does not mean the same thing although they may be linked. As an example, Boxall and Purcell (forthcoming) explain how income stability is guaranteed through job security, which is clearly linked. But the same cannot be said of other indicators. High income and career prospects, both extrinsic aspects are different. Therefore, bundling them all together without any distinction in explaining employees' job quality is not helpful. In this study, job security was the only extrinsic job value with a higher preference among the less educated. This suggests that researchers should evaluate specific job values and outcomes instead of using the umbrella term (intrinsic or extrinsic indicators).

The results also concur with Jurgenson's (1978) findings in the USA where he found that the more educated (vocational and degree holders) favour more strongly having interesting jobs than the less educated (primary and secondary holders). This finding is also in line with Gallie et al.'s (2012). For instance, for all waves, while employees with primary and secondary qualifications valued job security more than those with vocational and degree qualifications, those with vocational and degree qualifications placed more importance on having interesting jobs than those with primary and secondary qualifications.

Also, in agreement with Gallie et al's (2012) findings that the highly educated assigned greater importance to intrinsic job values, the thesis found that degree holders placed more value on having jobs that are meaningful to society (an aspect of intrinsic value) than other groups of workers although employees with primary qualifications also preferred to be in jobs that enabled them to help others.



In summary, all categories of workers were similar regarding the importance placed on working independently, utilizing skills and having flexible working hours. Employees with degrees attached greater value to career prospects, the utility of work to society, high income and having interesting jobs. The less educated, on the other hand, placed more importance on being in jobs that enabled them to help others and on job security.

### **6.3.2 Job experiences and education**

Kalleberg (2011, p. 40 and 42) suggests that ‘education has emerged as the main divider among workers with bad jobs versus those with good ones’ and so ‘workers with higher levels of education are generally more likely to have good jobs’. This assertion is endorsed by Holman (2011) who also argues that the higher the level of education, the higher the quality of work. Turning to employees’ experiences, for all surveys, the ANOVA and pairwise comparisons show that a higher proportion of employees with higher levels of education report that they have a high income, thereby confirming the assertion that educational attainment is an important predictor of earnings. This result is consistent with other studies (Kalleberg, 2011; Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere, 2010; Siebern-Thomas, 2005; the OECD, 2014) that show that the higher the level of education, the higher the income. For instance, in all surveys, employees with bachelor’s degree and post-graduate qualification were more likely to rate their income as high than those with lower qualifications (vocational, secondary and primary). This implies that employees who are highly educated have better job quality regarding income.

On the other hand, across 1997 and 2005, evidence exists to show that employees with degrees were more likely to rate their jobs as more stressful than those with other qualifications. The highly educated who are highly paid are also more vulnerable to stressful work. For instance, Kalleberg (2007) using the General Social Survey found that the highly educated were more likely to report

that they overworked, which directly contributed to their experience of stress. American employees with more educational credentials tend to work more hours and also work harder (related to the amount of work done), which could be emotionally draining (Kalleberg, 2011). The author further notes high target-setting and technological changes as some factors contributing to increasing work intensity. However, it is possible that because the highly educated have greater control over their working time, they will more likely be in the position to manage their stress (Kalleberg, 2011).

Employees' level of education influenced the perceptions of job security in the 1997 survey. This is in agreement with what Siebern-Thomas (2005) found in his European study where employees who were low-skilled were more likely to be in jobs that lacked job security. It appears education is related to employees' job security, and so concurs with Erlinghagen's (2007) and Bockerman (2004) studies where they found that job insecurity was inversely related to increasing qualifications such that the higher the level of education, the better the job security.

Further, in agreement with the findings of Siebern-Thomas (2005) and Jurgenson (1978), this thesis found evidence that the higher the level of education, the greater the likelihood of better career prospects. Employees with degrees reported a greater perception of career progression than employees with secondary and primary qualifications across both 1997 and 2005. This may be because the less educated have a lower likelihood of receiving training (Erhel and Guergoat-Larivire, 2010). Additionally, results from this study confirm the findings by Hansez (2012, p. 90) who found that in Belgium, the 'health status of highly educated employees is significantly better than it is for low educated' stemming from the nature of work in which they were engaged. This study shows substantial evidence (1997 and 2005 surveys) that regarding hard physical effort, the less educated suffered a penalty on this indicator.

In conclusion, overall, some variations in job preferences of employees based on their educational attainment is observed. For all three surveys, while the less educated placed more importance on job security and skill utilization, the highly educated attached a higher value to having interesting jobs. Also, employees with degrees were more likely to rank career prospects, high income and the utility of job to society more important than other categories of workers. Employees with primary education placed more value on work that allowed help to be rendered to others. The different categories of workers were similar in their preferences for working independently and flexible working hours.

Further, the intrinsic features of having interesting jobs, the utility of the job to society and collegial relations seem not to necessarily get better with higher education as there are no significant differences. Degree holders, who tend to be in more secure jobs, also benefited from better career prospects. Although they reported receiving higher income, their jobs were associated with higher stress. Employees with secondary qualifications reported better management relations. Those with primary qualifications were disadvantaged as they reported hard physical effort but tend to be in jobs that enable them to be helpful to other people. Regarding working independently, employees with vocational certificates were at an advantage compared with employees with degrees. Overall, the highly educated have better experiences on all three extrinsic features except that their jobs were more stressful.

#### **6.4 New Zealand employees' values over the past two decades**

Kaasa (2011) and Hauff and Kirchner (2014) have argued that job values differ among and between countries. In line with this, this thesis provides evidence using the New Zealand context, determining possible shifts in employees' job values over the past two decades using 1997, 2005 and 2015 ISSP data sets. Information about employees' job values was sought from employees

themselves as they are the best witnesses to attest to what they find important in their jobs (Clark, 2005). Also, employees are better at recounting their job experiences than any other person. It is inappropriate to ask others like managers because they may have a different perception of what they think employees value in their jobs. For instance, Kovach (1987) explains how managers ranked good wages, job security and promotion as important job values for their employees for these different years of surveys: 1946, 1981 and 1986. While most employees placed more importance on intrinsic job values, managers assumed they placed more importance on extrinsic job values. This problem is averted when employees are given the option of ranking their job values. The ISSP data sets used this approach in soliciting information from respondents. Additionally, the rankings were absolute rather than relative implying that respondents can rank all eight values as very important.

Against this backdrop, the thesis analyzed the New Zealand context because the importance placed on job values is contextual (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013) and as such, that of another country cannot be inferred (Johri, 2005). Johri (2005) explains that there is little research on employees' job values in New Zealand, compared to most European countries and Canada (Johri, 2005). Thus, this thesis contributes by bridging the gap.

Although there is limited data on New Zealand's (NZ) job values, in a literature review by Johri (2005), it was suggested that most New Zealand employees place more value on having interesting and challenging jobs. Pay and job security, although relevant, are not as important as the intrinsic values. The author, however, notes that this information should be used with caution since it was biased towards well paid and educated people. This study provides empirical data on NZ job values and job outcomes using a representative sample, thereby reducing biases. This is because the survey was weighted to ensure representation of the entire population, so differences in results are

expected. A more accurate picture of the realities is therefore provided. Since employees' values can vary by factors such as age, gender, educational level, among others, this study factored these into the analysis. Also, with the assertion that job values are not static because of changes in environmental factors, work experiences and life course events (Karl and Sutton, 1998; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013), this thesis tracked changes from 1997 through to 2015 using three waves of the ISSP data sets.

Results from this analysis concur with prior research by Kalleberg and Marsden (2013) that the sense of accomplishment, an intrinsic job value, was highly rated during the period (1973-2006) over income, career advancement, job security and short working hours. In the New Zealand context, having interesting jobs (an intrinsic job value) was one of the topmost ranked values for all the surveys. The study finds that in addition to having an interesting job, job security is always part of the first two most important job preferences. Currently (2015 survey), job security is the topmost ranked job value in New Zealand, like Clark's (2010) finding in OECD countries.

It can be confirmed that although some intrinsic job values (interesting jobs and skill utilization) are very important, job security (which is an extrinsic job value) is currently ranked the topmost and has always been very important, a finding that is contrary to Johri's (2005) literature review that suggested that employees in New Zealand place less value on job security. This result, therefore, provides empirical evidence on the New Zealand context. For instance, for all three surveys in New Zealand, having an interesting job, skill utilization and job security were highly ranked as very important. While having an interesting job was ranked the topmost value for the 1997 and 2005 surveys, job security was ranked number one for the 2015 survey. The results show that people are worried about their job security due to it being consistently ranked as one of the top three (currently the topmost) over the period. This is not different from the USA situation

because Kalleberg and Marsden (2013) had a similar result and indicated the reason could be due to growing economic insecurity during the period.

In particular, the global financial crisis in 2008-9 had negative impacts on employment (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). Another possibility could be technological changes (use of robots, computers, and artificial intelligence) which are making employees put more premium on job security (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; Karl and Sutton, 1998). Further, the importance attached to job security could be heightened because of the rise of the ‘gig economy’, known to worsen the job security of employees (Barley et al., 2017). Although with the use of apps of smartphones, employees get to work, they are also challenged with ‘no promise for future employment’ (Friedman, 2014; p.172).

The importance assigned to the usefulness of a job to society and having jobs that allow help to be given to others increased between 1997 and 2015. There was also a significant increase in the importance attached to working independently from 1997 to 2005. The features of these jobs became more important to employees in New Zealand in these years than before. These increases over the years show the increasing importance attached to some intrinsic job values as well as some extrinsic ones.

High income and time flexibility were consistently ranked as two of the least important job values for all surveys. Job security was preferred over high income, most likely because having a stable job can guarantee income stability for employees and their dependents (e.g., Dickerson and Green (2012); Boxall and Purcell, forthcoming). Although not the highest ranked, the importance placed on high income and time flexibility was on the rise between 1997 and 2005. Like Clark’s (1998, 2005a and 2010) and Kalleberg and Marsden’s (2013) studies, employees in New Zealand did not rank high income as the most important characteristic of a job, but the importance attached to it

rose in 2005. There was, however, a drop in its importance in 2015. A possible explanation for this ranking could be due to the nature of the question asked. For instance, employees were asked about how high their income was and not about the fairness of their income. The nature of the question might have warranted these rankings.

Also, the question on time flexibility was too broad as this variable could comprise various components. For instance, is time flexibility related to starting or finishing times or to deciding the days of work? A solution would be splitting the question into multiple parts. For instance, respondents could be asked whether they are in jobs that allow them to decide their finishing times and starting times. A second question could be whether they are allowed to decide their days of work. Fine-tuning survey questions to make them capture the specific meaning of the question is helpful as the nature of the question impacts on the responses.

Clark (2010), using data from the ISSP, showed that there had been some stability in OECD employees' values. In support, Gallie et al (2012) found that there is stability of employees' job values in Britain. These findings are different from Karl and Sutton's (1998) study of the USA where they concluded that unlike employees in the 1970s and 1980s who attached more importance to having interesting work above anything else and then followed by full appreciation of work done and 'feeling in on things', in the 1990s, employees valued good wages above anything else, followed by job security and interesting work. Their findings suggest significant changes in employees' job values. However, this study's results are consistent with Clark's (2010) study of OECD countries and Gallie et al (2012) because this research does not find much change in employees' job values.

As mentioned above, in the 1997 and 2005 surveys, having an interesting job was ranked the most important followed by job security. The order of these two values changed in 2015 with job

security being ranked the highest. This finding is consistent with the study of others like Clark (2005a, 2010 and 2015) who also found that job security and job interest were the most highly ranked values. Job security is consistently highly ranked in all the surveys although not the topmost for the 1997 and 2005 surveys. Job security was one of the highest ranked in 1997 coming after having an interesting job. Preference for more stable jobs could be due to technological changes (e.g., robots and computers) that have made significant changes to the workplace (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013; Karl and Sutton, 1998). Additionally, this higher preference (topmost for the 2015 survey) for job security could also be as a result of the on an ongoing feeling of insecurity after the 2008-9 recession.

The addition of the skill utilization value to the 2015 survey also made a significant change in the order of employees' values. Clark (2015) argues for the addition of skill utilization because it is missing from previous surveys. Fortunately, for New Zealand, it featured in the 2015 data set. Clark (2015) was right because skill utilization was the second most highly ranked value, shifting place with having an interesting job.

Overall, these findings concur with Kalleberg and Marsden's (2013) study in the USA who concluded that there were only modest changes in employees' job values over the last twenty years. Over the past two decades, New Zealand, like other developed economies has seen broad stability in peoples' job preferences. Also, the findings of the research largely mirror the results of those conducted among OECD countries (e.g., Kaasa, 2011; Hauff and Kirchner, 2014) as modest changes regarding shifts in values were recorded. Except for job security, employees in New Zealand like workers in the UK and the USA place a higher priority on many intrinsic job values (interesting job, skill utilization, working independently, helping others and utility of the job to



society). The importance attached to high income, job security, and time flexibility has increased over the period (e.g., Clark 2005a, Gallie et al., 2012 and Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013).

Job security is, however, different because it has always been ranked as one of the topmost values across the three surveys, thus, showing its relevance. This study also confirms Clark's (2010) findings of OECD countries using the ISSP datasets which found increasing priorities to more social aspects of jobs (utility of job to society and jobs that allow help to be given to others). It can be concluded that, broadly, there has been no sharp movements in employees' job values in New Zealand.

These findings buttress the fact that employers need to know employees' job values as they tend to direct employee actions (Longest et al, 2013; Kaasa, 2011) and have a direct impact on the job satisfaction and well-being (e.g., Clark, 1998; Kalleberg, 1977; Inkson, 1980; Karl and Sutton, 1998; Eurofound, 2012). Job satisfaction and well-being are both related to the degree to which employees' jobs allow the fulfilment of important job values. As such, most employees make comparisons of their job preferences and job outcomes and define their satisfaction in terms of the discrepancies (Inkson, 1980; Kalleberg, 1977). Knowing these job values, therefore, is an important step in improving employees' job quality (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013).

Not only do employees benefit, but their organisations too. Understanding employees' job values have economic implications in that employers get to know how to redesign jobs and reward systems that result in better job satisfaction (Karl and Sutton, 1998; Longest et al., 2013; Kaasa, 2011). It is not just a matter of providing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to satisfy employees, but rather more of knowing the right kinds of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and benefits that will influence satisfaction. Job values are therefore fundamental to identifying the right mix of rewards to satisfy employees (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013). With job satisfaction having an impact on

employees' behaviours (such as productivity, absenteeism, turnover intentions and turnover and citizenship behaviours), it pays to know what employees value from their jobs (Hauret and Williams, 2017; Karl and Sutton, 1998).

In line with this finding, employers who are worried about employee turnover and attitudinal problems should look at improving job satisfaction because lower satisfaction leads to a higher turnover. For instance, Judge (1993) provides evidence to show that job satisfaction is positively correlated with job performance and negatively related to absenteeism and turnover decisions. Similarly, Clark (2005a) reinforces this by arguing that most workers who are dissatisfied are more likely to quit their jobs than those who are satisfied.

### **6.5 New Zealanders' experiences of job quality**

The New Zealand results show perceptions of high income rose between 1997 and 2015. The perception of high income has therefore been trending upwards, which is a sign of improving job quality. With wages or salaries affording most employees the necessities of life (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009), this is likely to lead to higher quality of life, healthier workers and stronger families and communities (Kalleberg, 2011). This finding is consistent with Clark (2005b) who, using the 1989 and 1997 ISSP data, found that in most OECD countries, perceptions of high income rose. This rise in high-income does improve life satisfaction in the short term and also in the long term because employees' pension benefits are dependent on this income (Dahl et al, 2009; UNECE, 2010). This implies that as a higher proportion of New Zealanders is reporting higher income, they tend to have a higher job quality in this regard (e.g., Kalleberg, 2011; Warhurst, 2011). On the other hand, this finding only paints the picture of an aspect of financial compensation. This is because this survey has no data on employee benefits. This notwithstanding, as noted by McGovern et al. (2004), the relevance of these benefits is dependent on whether they are provided

by government or employers. In New Zealand, since most benefits, for example, national health care and paid parental leave, are provided by the government, improvement in income is the most important reason to argue that a growing proportion of employees have higher job quality.

A focus only on income is not adequate in explaining employees' job quality because several components make up job quality. Job security, i.e., the expectations of employment continuity, helps determine whether a job is 'good' or 'bad'. Employees see their jobs as better when expectations of employment continuity exist (Russell et al., 2014). In this analysis, job security has not seen any significant changes in New Zealand over the past two decades. This notwithstanding, the mean values for job security for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were 2.43, 2.29, 2.25, respectively, out of 5 on the scale (i.e., close to the midpoint). Literature on the New Zealand context shows a low level of unemployment rate by international comparison (OECD, 2018). As at the first quarter in 2019, the rate was 4.3% which is below the average rate of 5.2% among OECD countries (Statistics NZ, 2019; Labour market statistics, 2019). Further, the OECD (2018, p. 2) confirms that job security is high in New Zealand due 'to the comparatively small risk of becoming unemployed and short expected duration of unemployment'. This can explain why the average New Zealander perceives his or her job security to be mildly positive. Employees do not strongly disagree or clearly agree but are mildly in agreement that they have job security. No significant changes are observed, but employees are mildly positive about their job security. This suggests that there is still room for improvement for job security. This finding is different from Clark (2005a; 2015), Handel (2005), Curtarelli et al (2014) and Olsen et al. (2010) who report a fall in employees' perceptions of job security. Clark (2005a, 2015) for instance, reported of the fall of job security from 1989 to 1997 although there was recovery. O'Connell and Russell (2008) found that employment security increased for Irish workers between 1996 and 2004. This finding

also differs from the result presented here. Perceptions of job security in New Zealand remained the same over the twenty-year period. This suggests that employees are still concerned about the stability of their jobs as a lack of job security means employees' income stability and retirement benefits could be affected leading to anxiety (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2009).

The results indicate significant improvements in the mean perceptions of employees' job quality regarding intrinsic job quality measures of helping others and utility to society, especially between 2005 and 2015. This result is in line with findings by Olsen et al. (2010) who, using the same ISSP datasets for 1989, 1997 and 2005, found that workers in the USA had the highest job quality regarding these two indicators. Most employees tend to be satisfied when they realize that their jobs contribute to society (task significance), affect the happiness of other people and when these jobs are relevant to others (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

It has not been rosy on some dimensions for employees in NZ as the results show rising work-related stress between 2005 and 2015. This analysis reflects a decline in employees' job quality because of the increased levels of stress at work. This result is different from Lowe (2007) who studied the Canadian context between 1971 and 2006 and found a reduction in the stress levels. It concurs with Green's (2005) analysis of Britain between 1991 and 2005, which shows rising work intensification. This finding agrees with Curtarelli et al's (2014) study which found rising work-related stress during the 2008-9 financial crises in some European countries. The deterioration in employees' job quality (greater stress) could be due to technological advancements which are making employees work long hours both in their organisations' premises and at home (Kalleberg, 2011) and possibly due to the particular labour market condition pertaining at the point in time (e.g. 2008-9 financial crises).

It could also be, as argued by Green (2005), the effect of consumerism which is encouraging employees to work harder to get more pay to cater for both the necessities and luxuries of life. For instance, Kalleberg (2011, p. 151) suggested that most Americans had to work more hours to 'finance their spending' and also for their loan settlements. This rise in work-related stress tends to increase workplace accidents and expose employees to other health outcomes (affecting their well-being) (e.g., Clark, 1998; Jones et al., 2017; Oinas et al., 2012). High workload with low discretion, as theorized by Karasek (1979) and Karasek and Theorell (1990), has negative effects on productivity. To improve employees' satisfaction, a move towards creating jobs with high workload and high control (active jobs) is recommended (Karasek, 1979). Karasek (1997; p.304) further suggests that since 'workload is related to organizational output levels', it can be maintained while discretion is increased. This is because it is control that reduces stress levels. According to Karasek (1997; p.304), employees' mental health can be enhanced 'without sacrificing productivity' if authority is commensurate with responsibility.

Other important findings were that there was deterioration between 1997 and 2005 for employees concerning having interesting jobs, working independently and collegial relations. Over this timeframe, employees found their jobs to be less interesting, with less independence and having to work with colleagues who might be less cooperative and supportive. This finding concurs with Olsen et al.'s (2010) analysis which found deterioration in job quality on the dimensions of interesting work, independent work and social relations with managers in Norway between 1989 and 2005. Similarly, Handel (2005), using the General Social Survey in the USA, found that between 1989 and 1998, the perception of having an interesting job declined (from 23.1% to 19.4%).

Concerning social relations at work among colleagues, the finding is however different from Handel's (2005) study which found improvements in social relations at work among colleagues in the USA between 1989 and 1998. Since social support from colleagues in especially stressful environments enhances well-being (e.g., Eurofound, 2012; Munoz del Bustillo, 2009), deterioration between 1997 to 2005 with no change in the direction between 1997 to 2015 means jobs are not seen to be becoming better in this regard, and this has the tendency of impacting negatively on employees (Jones et al., 2017). However, over the twenty-year period, which is between 1997 and 2015, there was no deterioration or improvement for these job quality indicators.

New Zealand is believed to have a strong egalitarian ethos (Nolan, 2007; Inkson, 1980) which downplays the relevance of classes in the society (Inkson, 1980). This characteristic of the New Zealand context could possibly explain why for the 1997 (1.57) and 2005 (1.70) surveys, employees reported collegial relations as the most highly experienced job quality dimension. In the 2015 survey (1.69), collegial relations were ranked as second in terms of the employees' experience. In spite of this, the mean values for interesting jobs for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were 1.98, 2.16 and 2.04 respectively. This suggests that employees are generally in agreement that they have interesting jobs but there is room for improvement. Similarly, mean values for working independently and collegial relations for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were 1.86, 2.04, 2.00 and 1.57, 1.70 and 1.69 respectively. These results show that employees typically agree that their jobs allow them to work independently and more strongly agree that they have supportive co-workers. But, again, there is room for improvement.

Overall, there has been a lack of positive change in employees' job quality apart from employees' perceptions of high income, having a job that is relevant to others and usefulness to society.

Although significant improvements were reported for these three indicators over the period, there were no changes in having an interesting job, working independently and collegial relations.

Reviewing these findings, it would be helpful to conduct a brief congruence analysis, which is shown in table 6:1 below.

*Table 6.1*

*Congruence between job values and job outcomes (1997, 2005 and 2015)*

	<b>I (%)</b> <b>1997</b>	<b>E (%)</b> <b>1997</b>	<b>I-E</b>	<b>I (%)</b> <b>2005</b>	<b>E (%)</b> <b>2005</b>	<b>I-E</b>	<b>I (%)</b> <b>2015</b>	<b>E (%)</b> <b>2015</b>	<b>I-E</b>
Job security	93.0	62.5	30.5	94.3	69.5	24.8	94.7	70.4	23.3
High income	71.1	16.1	55.0	74.4	25.1	49.3	70.2	28.7	41.5
Good career prospects	85.3	25.5	59.8	83.4	32.7	50.7	70.8	26.6	44.2
Interesting job	97.4	85.3	12.1	96.3	71.4	24.9	93.8	78.1	15.7
Working independently	77.5	89.6	-12.1	81.2	80.2	1.0	77.3	87.0	-9.7
Help to others	72.2	78.2	-6.0	77.8	81.8	-4	79.3	84.2	-4.9
Usefulness of job to society	71.5	68.4	3.1	74.8	66.0	8.8	79.1	71.7	7.4

Note: I (Very important and important) E (Strongly agree and agree)

Concerning jobs that enabled workers to help others, this thesis finds that in the 1997 survey, although 72.2% desired this value, 78.2 reported having jobs that enabled them to meet this expectation. A similar trend is found for 2005 (77.8% ranked as important, and 81.8% reported positive experiences) and 2015 (79.3% wanted this value, and 84.2% reported such experiences) surveys. This further shows a relatively good match between their job values and job outcomes. This result is likely to lead to satisfaction because there is a small gap, and this happens to be positive. As suggested by Kalleberg (2008), employees' ability to match their preferences is more likely to lead to having happy and satisfied workers with organisations benefiting (in terms of functioning effectively) too.

A small mismatch (gap) was found between job preference and job outcomes for the utility of the job to society variable. For instance, for 1997, 2005 and 2015 survey, 71.5%, 74.8%, and 79.1%

respectively wanted jobs with this feature. On the other hand, 68.4%, 66%, and 71.7% reported being in jobs with the feature.

The analysis on the congruence between the relevance of particular job values and job outcomes further reveal some interesting patterns. Working independently was highly ranked as important and also highly reported as providing positive experiences. Employees' experiences exceeded their expectations such that while 77.5%, 81.2%, and 77.3% ranked it as important, an increasingly larger percentage of 89.6%, 80.2% and 87% respectively for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were in jobs that enabled them to work more independently. Similarly, for having an interesting job, a small negative gap compared to other indicators was also found between the importance attached to it and the experience of employees. For instance, while some 98%, 97% and 94% rated this feature as important, almost 86%, 72% and 79% of employees experienced having jobs that were interesting. Overall, all intrinsic job values used in this survey showed either a positive mismatch or some small gaps.

Comparatively, on the three extrinsic job values and outcomes (job security, high income and career prospects), a much wider negative gap was found. This finding is different from Gallie's (2003) study that show that Sweden, Denmark and Finland recorded an average performance regarding promotion and future promotional opportunities. Further, a high perception of job security was observed for employees from Sweden, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands. Morton's Ghanaian study amongst 50 SME's also reported high job security. The mismatch between job values and job outcomes for job security was much better (30.5%, 24.8% and 23.3%) for the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, respectively, than for career prospects (59.8%, 50.7% and 44.2%) and high income (55%, 49.3% and 41.5%). New Zealand is particularly weak on career prospects with the widest mismatch between expectations and experiences out of the three extrinsic features.



Moreover, the mean values for career prospects for 1997, 2005 and 2015 were 3.24, 3.18 and 3.24 respectively. These show that employees tend to disagree that they are able to advance in their careers. This study is consistent with Weaver's (2009) New Zealand-based study which also found that most graduates preferred to change their jobs in search of better opportunities because of the lack of promotion opportunities. This is suggestive that many jobs in New Zealand may be 'dead-end' (i.e. no or limited upward mobility) and as such could be described as 'bad' on this dimension (McGovern et al., 2004). This is because promotion is typically associated with both intrinsic (prestige and satisfaction) and extrinsic (job security, salary) rewards (Dill et al., 2012). Incorporating this feature into jobs has the tendency of improving satisfaction, commitment and labour turnovers (Siebern-Thomas, 2005; McPhail and Fisher, 2008; Dill et al., 2012).

This challenge stems from New Zealand's unique context. For better understanding of this challenge, the small size of the country and its economy must be factored into the analysis. New Zealand is dominated by many small and medium sized and family businesses (Boxall and Macky, 2014), which offer few layers for progression. Gilbert and Boxall (2009) further assert that New Zealand is a small economy with a small number of world-class corporations. These situations have negative implications for the advancement of managers in New Zealand. Using a qualitative study of four organisations operating in different sectors in New Zealand, Gilbert and Boxall (2009) found that all but one firm experienced recruitment stress. Due to the nature of the economy, firms that expect to grow migrate their firms or are bought by international businesses. The obvious outcome of this is the lack of career ladders for managers because many large firms do not exist. This factor leads to 'the significant leakage of talented individuals into the global market where career opportunities and rewards are so much greater' (Gilbert and Boxall, 2009, p.333).

Further, due to the small nature of the economy, many managers tend to engage in mobile careerism where they take advantage of opportunities in the global labour market by migrating elsewhere to develop their careers. Additionally, firms in this small economy tend to have younger managers who 'outgrow their roles', leading to retention problems. The size of the economy seems to affect how much pay or rewards can be offered to employees (Gilbert and Boxall, 2009). The income level is higher in Australia than New Zealand. For instance, a registered nurse with between one to five years experience in New Zealand earns between \$49,500 to 66,700 per annum (MBIE, 2017) while it is 65,000 to 76,960 for an Australian (job outlook, nd). The cost of living in New Zealand and the pay rate could explain employees' perceptions of low income.

These mismatches have negative consequences for employees, their dependents, and society as a whole. As argued by Kalleberg (2007), some mismatches tend to increase stress to the employee with a spill-over effect to the dependents if the worker is the main breadwinner. In certain cases, since some employees react by changing jobs, this tends to come with cost implications to the organisation.

Also, there was broad stability in employees' perceptions of job security, career prospects, and good management relations. The finding concerning job security is different from Olsen et al. (2010) who, studying the perceived job quality in the USA, the UK, Norway and West Germany (1989-2005), found job security dropped for all countries between 1989-1997 except Norway, which deteriorated later (2005). Although most employees ranked job security and interesting jobs as either the first or second most important value over the twenty-year period, the experiences reported represent a certain degree of disappointment.

On this basis, as suggested by Jurgenson (1947; p.562) 'if the job value ranking is higher than the job outcomes rating, it will be desirable for management to improve conditions relating to those

factors'. Management in New Zealand firms should aim at improving the congruence between these values and outcomes. Overall, employees' job quality has seen both improvement and deterioration. Of the twelve measures, only three showed positive changes, i.e., perceptions of high income and the social aspects (helpful and useful jobs). More people also perceived their jobs were very stressful and perceived worsened collegial relations. Aside from these changes, the rest of the indicators remained the same. For instance, although employees rated job security highly, no significant changes (either improvement or deterioration) were observed. Similarly, concerning having interesting jobs, although most employees attached more importance (among the topmost), there was no improvement or deterioration within the whole period (1997 to 2015). As in Lowe (2007), New Zealand evidence, like the Canadian situation shows quite small changes in employees' job quality.

Turning to the effects of specific indicators on employees' satisfaction, the results is consistent with Westover's (2016) findings that job satisfaction is contextual because not all indicators were significantly related to job satisfaction. The findings are therefore different from Clark (2005a) Kalleberg (2011) and Handel (2005), who found that all indicators predicted job satisfaction. This analysis shows that job satisfaction is most strongly associated with having an interesting job, followed by good management relations and less stressful work for all three surveys. This is unsurprising because having an interesting job was also the highest ranked job value for two of the surveys. This finding concurs with Handel's (2005) analysis in the USA, which found that having an interesting job and good management relations are the strongest predictors of job satisfaction. These results were also similar to Clark's (2005a) study because, in his analysis of OECD countries, good relations, followed by good job content were strongly associated with job satisfaction. Similarly, this finding is consistent with prior studies that show that intrinsic job

quality measures (e.g., interesting work, management-employee relations) are more strongly associated with satisfaction than extrinsic job quality (e.g., job security and career prospects) indicators (e.g., Clark, 1998, 2005a).

For the three surveys, less stressful work had the smallest significant effect on job satisfaction, while having an interesting job and good management relations had the largest significant effects. The impact of jobs that are less stressful, having an interesting job and with good management relations on employee satisfaction are consistent across the years. Employee satisfaction is, therefore, most dependent on these three features. The implications are that for employers to benefit from positive attitudes and behaviours exhibited by satisfied employees, jobs that are interesting and less stressful jobs must be created. Consideration must also be given to good management relations. All three attributes were related to the nature of the job itself, thereby supporting the hypothesis that perceived job satisfaction is more strongly associated with intrinsic job quality than extrinsic job quality (e.g., Clark, 2005a).

Good career prospects (2005 survey), high income (2015 survey) and then utility to society (2005 survey) were also associated with job satisfaction for at least one survey. In this analysis, while the smallest significant effect in the 2005 survey was from the usefulness of the work to society, high income had the smallest effect for the 2015 survey. Clark (1998, 2005a, and 2005b) and Handel (2005) found that all measures of job quality used in their studies were associated with job satisfaction although to varying degrees. Some indicators had bigger effects and others smaller effects.

While in Clark's (2005a) study of 19 OECD countries, he found all measures of job quality to significantly relate to job satisfaction, this study found six out of the eleven measures to be associated with job satisfaction (i.e., combining all surveys). The result on job security not being

associated with job satisfaction in New Zealand is consistent with a prior study by Hauret and Williams (2017), who also found a similar result in some Southern European countries. What might account for the difference between Clark's (2005a) and this study could be due to the sample sizes. While Clark used seven OECD countries with a total of about 11,000 respondents, this study uses one country with 1577 respondents in total (316, 875 and 386 for 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys respectively). A smaller sample size tends to influence the effects of these job quality indicators on job satisfaction.

Overall, since the ISSP does not provide an exhaustive list of all job characteristics (which is difficult if not impossible), a direct job satisfaction measure to report the overall job quality was used. This, according to Kalleberg (2011) and Kalleberg and Vaisey (2005), provides an overall assessment of employees' work experiences. This measurement is supposed to be a good summary for other missing data on important job characteristics (Clark, 1998). Most employees in New Zealand, like Irish workers (O'Connell and Russell, 2008), were satisfied on the whole. For instance, there is evidence that the overall level of employees' satisfaction was high. In the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, about 90%, 79% and 82% respectively were either completely, very or fairly satisfied. Although there was a drop in the satisfaction levels in 2005, a recovery was made in 2015, which is a positive sign of improving job quality. This finding is different from Olsen et al's (2010) study that found stability in employees' overall satisfaction from 1989 to 2005. This is also quite different from the USA situation where Kalleberg (2011) using the General Social Survey provides evidence of declining job satisfaction from 1977 to 2006. This decline was partly blamed on increases in job insecurity and rising work intensification, among others. Overall, as suggested, managers need to make changes to both the content and context of work in order to improve the quality of work (Clark, 2005a; Kalleberg, 2011). Improvements in employees' job

quality are argued to lead to higher satisfaction, commitment, motivation, innovation, all impacting on organisational performance (e.g., Findlay et al., 2017; Knox et al, 2015; Carre et al., 2012).

The current study validates the hypothesis of the job characteristics model (JCM) (Hackman and Oldham, 1976) in relation to job satisfaction. The job characteristics model proposes that employees' job quality is improved through the appropriate design of jobs because poorly designed jobs affect employee attitudes and behavior negatively (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Furthermore, enriched jobs provide personal intrinsic motivation and general satisfaction. In relation to this study, a possible explanation as to why New Zealanders' satisfaction rating was high could be because employees' jobs possessed many of the characteristics outlined in the JCM, thereby confirming the prediction that enriched jobs provide general satisfaction.

In this study, certain job characteristics were associated with satisfaction although their mediating links have not been tested. Jobs that enable employees to work independently, jobs that are beneficial to others and those that contribute to the society are associated with the personal outcome of satisfaction. The task significance dimension was highly experienced by employees because most (around 80% across the surveys) reported having jobs that were helpful to others. This was described as a 'positive mismatch' in the congruence table (6.1), which compared job values with job outcomes, and could have contributed significantly to job satisfaction. Knowing that their jobs impacted positively on others may make them see their jobs as meaningful because they feel that their jobs affect the happiness of others (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Employees confirm that the relevance of their job to others also positively predicted employee satisfaction in the 2005 survey.

Additionally, the thought of knowing that their jobs contribute to society affected their job satisfaction. For the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys, small gaps between importance and experience

(3.1, 8.8 and 7.4) are reported, signaling good average experiences on this dimension. Independence, a component of autonomy, is also experienced by the average worker. From the congruence table (6.1), a positive mismatch is experienced for the 1997 and 2015 surveys. This may be because when jobs are designed with a high level of independence, employees tend to feel personally accountable and responsible for the results of the job, as advanced by Hackman and Oldham (1980). The findings from this study show that the measures that relate to task significance and autonomy are related to job satisfaction. These features inherent in their jobs generally appear to make employees feel their jobs are 'meaningful, valuable and worthwhile' (Hackman and Oldham, 1976, p. 256).

Although the model's aim was to solve the problem of job simplification as developed by Frederick Taylor and to reduce stress (Parker 2014; Ayandele and Nnamseh, 2014), it appears the challenge persists. In spite of the fact that the majority of employees are satisfied, stress is a challenge to many. In fact, stress levels are currently on the rise (2015 survey) showing that employees' job quality in this regard is deteriorating. Due to the deleterious nature of stress on workers' health, lower levels of stress ( $p$  value = 0.000, 0.003 and 0.000) will predict their satisfaction positively. The JCM is also criticized for limiting the motivational work features because there are more characteristics in reality that can affect personal outcomes for employees like the social environment (Humphrey et al., 1986). This study confirms this earlier finding because from the surveys, having good management relations predicted satisfaction significantly.

Overall, the non-pecuniary job quality indicators (usefulness to society, help to others, working independently, social relations and having interesting jobs) were reported more positively than the pecuniary indicators (job security, high income and career prospects). The good experiences of these intrinsic indicators made a difference on the satisfaction levels of employees. In contrast, the

widest negative gaps are found for job security, high income and career prospects for all the surveys (congruence table, 6.1). Further, from all the surveys, employees' perceptions of good career prospects, high income and job security were consistently ranked lowest in terms of their experience (always part of the bottom three). These need improvements because as advanced by Boxall, Macky and Rasmussen (2003, p. 210) 'extrinsic rewards (such as pay, promotion and security) do matter for employee retention '. Designing jobs such that employees get to experience more of these attributes can be expected to have an influence on employees' satisfaction. Since intrinsic job quality constructs emphasize the process of work (the job itself) and 'people realize intrinsic rewards by doing the work itself' (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2013, p.260), the theory-guided design of jobs can improve job satisfaction, as recommended by Karl and Sutton (1998) and Hackman and Oldham (1980). Overall, better experiences of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are needed to improve job satisfaction in New Zealand.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

In summary, this chapter has highlighted differences in employees' job values and outcomes by their gender, employment status, and educational credentials. The effects of specific job quality indicators on job satisfaction were also measured. Changes in their job preferences and job experiences were also tracked. Concerning gender and employees' values, this study does not find significant differences between men and women regarding career prospects, working independently, high income, having an interesting job and skill utilization for all three surveys. However, for some of the years (at least one year), the study finds that women were more likely than men to rank as important job security, flexibility, the utility of the job to society and jobs that allowed them to be helpful. Confirming the gendered nature of job quality, men tended to experience better job security, higher income but also exerted greater physical effort than women.



Women, on the other hand, were better off regarding being in jobs that allowed them to be useful to society and also helpful to others.

On the other hand, no gender differences were revealed for the indicators of career prospects, having an interesting job, working independently, stressful work, skill utilization and management and collegial relations. Overall, an inference made is that gender does not play a major role in determining employees' job values. The differences provided in times past seem to be converging. Men's job quality was not necessarily better on all dimensions than women's. Both groups experienced some advantages and disadvantages on specific dimensions. In this respect, the gendered nature of job quality seems to be becoming less significant.

Regarding differences in the job preferences of full-timers and part-timers, this study finds that at least for one of the surveys, the former placed greater value on career prospects, having interesting jobs and higher income than the latter. Part-timers attached more importance to time flexibility, the usefulness of the job to society and jobs that enabled them to be helpful to others. Working independently, job security and skill utilization were job attributes that mattered to everyone, whether in full-time or part-time status. Full-timers and part-timers' experiences at work were different on six intrinsic indicators, with the latter having better job quality at least for one of the surveys. Part-timers were at an advantage at least for one of the surveys regarding having an interesting job, working independently and better management relations. Also, they tended to be in less stressful jobs, were in jobs that allowed them to be helpful to others and useful to society. Full-timers had an advantage concerning better job security, better career prospects, high income and the use of their skills, at least for one of the surveys. Full-timers and part-timers each have positive experiences concerning specific indicators, signaling that there are positives and negatives

for both options. An inference made is that bundling all part-time jobs as ‘bad’ is unhelpful because there are some advantages as well as disadvantages with this type of contract.

The level of education influenced employees’ job orientations. The highly educated (vocational and degree holders) attached greater importance to career prospects, high income, having interesting jobs and being in jobs that enabled them to be useful to society. The less educated (primary and secondary) preferred jobs that allowed them to be of help to others and higher job security. No differences in job values were found for working independently and flexible working hours. Educational credentials also influenced the perceptions of various job outcomes. The highly educated tended to enjoy higher income, better career prospects, higher job security and working independently but were also in more stressful jobs.

On the other hand, the less educated reported better management relations and were more often in jobs that allowed them to be helpful to others. They were also more often in jobs that demanded hard physical effort. Perceptions of having interesting jobs, collegial relations and being in jobs that were useful to society were the same for all categories of workers. Overall, the study observes that the level of education was a determinant influencing employees’ job preferences and outcomes. In terms of outcomes, the highly educated were at an advantage regarding all three extrinsic indicators used in this survey. The less educated benefitted mainly from better management relations and were in jobs that allowed them to be helpful; all intrinsic job rewards. On the whole, this thesis confirms that education influences employees’ job values and experiences. Although the highly educated are better off regarding most of the indicators, especially the extrinsic features of high income, career prospects and job security, they are also more stressed.

Unlike other studies (e.g., Clark, 2005a; Handel, 2005), in this analysis, all indicators did not predict job satisfaction. Having an interesting job, less stressful work, good management relations, high income, better career prospects and the usefulness of work to society were associated with employee satisfaction. The features that influence satisfaction are a blend of both pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards.

Overall, an observation made is that the relative importance placed on jobs that allow help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society are the only job values with slightly positive movements over the years with higher importance assigned from 1997 through to 2015. For career prospects, a downward trend (decrease in importance) is found between 1997 and 2015 and between 2005 and 2015. An upward trend (increase in importance) is found for time flexibility between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015. For the others, the changes recorded fluctuate such that no consistent trend is found. Interestingly, for all the surveys, while high income and time flexibility are the least ranked, having an interesting job and job security are the topmost ranked.

Another observation is the high importance placed on skill utilization in the 2015 survey. Skill utilization placed second after job security but before an interesting job. The most compelling findings are that over the twenty-year period, there were only slight and modest changes in employees' job values. Job security has always been important to employees and continues to be important alongside having interesting jobs and skill utilization. High income and time flexibility were also the least ranked as important over the period although there is an increase in the importance attached to them.

The study notes some improvements in employees' job quality. Income has changed for the better since 1997 with significant changes recorded between 1997 and 2005 and between 1997 and 2015.

Regarding having an interesting job, good collegial relations and working independently, significant positive changes are recorded between 1997 and 2005. However, over the whole period, no improvements or deteriorations were found. Additionally, having a job that allows help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society made significant improvement between 2005 and 2015.

On the other hand, regarding stressful work, a significant negative change is observed between 2005 and 2015. While good collegial relations are one of the highest reported in all the surveys, the perceptions of high income was one of the least experienced. Overall, the intrinsic job quality indicators of social relations, the usefulness of the job to society, help to others, having an interesting job and working independently were the most likely to be reported as better experienced than the extrinsic indicators of job security, high income and career prospects. In summary, improvements in employees' job quality can be seen regarding high income and the social aspects of jobs. There were no changes for the rest of the indicators, except employees' perceptions of increasing stress.

## **Chapter 7: The experiences of part-timers**

### **7.1 Background – the relationship between the quantitative and qualitative sections**

This section focuses on involuntary part-timers, a minority group of workers with concerning situations. A person who experiences a mismatch between the desired hours and actual hours is regarded as an involuntary part-timer (e.g. Kalleberg, 2008). An involuntary part-timer describes a person who is willing and available to work more hours but unable to find fuller employment. It also applies to employees whose full-time hours have been cut back due to decreasing labour demands. Involuntary part-timers are regarded as vulnerable because they have insufficient hours which directly affects their income levels, increases their risk of in-work poverty and affects the lives of their dependents negatively (e.g. Glauber, 2013).

Although the literature in NZ shows the rise in this type of employment (e.g. Tucker, 2002), it is under-researched, so the interest in extending the literature using this thesis. The quantitative analysis of part-timers also revealed that some employees experienced a mismatch between the hours they preferred to work and the actual hours they worked. Specifically, the questionnaire had questions asking employees to state their employment status preferences and to indicate whether they would prefer to (a) have their hours increased so as to earn more, (b) reduced and earn less or (c) remain the same and earn the same. Of those who were part-timers, a sizeable percentage of 37.5%, 29.3% and 39.4 % for the 1997, 2005 and 2015 surveys respectively, were interested in increasing their hours so they could earn more.

Similarly, a search through the literature showed that part-time jobs are mostly considered ‘bad’. However, part-time jobs which were considered ‘bad’ were mainly involuntary part-time jobs with limited working hours against the employee’s preferences (e.g. Wooden et al, 2009). This mismatch

affected the level of income negatively and career progression and hence generated dissatisfaction. Interest in this area was further developed through personal experiences from interactions with some people who were part-timers involuntarily. A few people I interacted with were quite unhappy due to their employment status. Although they had guaranteed hours, the hours were inadequate thereby affecting the quality of their life.

This group of workers has many similarities with the unemployed in that they both lack hours (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). However, although the unemployed tend to get unemployment benefits which serve as a buffer, the same cannot be said for the involuntary part-timers. They represent a readily available workforce with unused potential due to the lack of hours. According to Statistics New Zealand (2013), although there is a low unemployment rate in New Zealand, there is high underemployment rate compared with other OECD countries. Involuntary part-timers, also referred to as ‘the underemployed’ who are willing and available to work more hours than they have but are unable to do so, will be the focus of this section. Figures from the OECD database (drawn from the Household Labour Force Survey collected by Statistics New Zealand for New Zealand) are used to provide a history of its prevalence. Figures show a rising trend from 2010 to 2016. Table 7.1 below shows the share of involuntary part-timers as a percentage of part-time employment (extracted from OECD database).

*Table 7.1*

*Share of involuntary part-timers as a percentage of part-time employment*

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
26.0	24.8	24.8	22.9	18.6	16.2	15.9	16.6	16.7	21.4	19.8	19.9	20.7	21.5	21.6	20.3	24.5

Note: author’s own compilation extracted from OECD database (Labour Force Survey Supplement, NZ)

The quantitative section of this thesis examined the perceptions of New Zealand employees' job quality. Specifically, gender, educational attainments and employment status (full-time versus part-time) of employees were compared with the aim of understanding differences among them. Regarding the surveys (1997, 2005 and 2015), there was strong support for the hypothesis that full-timers perceive higher income ( $p=0.000$  for all waves) than part-timers. Only in one of the surveys (2015) do I find that full-timers were more likely to report higher job security ( $p=0.006$ ), career prospects ( $p=0.003$ ) and skill utilization ( $p=0.004$ ). On the other hand, there was substantial support (for two surveys) with part-timers being better off regarding having jobs that are useful to society ( $p=0.014$  and  $p=0.038$  for 1997 and 2005, respectively) than full-timers. Further, part-timers were advantaged with less stressful work ( $p=0.002$ ), good management relations ( $p=0.037$  and  $p=0.034$  for 1997 and 2005, respectively), interesting jobs ( $0.042$ ), working independently ( $0.020$ ) and being in jobs that enabled them to help others ( $p=0.026$ ). Data did not reveal any clear-cut outcome for which group had a better job because both full-timers and part-timers enjoyed premiums and suffered penalties on specific job quality indicators. The quantitative analysis suggests that the reality is not straight-forward but quite complex, implying that we should not assume that people in one category are worse off than the other.

Against this backdrop, the qualitative research aims to:

- Provide an in-depth understanding of the nature of working life of both present and past involuntary part-timers as well as the emotional experiences of current involuntary part-timers.
- Identify useful strategies implemented and being implemented by past and present involuntary part-timers in transitioning out of jobs with inferior quality.

## **7.2 Introduction to findings**

The objective of this chapter is to present the qualitative research findings to the research question posed at the beginning of this thesis. This chapter focuses on involuntary part-timers, a minority group of workers with concerning issues surrounding the inadequacy of their working hours. The first part of this chapter provides an overview of the working conditions of present and past involuntary part-timers. Then, the emotional and financial experiences of involuntary part-timers due to the lack of sufficient hours are presented. Next, this chapter presents the strategies implemented and being implemented by past and present involuntary part-timers to transition into better jobs. The thesis argues that having an understanding of employees' perspectives on their working conditions and the challenges they present is important for appreciating the complexities of strategies employed.

## **7.3 Working conditions of past and present involuntary part-timers**

This first part of the chapter discusses the working conditions of past and present involuntary part-timers. Specifically, the findings relate to management and collegial relations, pay and pay progression, employees' job security, intrinsic job quality, time flexibility and training and career advancement opportunities. These working conditions relate to twenty participants working in five sectors, namely; retail (14), banking (1), rest homes (1), hospitality (1), manufacturing (1), the health sector (1) and publishing (1). Participants working in the retail sector have jobs that involved stocking and restocking shelves and customer service. The person employed in the bank was a customer service representative. While the rest home worker has a job as a carer for the elderly, the person employed in the hospitality sector was a waiter. The participant in the manufacturing sector had a job in packaging while the person in the healthcare sector was



employed as a chiropractic. The person employed in the publishing firm was a designer and publisher of books. The length of service ranged from a minimum of two years to thirty-three years with the longest serving from the retail sector. The minimum number of hours worked was seven hours per week and the maximum being thirty-eight hours. Table 7.2 below provides specific demographic details about the respondents.

*Table 7.2*

*Demographic and work details of respondents*

Industry	Number of respondents	Current hours of work/week	Nature of work	Length of service
Retail	14	28-38	Stocking, re-stocking shelves and customer service	From 3 to 33 years
Banking	1	36	Customer servicing	Approximately 8 years
Rest home	1	40	Caring for the elderly	Almost 16 years
Manufacturing	1	28	Packaging goods	About 3 years
Health sector	1	12	Chiropractic	About 2 years
Publishing	1	27	Web designing and publishing of books	Approximately 10 years
Hospitality	1	7	Customer servicing	Almost 12 years

### **7.3.1 Management and collegial relations**

A dominant theme in eighteen out of the twenty respondents' accounts was that their managers were very supportive. Almost all rated the relationship as good except two participants who felt otherwise. Ninety percent described their relations at work as good suggesting they felt there was

still room for improvement. According to the participants, managers were concerned about what happens at work and offered help in stressful situations. For almost all participants, managers' open mode of communication, transparency, care, and involvement made them very comfortable. This was exemplified by an interviewee who explained that:

***Martini (present involuntary part-timer):*** Very good relations. On the scale of one-ten, it is nine. Because they want the business environment to be very communicative, so there is a lot of communication between managers and colleagues trying to compromise and agree on things together. This is good. There are many levels of managers (top managers, managers, and supervisors) and they are all really good. That is a good job.

This participant recounts that the relationship between the different levels of management and employees seems cordial. A conscious effort has been made by management in this organisation to create a friendly environment where employees can be satisfied. It appears managers and subordinates get along together as an open and friendly environment has been created. Subordinates are encouraged to air their views on issues concerning the organization and managers try to compromise. For this employee, this suggests that he is happy and satisfied with the harmonious and friendly relationship that has been created in the organisation.

Another respondent expressed similar sentiments by adding that:

***Noka (past involuntary part-timer):*** Really good relations with workers. Managers are encouraged to be in touch with staff. We meet regularly on a daily basis with managers walking through and asking how the day was and whether there is anything you need help with. So, it is like there is great communication. We are like the same with the only difference being with the responsibilities. The organisation does well with maintaining good relationships so prevents people from moving elsewhere. There is peace of mind here because the environment is cordial. Where they cannot compensate financially, they do so in other ways.

Managers in this organisation appear to have consciously created a friendly environment as a strategy for retaining employees. Noka, for instance, explains that the organisation does not give very high pay rates compared with others in the industry but supportive management behaviours seem to compensate for this difference. Because job quality is defined by several indicators and

not only pay, senior managers have encouraged supervisors to be sympathetic and to maintain positive relationships with subordinates. It seems superiors' interest in employees' welfare, especially with work-related stressors, is well appreciated by subordinates. This quote is suggestive of a friendly work environment where subordinates feel they belong (the 'we' feeling) and are happy to be a part of the organisation.

On the downside, one participant's relationship with her managers was poor such that it was emotionally challenging. She remembered how she had to change jobs because of a poor relationship with the superior which made her ineffective. Hence, the better option was to resign.

***Lib (present involuntary part-timer):*** *I have had about three jobs all in a row where I was treated very unfairly and in the end, I left because I am not going to let this continue and it was not going to change, but I often left before I got a job so was unemployed for like 3-6 months looking for another job. There was one job in particular where I was crying every day because of the treatment from my manager, and I could not take it mentally, so I left.*

It seems employees have different levels of thresholds in coping with relational problems with superiors. In some situations, employees cope by enduring unfair treatment but not beyond a certain limit. The stress of poor relationships can become mentally draining such that this participant chose to be unemployed rather than endure it. An observation from this account is that relatively high income, although important, is not the only reason for staying in employment. As social beings, poor relationships at work can influence some employees' decision to quit their jobs.

Relationships with colleagues were also quite good for most of the research participants although not highly reported like management relations. It appears that because subordinates are dependent on their superiors for directives, the relationship with them is key. Supportive relations among co-workers could serve as a buffer, but unfortunately, the relations were not as good as management relations. Almost seventy percent of the participants described their relations as either good, quite well or okay. A small cohort of three respondents perceived very good relations while another

three perceived bad relations. According to the accounts of participants, tensions, personality clashes, and rivalry among colleagues were reasons that affected their relations negatively. This finding on collegial relations contradicts the quantitative findings of this thesis that show no differences on average in the perceptions of relationships at work between full-timers and part-timers. The qualitative research of course, is based on a small, non-random sample.

The following is an example of how a respondent expressed the tensions that occurred among colleagues due to a large number of employees in relation to the work available:

***Martini (present involuntary part-timer):** They are all young people, and some of them are really competitive. I don't mind, but sometimes it can be a bit un-nice [sic], but overall it is good. Everyone want to learn how to make coffee, so sometimes I can't have the chance to be on the coffee machine because they all want to learn. I will rate it to be 6 out of 10. Because it is too many of us, we all want to work so between us there is a rivalry. If you get too many people, they will not be happy because they need more money, more shifts, more responsibility and more jobs.*

Martini felt that there was tension among colleagues due to the competition for more hours and training opportunities. With employees striving for more responsibility, this tended to create a poor working relationship. Describing the colleagues as young and energetic, there appears to be a struggle for more responsibilities and training opportunities. With all wanting to learn on the job with intentions of having more shifts and money, employees feel compelled to win, thereby undermining friendly relationships. This intense competition due to a large number of employees in relation to the work available shows employee dissatisfaction in this context. In this case, employees are not satisfied because, as colleagues, they are striving to achieve the same goals although with limited resources.

Overall, employees have good perceptions of the relationship between them and their managers. This was based on the fact that most managers were accommodating and communicated openly. They also described their managers as very supportive and helping manage work-related stress.

Although collegial relation was also good, it was not as good as management relations. Two participants felt there were personality clashes and tensions between and among colleagues due to the amount of work available.

### **7.3.2 Pay and pay progression**

Experienced workers at all companies were getting a little above the minimum wage of \$15.75 an hour at the time of data collection and the newly employed received just the minimum wage. These experienced employees confirmed that there was pay progression although small. All but one of the participants perceived that there was no difference in the pay rates between full-timers and part-timers in the retail sector. The combined compensation package of all 20 participants comprised of wages, performance-related pay, overtime payment and benefits (e.g., staff discounts). The combination of components differed based on the organisation. While some employees received wages and benefits, others had wages, performance-related pay and overtime payments. This notwithstanding, a majority of employees (13) were dissatisfied with their pay rate because they felt it was inadequate due to the high cost of living.

This employee explains his dissatisfaction with some components of his package by stating that:

***Dava (present involuntary part-timer):** The lowest you can get. Just the minimum wage. It is not good. There is this speculation that in the next month, there will be a pay rise which is a yearly thing that happens, which is an annual review. I do not know if I will get one or not. Regarding benefits, we do have staff discounts. That is nice sometimes. We do get sick leave; they are quite good when you are sick. I don't think it is a benefit. They understand they do not push you. I believe they give annual leave, but I have not been here for a year so not benefitted from that.*

This employee perceives his pay rate to be low because it simply meets the minimum wage. He was unaware of the details of (when and how) pay raise and some organisational benefits. From the quote, it appears only employees who meet performance targets are rewarded with an annual

pay rise after a performance review. However, they seem to appreciate the few benefits they get (e.g., sick leave, staff discounts) due to their association with the organisation.

Though some workers had concern over their pay rates, not all in the organisation received low pay rates. The pay rate was high for a skilled worker in the retail sector who explained that:

***Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):*** *As a baker, my wages are far above the minimum wage because it is a specialized field which demands training. It is not like customer service that everyone can do. Also, we are given 3% in a year, and that is to all workers.*

Although the retail sector is known to be low-wage, not all jobs are low-wage. It appears jobs within the organisation that demanded unique skills were better paid than those that required less training and skills. As such it seems the organisation's pay rate is dependent on the type of job and skill requirements. It is also evident from the above quote that Gorg thinks there is an annual three percent pay increment given to all irrespective of the job type and pay rate in this case.

All but one employee with collective contracts (65%) explained that their pay rates were determined by their performance and negotiations from their unions. This position was expressed by a research participant who stated that:

***Merlan (past involuntary part-timer):*** *We get extra through what the unions negotiate. Just a little above the minimum wage. We do have the assessment with our bosses to say our level of performance. They rate you like A, B or C performers and then they determine what your increase will be. So, we end up getting more based on our level of performance in addition to what the unions negotiate. Consequently, performance determines the pay rise.*

All employees with collective contracts in the retail sector received pay rises from two different sources, i.e., individual performance and the union's intervention. The pay rise is firstly dependent on the level of performance grade attained by the employee as either an 'A, B or C.' The second form of increment comes with employees' contract type, either individual or collective. In this

regard, unionized members who meet performance goals get more rises than employees with individual contracts who are less productive.

However, the participant working in the banking sector indicated that all employees, whether on individual or collective contracts, received the same pay rate. This suggests that the union's negotiated pay rate is given to all irrespective of the type of contract.

***Noka (past involuntary part-timer):** So, with ours, you pay the unions but for the last few years, everything we bargain for, all non-unions get the same. Recently they have asked for a change so starting this year, those on the individual contract will not benefit from what we get. We have recently bargained for a change, and that is taking effect this year.*

For this participant, who is a union member, she felt it was unfair if all (whether on an individual or collective contract) get the same pay rate. Union members were expecting to get better pay rates than non-union members after the payment of dues. They seem to be unhappy with the trend of events and are therefore expecting a change in favour of unionized employees in the coming year.

Also, employees in the surveyed firms seem to compare their pay rate with others in the same industry. Others are also skeptical about the grades given them after the annual assessments.

***Liza (past involuntary part-timer):** In comparison with others in the same industry, we are average. I cannot speak for KMART, but for the Warehouse, they have better rates than us. The company pays the minimum wage unless you are in the union. If not in the union, they will stick to what the government gives but if in the union you get the extra. No increment from the company unless the union does. There are no bonuses and recognition but mainly dependent on the union. Most of us are given a C grade, so they don't have to give out any bonuses. Grade A and B, mean one is exceeding the expectation, and that means one will be given a rise, but they give us C, so they don't pay extra.*

It appears the union's negotiations make a lot of difference in the pay rates of some research participants because the rise based on individual performance is difficult if not impossible to get.

Some employees (three) are skeptical about how their performance is rated because they perceive that managers deliberately under-rate their performance to prevent them from getting the pay rise.

A small cohort of four employees seems to be informed about better pay rates in competitor

organisations. They rate their organisation as average regarding pay rates after the comparison in this case.

In summary, employees indicated that there is pay progression at their various organisations, albeit small. The majority of the respondents assert that there is no difference in the pay rates between full-timers and part-timers. Most participants' pay rises come from their performance and the negotiated rate from their unions. This notwithstanding, most participants are dissatisfied due to the current cost of living.

### **7.3.3 Job security**

Measuring job security subjectively (whether or not employees feel secure) shows an above average rating by a majority of respondents (80%). This majority (16 of 20 respondents) felt their jobs were very stable now and in the very near future but were unsure of the distant future. The security for the distant future was uncertain, probably due to the dynamic environment in which businesses were operating or changes in the economy.

Although the majority were in secure jobs, a small cohort of three participants (15%) was of the view that their jobs were insecure because of previous redundancies in their organisation. Some recounted how they assumed they could be like their colleagues who lost their jobs in time past.

***Noka (past involuntary part-timer):** Because I am working for a company (bank) that is constantly changing jobs, the job security is very low. In the last two years, they have made people redundant twice across the country. Recently, a few months ago, my store where I was working, they stopped jobs so out of the staff, only 2 out of the seven who were working there were transferred elsewhere. The others were made redundant, so there is always the fear of what if this time around am not so lucky and based on your sales. The more products you sell, the better your chance of staying is. It's not been easy for me.*



Because they witnessed the retrenchment of colleagues and their transfer to other branches due to business closures, the feeling of insecurity was high as reflections on these events was a cause for concern. It appears less productive employees were more likely to be the ones retrenched.

Job insecurity also tended to rise when competition in the industry became intense.

***Merlan (past involuntary part-timer):*** *There was a time when the new north-west store opened, and they said that was going to be the biggest store. I thought people would flock there and that will be the primary focus, then what are we doing in here? Things were running through my mind. Then I was thinking, are they going to close if we don't make money? If people will get past us and go there, then what becomes of us? That was a concern for me because I thought they would close us, but it was the other way round. Some people went there and came back. Not anymore at the moment.*

In this case, it appears perceptions of job insecurity for the future were influenced by the establishment of other retail outlets. With the fear of losing customers to the new store, employees were uncertain whether their store could continue to be in business to retain them. A few employees seem to understand that intense competition in the industry due to the opening of new stores could be a good reason for them to lose their jobs. If their organisations are unable to maintain and increase their customer base, then it seems natural for them to lose their jobs.

Overall, the majority of employees (80%) perceive their jobs to be very secure now and in the near future but unsure of what could happen in the very distant future. This feeling of insecurity in the distant future was prompted by events of business closures of competitors and the opening of other stores in the same chain. The minority of three participants who believed their jobs were highly insecure felt so because of past restructuring activities in their organisation and the 'casualized' nature of their contract. This notwithstanding, all respondents (both past and present involuntary part-timers) indicated they had guaranteed hours.

### 7.3.4 Intrinsic job quality

Different employees described their working experiences differently. While some viewed their jobs as boring, repetitive, too simple, less stressful and making very little use of their skills, others described their jobs as stressful but challenging and making use of their skills. Employees' experiences of intrinsic job quality can be clustered into three categories. One group is made up of employees with less stressful but repetitive jobs without the utilization of many skills. This feature was described mainly by twelve participants in the retail sector whose main duties were stocking and re-stocking shelves. Another group of four comprised those with somewhat stressful jobs but with skills being well utilized. This was characterized by participants whose jobs involved customer service. However, they noted that it varied based on the day or the season. The last is a small group of two participants with less stressful jobs but whose skills were well utilized, the reason being that their jobs were related to their training.

This participant shares her work experience and explains that:

***Martini (present involuntary part-timer):*** *The job is not difficult and not very stressful compared to some many other jobs I have had so it is very nice. Sometimes it is boring because they employed a lot of people that is why I don't have many shifts. Sometimes there are so many of us with few customers, and we don't know what to do.*

For this employee, it appears managers' focus on customer satisfaction influenced the number of people employed in relation to the available jobs. This increase in employee numbers made the job boring because this employee claimed they were idle most often. Despite that, this employee described her job as good because compared with other jobs held in the past, the current job was quite simple and less stressful. However, its simplicity made the job boring.

Four out of twenty employees who were responsible for customer service felt it was very stressful especially during sales and when one encounters tough customers. Two comments are as follows:

***Dava (present involuntary part-timer):*** Sometimes demanding. Days like today, it is relatively calm. It's a nice day today. In the seasons of half-price sales and stuff, it is stressful. In the circumstances, when stock comes in on a weekly basis, it is stressful because of heavy lifting over a long period. Here we cannot sit down at all unless it is break. And it is a concrete floor, so it has a physical stress on my body. And just like any retail job, it can be stressful dealing with customers; you can have some nasty people around. The job itself is not challenging. It is boring because I feel I can do better, but it is never challenging. It is kind of energy consuming. I feel I can do a lot better but feel my skills are not being used.

***Kos (present involuntary part-timer):*** It is sometimes stressful. It depends on stock. Like near to Christmas, there are heaps of stock, and I sometimes have to put them out all by myself, but now in my condition (pregnant at the time of the interview), the guys and managers help me out.

Some jobs were stressful, but it appears the level of stress was influenced by an employee's roles and the season. In this case, it appears jobs that required the physical exertion of effort had a toll on employees especially when there were new stocks to be warehoused. Two respondents involved in merchandizing narrated their ordeal regarding the amount of effort they had to expend especially when new stock arrives.

The level of stress experienced by employees also seems to come from the design of jobs. Jobs that demand a particular posture appear to wear employees out. For instance, Dava recounts that due to the nature of his roles, he had to stand the whole day while serving customers and only had the opportunity to sit during his break times. Because these jobs are not complex and diverse, they tend to be boring and underutilized his skills. Kos's experience was the same. It appears the design of the job had a toll on her physically. She was however fortunate due to her state (pregnant) to benefit from the supportive relationships between herself and the colleagues and also from her superior.

Despite the design of jobs, managers and employees had a role to play in how stressful/difficult the job was. This was recounted by a participant who indicated that:

***Lineh (past involuntary part-timer):*** *It is stressful if you make it out to be. That is why I am saying you have got to find your way to do your work. Am not stressed at all. It is sometimes boring. If you don't have stock and nothing to do, then it is a long day. And then you have to find things to do or go and help others. But a lot of people are stressed. I have seen a lot of people come and go in a few weeks. It is not difficult because I am used to doing it. The level of difficulty is based on how difficult your manager is.*

Some employees explain that their job is stressful, but it appears the level of stress is influenced by the amount of support from superiors, the design of jobs, the type of customer and the individual's personality. As an experienced employee, this participant had found a way of handling her job and was not worried by the demands of the job. While some employees have resigned due to the boring and stressful nature of work, others seem to have found a way of managing their stress and are therefore enjoying their jobs. For this participant, boredom was managed by helping colleagues with busy schedules.

On the other hand, two participants were of the view that their jobs were stressful but were also challenging and interesting.

***Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):*** *My job is not difficult but very challenging. It is quite stressful too. For instance, you need to bake the pastries to have the same taste every time. An error in the process will affect the taste which will mean the whole thing has to be thrown away.*

Other employees had stressful but challenging jobs because they had jobs in mass production, where consistency for the final product was a key requirement. Gorg for instance, explains that because the final taste of the product cannot be compromised, he had to go through several processes which made the job very challenging. It appears the job demanded that he pays attention to detail as an error in any of the stages has cost implications for the organisation.

Others described their jobs as repetitive, diverse and stressful but made use of their skills. This sentiment was expressed by an interviewee who stated that:

*Noka (past involuntary part-timer): It is very stressful. It is very repetitive because you are working for two companies, we do everything. One minute you could be opening an account, the next thing you are dealing with one who is interested in investing 1 million dollars or posting a document. It is very challenging. Quite diverse things have to be done. In the sense of what I have studied, there is no skill utilization, but when based on abilities as an individual, like from a character, my skills are being utilized.*

This participant's job required various activities to be completed within a short period of time. This made her describe her work as challenging but also very stressful and repetitive. According to this participant, although she is not utilizing the skills acquired from education, she benefits from the utilization of her personal skills. She said that having studied accounting as a major at university, she would have loved to be in a job that would make her use the acquired knowledge and skills. However, this job is under-utilizing those skills.

Overall, the majority (80%) viewed their jobs as under-utilizing their skills and four participants described their jobs as stressful. The level of stress was mainly related to the type of customers a person encounters and the design of jobs in the organisation. A big cohort of sixteen said their jobs were not very stressful.

### **7.3.5 Time flexibility**

Working time flexibility, an aspect of autonomy, is an important measure in determining employees' job quality. When employees can choose their starting and ending times, they tend to experience better job quality due to the experience of lower stress. In this study, fifty percent of the interviewees explained that their working time is not aligned with their individual preferences because management schedules the shift and employees have to plan their times to fit in. It appears the nature of work in which they were engaged was the greatest factor preventing them from

enjoying time flexibilities. The majority (13) were employed in the retail sector, known for extended opening hours. These employees were responsible for stocking shelves and customer service, which required their physical presence because of the frequent customer interactions.

***Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):*** *I have no choice as to when I report. Management tells me, and that is it. I, therefore, report to work at 4 am, and that was given me by management.*

Working during unsocial hours was not determined by this employee but solely based on managerial discretion. For this employee, he had adjusted to these requirements although it was not favourable initially. This employee, for instance, was unable to alter the schedule given.

For other research participants, although management does the scheduling, regarding overtime work, they had some flexibility.

***Dava (present involuntary part-timer):*** *Management tells when we come. There is no choice; it is rostered. There are periods when we may stay open for an hour or so, and they will ask if you can stay open for another hour, that is when I get the choice. I will have loved not to come on a Sunday, but this is what is given me, and because I need the money, I kind of have no option. I do not work for too long in a day. The longest is 9 hours.*

This respondent explained that working overtime was not mandatory, and that seems to be the only occasion when they had flexibility over the use of their time. The benefit of getting more money was the main incentive for reporting to work on days and times that were unfavourable. Although most employees did not work long hours, they worked unsocial hours, against their preferences.

A small cohort of working mothers (3) with caring responsibilities indicated that they were allowed to make a choice partly for their preferred working days. They could not decline to choose to work on Friday nights and weekends. According to them, it was a management directive, and supervisors applied it in the letter.

Below is how a participant explained her experience:

***Kos (present involuntary part-timer):*** Last year, I gave them my hours because of my son. He is in pre-school so that I can work Monday to Friday. But I was told everyone has to work one weekend so am now coming on Friday night or else I will lose those hours. Thus, it is quite hard to do these shifts. For the other days, I chose the times but not for the Friday nights (5:30 – 9:30). I was forced to do that. I don't come on Saturdays or Sundays.

These working mothers with young children benefited from scheduling flexibilities to a limit. It appears management and employees had compromised on the working hours and days for some working mothers, although not entirely to their satisfaction. Kos, for instance, was given the opportunity to choose her preferred weekdays excluding weekends. According to the manager, she needed to work at least on a Friday night or a weekend. This suggests that individual needs have been accommodated to a limited extent. Due to her caring responsibilities, she would have loved to work during the day or weekdays only. It appears the desire to adapt to customer demands has limited employees' time flexibilities. Because most participants (70%) were in the retail sector where customer satisfaction is key, customers' needs seem to be the driving force determining the number of days and hours stores are opened. In a bid to accommodate customers' needs and outperform competitors, weekends seem to be days they cannot sacrifice for employees' convenience.

On a positive note, one female participant who described herself as a single mother was, however, fortunate to have control over her working time, enabling her to have a balance between work and family commitments.

***Simal (present involuntary part-timer):*** I choose the hours I want to work solely because I am a stay home mum. I can only work on those hours because I have to make sure my children are ok. I just work when they are in school. After 2:30 pm and night, I am not available to work. I have an advantage in choosing the times and days.

While there were some restrictions on time flexibility for some workers, it appears some managers were very considerate in accommodating the individual needs of single mothers because their time preferences were considered. This gave this employee the opportunity to care for her children, which was an advantage for her.

In summary, most employees were not satisfied with their shifts as they had to work on a weekend or at night at least once a week. While three working mothers with caring responsibilities had their time preferences accommodated to a limited extent, one sole mother's time preferences were fully accommodated. Although these mothers are actually seeking full-time hours, they would have loved for their time preferences to be accommodated entirely due to their family commitments.

#### **7.3.6 Training and career advancement opportunities**

All but three employees were trained on the job to familiarise them with daily routines. These training processes were mostly done by experienced colleagues and lasted a few hours or days. An online training programme was also arranged for two respondents. The majority (seventeen employees) indicated that they benefitted from on-the-job training at the start of their job in their respective organisations. Unfortunately, these training processes were not ongoing for the majority of thirteen participants who explained that the training was quite helpful in getting them settled in their jobs and the environment. A small cohort of three participants claimed there was no training at all and so they had to learn from experienced colleagues and through trial and error. One of the three indicated that she benefited from informal training (introduction to the job). There was little career advancement for the majority (fifteen participants), although many explained that their jobs allowed movements across departments.



**Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):** *For my kind of job, I had intensive training in the organisation due to the sensitive nature of the job (on-the-job training). You know, as a baker, you need to get all your ingredients right, or else everything can go waste. For instance, the wrong combination of flour, sugar, yeast or salt can change the final product.*

It appears the extent of the employees' training was based on the role performed. Employees with specialized roles were given the necessary training to integrate them into the organisation and also to improve efficiency and effectiveness. It was in the best interest of both the employer and employee for training to be conducted to equip the employee and reduce the number of defective products.

To another employee, there is an upgrade of their skills through continuous training, but the decision to participate is highly voluntary:

**Noka (past involuntary part-timer):** *I still keep on going for training. What they do every year is that they ask if you are happy with your current position and we have these training available. Are you interested? So, taking them up is really dependent on one's willingness to study, and after the training, one is given more responsibilities.*

Two employees explained that the organisation had made arrangements to get them continuously trained, but the decision to be trained was based on employees' availability, willingness to learn and acceptance of higher responsibility after the training programme. It seems managers are interested in the training and development of their employees and for which reason training programmes are publicised annually. Participants explain that their responsibilities increase after every training, possibly because they need to practice what was taught.

Two participants, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the nature of the training:

**Simal (present involuntary part-timer):** *Right at the beginning, I was given 'crunch course' in the centre which I found intimidating and had to depend on the senior staff to teach me how to do my job. You are a newcomer, and when you come to the organisation and are told to do things in a basic way of operation, it does not help. Get out there and do things which I find terrifying because I had never done anything like that before. You keep trying till you get things done and you start getting anxious at the end of the day.*

This employee appears dissatisfied with the nature of the training given. As an employee with no experience in the present job, she was expecting to receive adequate information instead of the little information provided. It appears this form of training did not get her ready for the job as she still had to depend on more experienced workers to work effectively. It, therefore, seems the training was creating anxiety instead of settling her into the job.

Eve for instance, had to learn on her own through trial and error because there was no training at all.

***Eve (past involuntary part-timer):** When I arrived, there was no training at all, so I had to learn for myself. I have to ask somebody. You make a mistake and then the boss, tells you, this is not the right thing to do. You have to redo. You sort of train yourself. Not quite, after that, I started opening my mouth and asking questions. Is this the right thing to do? I ask the visual manager; I keep asking. If she says yes, I leave it like that. If she asks me to change then, I have to change (present).*

Four employees explained how they got frustrated because they had to re-do their jobs due to the lack of training. The lack of training meant they had to learn through trial and error. However, it appears personal strategies adopted by these employees helped salvage the situation. Apart from learning through trial and error, these employees resorted to consulting and asking their managers and experienced workers who were knowledgeable in the work routines to give feedback on their performance.

Regarding career advancement, most employees (75%) had not progressed even after several years' experience. Fifteen participants indicated that although their roles had not changed, their job titles had changed. This interviewee shares her experience and recounts that:

***Eve (past involuntary part-timer):** I started as a merchandiser. Sometimes you can be a salesperson if no one is at the counter. There has been no progression though now they call us salesperson/merchandizer/level 3. You do everything. There has been only a change in the name/job title, but there has been no progression.*

They had been responsible mainly for the same kind of job for all these years although in times of staff shortages they are assigned different roles. These experienced workers indicated that there had been only changes in job titles to reflect current trends, but practically, there has been no progression. They were performing the same job under different job titles. For instance, all participants from one store (13) indicated that their titles had been changed from general service person to merchandizer, but nothing else had changed.

Concerning career progression, three of the research participants indicated that it was a personal choice not to progress because they did not want the added responsibilities and restrictions on the number of hours that come with promotions.

***Pol (past involuntary part-timer):** I don't want to be stressed out so am happy where I am. They stress out in their positions. I don't want to be a manager. It is too much work and stressful. I know myself, I have the experience, and I can do more and do what the managers do, but I don't want it. We do get more money than the managers if we work overtime, but they have a set number of hours.*

The three participants explained that they were not interested in advancing to managerial positions because of the stress attached to those positions. They also claim that although they are competent and experienced enough to be in managerial positions, it is a personal decision to remain at the same level because there are no restrictions on the number of hours. They explained that working overtime gave them the same amount of money they would receive if they worked as managers with limited working hours. These employees perceived that an increase in pay rate is the only benefit of career progression and because they worked an extended number of work hours (possibly getting the same amount of money but working longer hours), they tend to ignore the other benefits of increased security, employability and the prestige associated with career progression.

However, two other participants in the same store who expressed interest in progressing were unsuccessful in their application, so although they started as general service persons, they were still in the same role after many years with only a change in title to merchandizers.

***Lianne (past involuntary part-timer):*** *I have not progressed, but there is a reason. I did say I wanted to be a manager and the fashion manager at that time put me on speed. They have a system, like anybody that wants to be a manager, they had a scheme where everyone is assessed. There were a lot of us there, but they only needed a few managers. We went through scenarios and stuff even though I passed; others had better marks than me. So, the lady told me that I needed to do a development plan. So, I said ok. The manager changed, but I don't think the new manager liked me, so there was no support. I have asked for the development plan, but she never made one. The HR manager said I had six months to do my development plan. If they don't see any, then they know I am not serious.*

These research participants who expressed interest in advancing to a managerial position were not qualified after an assessment by their organisation. For example, this respondent who was very interested was not as competent as others who were assessed. Because she was motivated to progress, she was willing to undergoing any form of development to be better qualified the next time. But it appears there was no support from the immediate manager because of perceived dislike. There is an indication that although the organisation has made provisions for career advancement opportunities, some employees do not meet the requirements for such progressions.

Another participant recounts her experience by explaining that:

***Simal (present involuntary part-timer):*** *I have been told if I put in an application for a managerial position, I will be given a recommendation because I am pretty good with the customers and the other workers. I have said that on many occasions when I go for assessments that I will like to be a manager. They are like 'yeah when the time comes we will let you know' but the time has come and gone, and I have not been given the opportunity. I have pretty much been at the same level. The only thing that has changed is that I am an authorizer and this is not much of change. I feel that I have a lot more to offer but have not been given the opportunity.*

It appears the efforts put in by this employee to rise have been futile over the years. It seems employees with long tenure experienced more frustration because they have been stuck at one level for a long time; it is as if there is a glass ceiling. Simal, for instance, has been in a part-time position

for about fifteen years and suspects her employment status is affecting her chances. She seemed disappointed in management for not keeping their promise of recommending her for promotions. It is as though management is withholding information on promotional opportunities from her and this has created mistrust. She has been shuffled around on lateral movements only and no hierarchical movements for all the years of service, which she finds frustrating. Thus, she is anxious and unsure as to when her promotion will be due.

Two participants had risen through the ranks due to their positive work ethic.

***Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):*** *I started as a baker, but I am currently a supervisor. Due to my hardworking nature, I have progressed in my career.*

To Gorg, there has been upward mobility. This was possible because he was industrious and as such his performance on the job facilitated this progression to a supervisory management position.

Overall, the evidence to me suggests that most participants (17) were trained on the job to get acquainted with the demands of the job and the environment. They confirmed that this form of training process achieved the aim of familiarizing them with the organization. It was rather unfortunate that the training processes were not continuous for many. A majority had not advanced after many years although they have been rotated on the job and their job titles changed to reflect current trends.

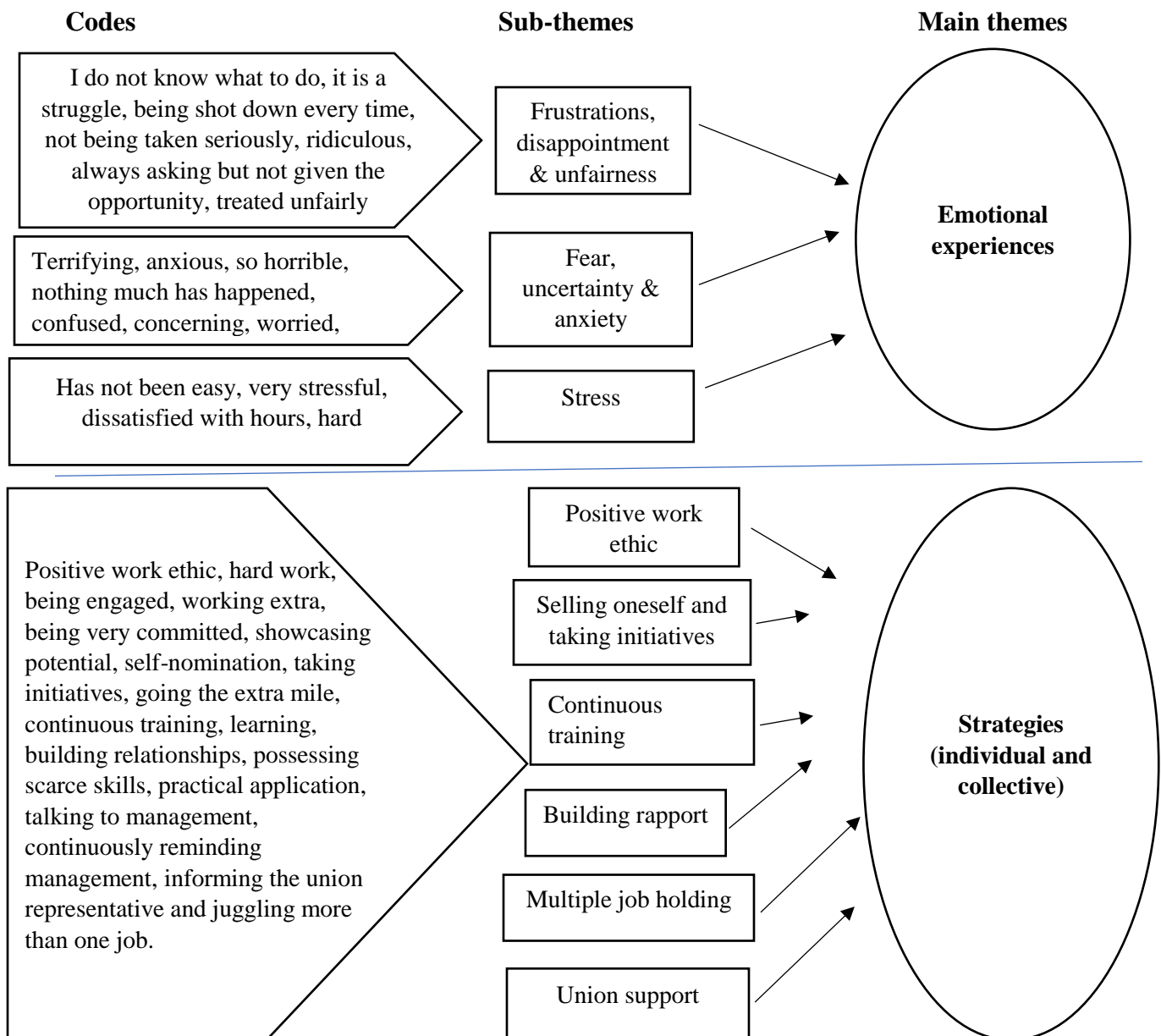
#### **7.4 The emotional experiences of involuntary part-timers**

In this section, the emotional and financial challenges developed from the data itself using the inductive approach formed the basis of this analysis. In this regard, recurrent themes that emerged from the majority of respondents are discussed. This study analyses the emotional experiences of only current involuntary part-timers. These emotional experiences presented major themes comprising frustration and disappointment, fear, anxiety, uncertainty and stress. Figure 7.1 below

summarises how the inductive codes, sub-themes and main themes were developed. Refer to pages 140-141 for details.

*Figure 7.1*

*Development of codes, sub-themes and main themes*



#### 7.4.1 Frustrations, disappointments and unfairness

All involuntary part-timers explained that the inability to increase hours or attain full-time positions was a primary source of frustration. Further, I found that they were worried and frustrated mainly because the number of hours affected their income levels and buying choices. There were four participants who were also disappointed that their managers kept employing externally without first offering them the opportunity to apply for these openings. It appears employees feel the decision to continue recruiting outsiders was unreasonable because the organisation already has willing and available part-time employees seeking full-time status.

This is how a research participant recounted the frustration due to insufficient hours:

*Simal: I am sure of the number of hours I have, but I will like to work more hours. I have sat down with management, and I have said I would love to do extra hours but I was told we cannot do anything at this moment. It is a continuous thing which is like being shot down every single time one asks for more time. I want to be a full-time worker, not part-timer for the rest of my time there. I feel I am not being taken seriously enough to be given full-time hours. The company keeps employing new people every time meaning all the hours have been taken out, which is ridiculous. Part-timers want more hours but have not been given. Meanwhile, Christmas casuals are being interviewed whereas the vacancies have not been opened to those of us already working here. What I think should be done is to first offer these extra hours to current employees first - whether on a permanent or temporary basis.*

It is evident from the above interview that this employee does not intend to be in a part-time position anymore and is frustrated with the turn of events as new employees are recruited without her having the hope of attaining full-time status anytime soon. She expressed disappointment and dissatisfaction with this current business practice of external recruitment without first considering internal recruitment. What does not surface in this account, however, is management's reason for not giving more hours to employees who are willing and available to work. It can, however, be inferred that employees have informed management of their desire and availability to work more hours.

Another employee from the same organisation explains why management was not giving more hours to involuntary part-timers:

***Kos:** Last year I asked my manager if she could give me more hours, but she did not because she said they are cutting hours. However, they were recruiting at the time. We asked why, and they explained that they need more people at a particular time-period to work on a specific section. They only want to cut hours but not to increase.*

Although employees want more hours and are available, the organisation's desire to have them at particular times to suit their business requirements denied them access. While, in this case, this employee received a clear explanation of the rationale for not getting more hours, others I spoke with were not informed. This suggests that there is inconsistency in the sharing of information on available vacancies. For this reason, some employees seem to be skeptical about management's intentions in not granting them more hours. The organisation's justification for simultaneously cutting hours of current workers and recruiting new workers seems to be because of organisational time constraints. This is because the organisation wanted the employee at particular times and, in most cases, the person is already working at those times.

Apart from these feelings of inadequacy, they are also frustrated and distressed because of their inability to secure adequate hours in spite of all their hardworking efforts, intended to impress and attract management's attention to their willingness and availability to work more hours.

For this participant, it is also a feeling of injustice because others are given the opportunity to do more hours.

***Fal:** It is frustrating because we see people working 6 and seven days and they get tired, and here we are asking for hours, and they don't give us. You perform really hard to prove it to them. I am reliable and hardworking because I want more working hours, but they don't look at that. It is not healthy; it is risky if anything happens to them or customers who are going to blame? They need to have a proper break.*



With only a select few having extra hours, she is rendered powerless as her positive work attitude seems not to pay off. She sees this practice as an unfair treatment because some workers are offered the opportunity to earn more while others are not offered any extra hours at all. Some employees feel disappointed and have reservations about how management is handling these scheduling issues. To them, management must spread out the workload evenly to all available employees instead of overworking the few who sometimes complain of tiredness and stress due to over-time loads.

The majority of participants did not see this as a problem, but an interviewee was concerned about the inequalities in managements' approach/treatment of full-timers versus part-timers:

***Fal:** Full-timers sometimes have better relations with some managers. They get what they ask for quicker than those of us who are part-timers. Full timers get along better. They have their group meetings apart from part-timers. This company should be a family and make everyone feel comfortable and welcome.*

Fal, a frustrated employee, feels that some managers give preferential treatment by employees' employment status. She is frustrated because she feels discriminated against as she claims full-timers are usually favoured by managers. It could mean that since full-timers work longer hours, they tend to have social and managerial groups/clusters and get along better than part-timers do. This segregation in the organisation appears to be a worry especially for this part-timer who feels this situation detaches her from the organisation. Not having any managerial cluster meetings also raises questions about whether she has a voice in the organisation. This employee's experience of preferential treatment towards full-timers stands in contrast to my quantitative analysis, which provides substantial evidence of part-timers, on average, being better off regarding this indicator. On a positive note, this is not the view of the majority of respondents but only one.

### **7.4.2 Fear, uncertainty and anxiety**

Further to the emotional experiences presented earlier, some involuntary part-timers also encounter fear, uncertainty, and anxiety due to inadequate hours, thereby complicating the challenges.

Fal, experiencing fear and anxiety, recounts her ordeal and notes that:

*It is very stressful and frustrating, to be honest, and you get a minimal number of hours. I have a family I need to take care of. I have kids, and you don't know whether you will be able to afford the rent for the next following week or be able to provide for your kids. I have signed a casual contract for up to 30 hours, but I want to do 40 hours for full-time.*

The insufficiency of hours and financial constraints seem to have created uncertainty for this employee. This is because she is unable to adequately prepare to meet the families' necessities in the coming weeks. This lack of financial stability appears to be of immense concern to all ten currently involuntary part-time employees due to its effects on their physical and financial well-being; which is compounded by the fact that they do not have any savings to fall back on. It appears they are unable to even plan for at least one week ahead.

### **7.4.3 Stress**

Compounding the inadequacy of hours was their inability to get their preferred working times. All but two employees were able to influence their working days and times. However, women with caring responsibilities had a lot of challenges with this arrangement. This was particularly difficult for a small cohort of two women with young children who did not want to work during unsocial hours (evenings). These employees perceive management not to have compromised enough with the scheduling of working times. This is because although some of their preferences were factored into the scheduling, they were not entirely. To them, the inability of management to be entirely considerate of their particular situations created more frustrations and stress.

Praj expressed her sentiments as:

*It is so horrible for me. I put my child in preschool and paying over there. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are my days off. I don't need that time off because my child's in preschool anyway, and I can use that time to work. Then for Thursdays and Fridays, I am off again the whole day but have to come at night. No one is available to take care of my kids at night. If I work at least 35 hours, I will be fine. I am doing very few hours, and it is affecting my salary. I don't want to do late nights because of my kid. I have expressed to management that I prefer working the day instead of the late nights (present).*

This employee feels management is not very concerned about her particular situation as there is not much consideration or support for care responsibilities. Two of the participants with caring responsibilities who were made to work during unsocial hours were stressed because they had to look for extra help during those periods. These two participants' preferences for particular days and times had been accommodated up to a certain limit, but according to organisational policy, they were mandated to do an evening shift. These involuntary part-timers still had to accept work during unsocial hours because they wanted more hours. Some working mothers with caring responsibilities said they had to sacrifice family responsibilities to order to keep their jobs. It seems employees are also frustrated because although they have informed management of their preference for particular times due to caring responsibilities, management has neither been accommodative nor expressed much support. The employees seem frustrated because beyond having limited hours which affects their income levels; they still have to spend more money in taking care of their children at preschool, a situation they find uncomfortable.

Overall, accounts from these involuntary part-timers show their dissatisfaction with their current working hours. They are frustrated because they have been unable to change their situations after several attempts of reminding managers of their availability. Others claim to be working hard to impress management. Their challenge is complicated by the fact that their managers kept recruiting externally without giving them the opportunity first. Some working mothers with caring

responsibilities were also stressed due to time inflexibilities. The lack of sufficient hours has also affected their income levels, purchasing power and the standard of living for their dependents, thereby creating anxieties and uncertainties for the future.

## **7.5 Strategies for transitioning into full-time jobs**

Involuntary part-timers usually have financial and emotional challenges due to inadequate hours. One of the research questions was to examine strategies used and being used by involuntary part-timers in transitioning into ‘good’ jobs. Strategies used by both present and past involuntary part-timers were examined inductively and grouped into six major themes. These themes were generally grouped under individual and collective strategies. These are building rapport and communication, positive work ethic, multiple job holding, attaining higher education, selling one’s self and taking initiatives and union interventions. These data were then interpreted to reflect participants’ views using academic terminologies.

In this regard, during the interviews, I asked participants the strategies they used or are using to get into jobs of better quality. This revealed some strategies they have personally used or using to varying effect. In this part of the research, I discuss successful strategies used by past involuntary part-timers as well as ongoing strategies being implemented by current involuntary part-timers. In order not to be trapped in this condition, most had personal strategies in place and a collective strategy (union intervention) for their transitioning.

### **7.5.1 Individual strategies for transitioning**

Participants seem to have placed a stronger responsibility on themselves to remedy their financial and emotional challenges. All interviewees had made it a personal goal to transition into full-time

jobs and not solely depend on their employers for interventions. Instead, they believed that securing more hours demanded commitments to various personal strategies.

#### **7.5.1.1 Positive work ethic**

Unanimously, past involuntary part-timers had a positive work ethic while they were in part-time jobs. This was one of the most successful strategies because it was related to performance at work (commitment level and ability to work harder). It appears having a positive attitude to work was important since getting more hours was dependent on the level of a person's performance. One of the respondents described this strategy by stating that:

***Merlan (past involuntary part-timer):*** *I will say it is your willingness. If you are willing to do the extra bit in any department. When I came to the country, I worked hard as if I had only today and not tomorrow. Work must be done for today and not tomorrow. I need to finish up today and not tomorrow. Management will not employ you if you don't want to work extra. They will not waste money if the person does just a little. They see, sometimes we think they don't.*

According to this employee, managers were always looking for workers who are hard working. To her, managers will more likely retain and increase hours for employees who have a positive work ethic. From this account, it appears managers have a preference for employees who are not sluggish and do not procrastinate in the completion of their duties. It was important for employees to be hard working and also go the extra mile to get more hours.

An interviewee discussing the productivity potential of employees with positive work ethic explained that:

***Liza (past involuntary part-timer):*** *It was my work ethic. I started as a casual, and I was supposed to be there for eight weeks, but they saw that within the eight weeks, the job I did was satisfactory to their standard. They liked it. According to them, I did a thorough job such that what needs to be done by 2 or 3 people was done by me alone. It was just hard work, and that is what the boss wanted. It was cost savings on their part with me.*

This employee explains how labour cost was reduced by the organisation due to her hard work. It appears managers were more inclined to retain and give more hours to employees who were able to meet and exceed expectations. For employees, a desire to get a full-time job meant they had to show management that they can help the organisation succeed by doing thorough jobs. After a performance review, feedback from management showed this employee was exceeding targets so was able to transition into a full-time job.

Another interviewee explains the rationale for a preference for better performers:

***Noka (past involuntary part-timer):** Most casuals are normally detached from their jobs. They do not give their best because they feel they do not belong here. For instance, when a customer comes in they tend not to see who is a casual or full-timer. So, they expect the same service from all of them, so if they come in and then do a mediocre job, then it becomes a problem which affects the organisation.*

According to Noka, it seems some casuals are disengaged, and less committed so are unable to transition quickly into full-time status. Being detached from the organisation due to one's employment status comes at a cost because customers expect the same quality of service from all employees irrespective of status. Recognising that individual performance was essential to contributing to overall organisational performance was the one important thing to management. Those employees who give of their best were at an advantage in transitioning into full-time jobs that those who were lackadaisical.

While this strategy has succeeded for all previous part-timers, the evidence from this data suggests that for the ten current part-timers, it might be a more challenging strategy. Fal, for example, was frustrated, stressed and anxious because over the period, although she has been demonstrating her positive work ethic by being hardworking, it has been futile. According to her, she wanted to impress management that she was capable of working more hours if given the opportunity.

Overall, a positive work ethic, according to past involuntary part-timers, is key to transitioning into a full-time position. This was because managers have a higher preference for hardworking employees who perform effectively than those who are less productive.

#### **7.5.1.2 Selling oneself and taking initiatives**

A build-up on the previous strategy was showcasing their potential to management. This was related to making managers know that participants are multi-skilled and capable of working in any part of the organisation. Proving one's worth by making managers know a person was willing to help the organisation succeed was preferable. Taking initiatives, by not waiting to be instructed on what has to be done was a successful strategy revealed by four past involuntary part-timers during the interviews.

This view was exemplified by a respondent who stated:

***Poli (past involuntary part-timer):** When I was a casual, I knew that I was desperate for a full-time job, so instead of being told what to do by a manager, I had to look for other things that need to be done, and I jump into that. It is more of using my head. But sometimes if there is nothing to be done in my department, I ask the manager of the other department if there is something to be done. Management got to know I could do more than just what is in my department. I was always moving around to get things done.*

The above suggests that employees were seen as useful when they behaved in responsible ways towards the organisation. According to this participant, employees who were multi-skilled and versatile were preferred by management. This participant, for instance, explains how she searched for work from every department in the organisation in a bid to secure a full-time job. This suggests that management was willing to recruit and retain ambidextrous employees with lots of capabilities to help the organisation succeed. It is a process of selling themselves to management. By self-nominating themselves for other responsibilities, they showcase their ability to take initiatives.

Taking the necessary initiative to solve organisational problems was reinforced by another respondent who stated that:

***Cha (past involuntary part-timer):** The full-time job is based on an opportunity. Step up when there is a problem. Do not back off. I used to put myself up. You need to use your common sense. The boss must know you are capable. You must pull yourself up beyond to the extreme to get the job done.*

From this participant, it appears employees who offered solutions to organisational problems were given the opportunity to work full-time. Those who proved they were capable and diligent at work were more likely to benefit from opportunities. Employees who showed their potential by self-nominating themselves and solving organizational problems were successful. Cha, for instance, is working in a rest home and recounts meeting very ‘difficult’ clients. She usually calms the clients down without relying on the manager for instructions on every situation. She also recalls that being trained continuously gave her the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills to help the organisation succeed.

Implementing this strategy can complicate the already stressful situation of current involuntary part-timers. This is because as Lineh explained, she had to find work to do or help others to show her ability to take initiatives. As employees engage in impression management in exchange for more hours, practically, it will put more pressure on them. This notwithstanding, it might be more advantageous to do this in order to get a full-time job.

#### **7.5.1.3 Upgrading skills through continuous training**

Although low-skill jobs require very little on-the-job training, mostly with no past work experience and usually lower qualifications, eight respondents were of the view that upgrading their skills was necessary for their transition. This was mainly done through attending training programmes to stay current on trends in the organisation and industry. This strategy was found to be appropriate for



both past and present involuntary part-timers. This strategy was shared by an interviewee who explained that:

***Gorg (past involuntary part-timer):*** *I believe one's skill is relevant to getting a full-time job because with the appropriate expertise, you can be in the right job and it is particularly true if the skill possessed is scarce. Coupled with the relevant qualification, is the experience. After gaining the appropriate skills and working for some time, the experience possessed enabled me to get a full-time job.*

This account shows employees who had relevant qualifications and possessed scarce skills had an advantage. For some jobs within the same retail sector, this is critical because not all jobs in the organisation are low-skilled. Gorg, for instance, is a baker in a retail store and explains that because his skills were in high demand compared with customer service which can be done by anyone with little training, he was able to transition into a full-time job easily. According to him, to attain his vocational training certificate, he underwent training for almost two years and so describes it as 'scarce.' He further explains that it is very rewarding in monetary terms because he gets well beyond the minimum wages. This suggests that the acquisition of relevant knowledge and experience can help workers transition into good jobs as they tend to have an added advantage over their counterparts with few or none of those skills.

Despite the belief that having a vocational training certificate was ideal, four others were of the view that the ability to provide hands-on experience was more critical:

***Cha (past involuntary part-timer):*** *People need to have more qualifications, but you need to be practical too. Can you put the education to work? So, the qualification must go with your practical, can you apply what you have been taught?*

Without downplaying the importance of education, Cha adds that employees need to be able to transfer the knowledge acquired onto the job to transition smoothly. It appears upgrading ones' certificate is not the only important factor but also having a hands-on experience on the job mattered.

However, for two employees, a major challenge encountered was how their vocational training programme was to be funded. In as much as they were interested in upgrading their skills, the cost inhibited their progress, thus making them reliant on their organisations for support. One of these respondents further notes that she was awaiting her turn for company-based training since it was difficult to do that through personal sponsorship. Until the organisation comes to fund their education, it appears some of these vulnerable employees are likely to remain in these jobs of poorer quality for a while.

This frustration by an interviewee was recounted as:

***Simal (present involuntary part-timer):** One of my strategies is furthering my education through my organisation so I can progress into other roles in the company. This is because it will be free and that will mean helping the company and myself. I don't have the money for it, and the company bears it.*

This research participant acknowledges the importance of education as it is more likely to pave the way for better opportunities in the organisation. However, she explains that it was only possible through the organization's sponsorship due to her financial constraints. The interviewee also recognizes that being sponsored by the organisation had dual benefits to herself and the organisation.

This notwithstanding, it appears job-personality fit mattered more to employers.

***Noka (past involuntary part-timer):** Higher qualifications are not the only thing considered. They look at the character and the person who fits in and not just the certificate. Sometimes, those who are averagely qualified are willing to learn, and since their personality fits the organisation, they tend to get it. They can be moulded into what the organisation wants.*

Noka said that employees' attitudes towards work (i.e., their ability to fit into the culture of the organisation) was important. From Noka's perspective, managers are happy to keep employees with the relevant soft skills even if they are not highly qualified (hard skills). Noka highlights the

importance of finding employees with the right personal qualities and attitudes: trainable, adaptable and willing to learn. It appears the attitudes of employees in addition to qualifications tend to enhance their mobility.

This being said, this data shows that for some current part-timers, because they are already struggling financially, they might be unable to realize this dream of upgrading their skills solely. Relying on the same organisation for support in funding their vocational training presents an extra burden and delay in moving into full-time jobs. This reliance could mean a long wait. Many workers agree that updating their skills through vocational training is important in enhancing their employability, securing more hours and progressing in their career. Additionally, it was imperative to have a hands-on experience and the right soft skills to perform.

#### **7.5.1.4 Building rapport and communication with management**

The most dominant theme in all participants' account was to make their intentions known to management. Employees built rapport with their superiors, and that enabled them to frequently remind management of their desire to work more hours. Unanimously, this was the first and commonest strategy outlined by all interviewees (both past and present involuntary part-timers).

For example:

***Fal (present involuntary part-timer):** Talking to management to increase the hours. This, I have been doing, but nothing much has happened. It's tough to look for another job, so it not an option. I will be around here for now and keep discussing with management.*

It appears some employees have intentions to continuously remind management of their desirability to work more hours. This implied providing information on their availability to management consistently. Some employees seem trapped in their current organisation although

they are unhappy with the number of hours. Their inability to secure jobs elsewhere has made them rely on this strategy although it has not yielded any positive result yet.

One employee, however, stressed the need to communicate to all levels of management at the same time, so the same message is sent across:

***Martin (present involuntary part-timer):*** *I have been talking to all the managers together instead of one at a time. If you just talk to one, he will answer whatever he wants. But if it is more managers, they cannot lie, so they don't know what to say so they have to think about it. And when they come back, it is more advantageous for me. If I speak to one, he can tell me anything to make me quiet.*

This employee added that informing all levels of managers if possible was more effective than discussing with individual managers. This style of communication was geared towards getting managers to become more committed to any promise made concerning granting more hours. It also ensured greater uniformity and consistency in the feedback given to employees regarding increasing their hours.

Findings from the data further showed that most employees communicate not only their availability but also their competence and ability to work in any unit. This was indicated by an interviewee who stated that:

***Praj (present involuntary part-timer):*** *I have told management I am available for work in any of the departments, I am not fussy to work in only one place.*

Being multi-skilled meant that they were capable of working in any unit, therefore, they could fit into any unit or department in the organisation. This employee assumed that managers would most likely prefer to work with employees who can comfortably fit into any unit with some form of training than those who are not so versatile. The thinking was that exhibiting this trait presented an advantage because it gives employees leverage over others who cannot quickly adapt.

Another strategy is covering in situations when others were unavailable. Practically, this demonstrated employees' commitment to wanting more hours. Time flexibility seems to be a better communicator of employees' availability to do more hours. This was explained by an interviewee who said:

***Cha (past involuntary part-timer):** My boss assesses me, and she assesses you to know if you are capable. And so I talk to her and ask her if she has more hours because I will want to do more. When people go off, they call, can you do these shifts whether in the morning or evening? When they give up some days, I pick up the opportunity. Somebody will tell you they want to go to Australia, do you want it?*

Beyond informing management of their desire to work more hours, management's assessment of the person's capacity determines whether they will receive more hours or not. Also, it appears a person's willingness to fill in or shadow others during absences plays a role. Covering for others who were absent showcased their competence because it signalled their availability to do more hours. It is suggestive then that employees' competencies and ability to respond to these calls irrespective of the times aided their movement into full-time jobs. Success with implementing these was, however, dependent on the manager's assessment of the employee's capabilities.

While this strategy has been used successfully by a past involuntary part-timer, its implementation might pose a challenge for five out of the ten current involuntary part-timers. This strategy is more complicated in practice because the previous data shows there are employees who are continually knocking on the doors of management without any positive feedback, thereby heightening their frustrations. Simal, for example, who has been working for the same store for the past 15 years, has deliberately and continuously informed management of her desire to have more hours. Although she has never been offered the opportunity, she has also not been given any reason why her request for more hours is always being turned down. When it occurs, this lack of full disclosure by management imposes a challenge on current part-timers who might be thinking of using this

strategy. Fal also shows how full-timers tend to have better management and collegial relations than part-timers. This suggests that the poor relationship already experienced by some current part-timers can complicate the reality of using this strategy successfully. Although this strategy has succeeded for all past involuntary part-timers, the hope it does the same for these current part-timers is questionable due to the nature of working relationships that exists for them.

#### **7.5.1.5 Multiple job holdings**

Another important strategy relayed by eight out of the ten employees who lacked sufficient hours was to hold multiple jobs in the same industry which might not require new skills. Further, two others indicate that they are already working in different fields due to their inability to secure more hours in competitor organisations. In fact, these two were working in three different organisations at the time of the interview with the main reason being that they want to improve their financial standing. This participant's account shows the extent to which they want to save the situation:

***Martini (present involuntary part-timer):** Currently, I found another part-time job, but that is very casual. It is still not enough. So, a third opportunity is in a different area, sound-engineer where I will be assisting. This is not paid for, but with time, I am sure I will be paid. This is because I am starting as a student. But there are no fixed hours; everything is random. So, it is a struggle.*

To some research participants, finding jobs in other organisations within the same industry was the most appropriate after being unsuccessful in securing more hours. It appears that even with getting another job in the same field, the hours received are still insufficient. For instance, this research participant had to search for a job in a different field to get additional income after holding two other jobs in the same industry. The challenge however for this respondent is that this new job was also casual, so it lacks security. Some employees seem to be juggling more than two jobs in a bid to secure more hours and get more income.

On the other hand, some claim holding multiple jobs comes with more tax obligations:

***Simal (present involuntary part-timer):*** *Another part-time job will mean paying more taxes for the second job, so it is not worth it. I have tried that it, and it was not viable. It only gave me pocket money which wasn't worth it.*

The above option was not viable for this interviewee who in the past held more than one job to increase her income base. Simal recounts how she paid more taxes for a second job and ended up with a small amount of money. Although more effort was expended, the monetary rewards appeared inadequate due to the tax obligations of multiple jobs. She explains that the second job in a different organisation attracts a higher tax rate. Due to this, Simal suggests the most appropriate strategy for her will be to secure more hours within the same organisation.

Further, a challenge for this participant who intended to hold multiple jobs, was the inconvenient shifts given to her. These shifts denied her the flexibility of working elsewhere. Most of these workers are rostered by management and so usually do not get shifts in their preferred hours and days. With the lack of control over time flexibility, some employees were challenged in using this option:

***Kos (present involuntary part-timer):*** *Thus, it is quite hard to do these shifts. Sometimes it is just about 4 hours, and that makes it difficult to get other employers to employ you.*

It appears although this employee is willing and available to work, her working hours are inflexible and therefore limit her options. Management seems to control the shifts as employees are required to work on particular days and times or lose those hours. This tends to compound their problem of insufficient hours and inadequate income. From Kos's experience, she was unable to secure any job elsewhere because her available times are inconvenient for other employers. Due to caring responsibilities, although she is willing and open to working, her hours are not endless or flexible. Unfortunately, her particular situation has not been considered as she has to accept or lose those

hours. So, in this case, these extra hours available will under-utilized due to organisational constraints.

In spite of the challenges associated with multiple job holdings, two others were of the view that securing jobs in other industries although unrelated to the current job was feasible. With current trends of business closures of some competitors, employees thought they are better off if they looked at different areas. Although that may require additional skills and training, it seems viable for some research participants:

***Lib (present involuntary part-timer):*** *I am also trying to get a job in a different field like an assistant gardener [currently a publisher and teacher].*

Although in an entirely different field, this research participant had to spot another opportunity in a different industry. Lib is currently in three different jobs with three different organisations, all with the aim of increasing hours to earn more income. This is frustrating due to the different requirements of these unrelated jobs and the increased tax obligations from working in different organisations concurrently. It seems however to be the only option available to some employees who have been searching unsuccessfully for full-time opportunities.

Unsurprisingly, a small cohort of four participants intends to better their chances of securing more hours by resigning and moving into other organisations, hoping to land full-time opportunities. Resigning from the current organisation and getting into a new organisation is one strategy some interviewees believed will improve their job quality:

***Praj (present involuntary part-timer):*** *Am just waiting here and after a year or so if I don't get more, I will think of something else or go elsewhere because there is nothing they pay extra here, it is just the minimum. Better go elsewhere where you can get more hours. I don't care about the money if I get more hours that will be good. If you work more, you get more. Here for a whole week just wasting away and nothing much. It is hard here.*



Praj had plans and timelines on possible movements to other organisations should she become unsuccessful in securing more hours. This change to other organisations seems not to pose any problem because her current organisation is not differentiated from its competitors regarding working conditions, especially pay rates. She assumed that at the prevailing wage rate, working more hours will improve the financial standing and remedy the situation.

The viability of this strategy is made difficult by the working conditions of some of these workers. Resigning from their current organisation and then securing another job is usually complicated in practice. Lib, for instance, narrated how she usually became unemployed for between three to six months before landing on another job. If securing a new position is difficult, then there is more likely to be complexities in implementing this particular strategy. Increasing hours by combining other jobs, although a possible strategy, is complicated by employees' lack of control over working hours. Praj, for instance, illustrates how she was forced to work on Friday and Thursday nights although she was available during the day on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. These were her days off which she did not need. The challenge then is that, due to time inflexibilities, she is unable to secure other jobs elsewhere. When employers of the two organisations influence when shifts are given to employees, then this lack of flexibility on the part of the employee is bound to make them more vulnerable. This is a reason some present part-timers are still 'hanging in' and waiting for opportunities in the same organisation.

Overall, evidence from the data shows employees are relentless in their efforts to secure more hours. Other strategies most current involuntary part-timers are planning to use were juggling more than two jobs to increase their hours and, possibly, moving to other organisations with better prospects of increasing hours.

### 7.5.2 Union intervention

More than half of the participants (65 percent had a collective contract) trusted in the union's ability to intervene on their behalf. For all respondents who used or intend to use this strategy, it was used alongside personal strategies discussed earlier, showing the extent of commitment to alleviating challenges. This option was however available only to those who believed in the power of the union and were, therefore, union members.

Some employees indicate that their unions have been negotiating for better job security. The unions were of the view that any extra hours should be made available to current employees first before they were advertised externally. For those who were union members, it was one of the trusted strategies they intended to use or had ever used. A belief that the union has been successful in negotiating for higher pay rates meant that the unions were capable of securing more hours as well. For instance, a third of the participants who were union members recounted how the unions had negotiated for higher rates of pay such that those with the collective contracts get about 70 cents per hour higher than those with individual contracts (i.e., for two retail companies surveyed). They believed that if direct communication with management fails, then another mode of communicating will be through their intermediaries - union representatives who will then inform the union organizers of their intention. Shan, who successfully used this strategy shares her experience:

***Shan (past involuntary part-timer):** I am currently working 35 hours a week. This was made possible with the help of the union. When I needed more hours, I informed the union organizer who negotiated with management on my behalf.*

It appears the union has won some employees' trust as they are seen to have a stronger voice in negotiating on members' behalf. There were compromises between management and the unions which enabled this worker to get more hours.

In line with this, some current involuntary part-timers are aiming to use this strategy because of previous experiences from union members who attested that the unions had a stronger voice and made a positive impact:

***Fal (present involuntary part-timer):*** *If you keep going to management and they don't do anything, then I will use the intermediaries (union) to support myself. The union might understand and hear us. They are here to support us.*

According to the thematic analysis, employees who seem to believe in the capabilities of the unions as a better support were however, going to use this strategy if communication with management to increase hours fails. As such, employees had faith in the unions to present their situations to their management.

On the other hand, two participants were unsure of the intervention they could get from the union.

This is how a respondent expressed the sentiments:

***Praj (present involuntary part-timer):*** *Am not with the union. I don't know if they can help. After working for one year, I will ask. I feel like it will be opposing the company I am working for. I don't really know. I don't know what to do.*

This participant who had an individual contract did not expect the unions to be of any help because of the assumption that the interests of management and unions were divergent. Due to the fear of being side-lined by management, some employees were skeptical of joining and getting interventions from the union. Instead, she assumed that being part of the union will reduce her chances of getting more hours. This notwithstanding, on balance, the majority of participants had collective contracts and believed in the unions having a stronger voice.

## **7.6 Summary of findings**

This chapter has highlighted the results of the qualitative part of this research with the first part describing the working conditions of both present and past involuntary part-timers. While most

employees confirmed having positive relations with their superiors to some extent, others had had poor relations which affected them emotionally. Regarding collegial relationships, unfortunately, one employee perceived there are factions in the organisation based on employees' employment status. In this case, while full-timers were happy because they had supportive colleagues, some part-timers felt left out. Additionally, while most experienced workers attested to receiving more than the minimum wage due to pay progression (based on performance, association with the union and skill possessed) the newly employed earned the minimum wage.

Employees' perceptions of job security ranged from very secure to quite insecure with previous business closures and past restructuring activities of the organisation influencing the level of insecurity. Also, the level of stress, boredom, repetitiveness, and difficulty were influenced by the design of jobs, season and customer type. Employees tended to manage their stress or boredom differently by either conditioning their minds, rendering help to other colleagues and putting into practice the knowledge acquired through training. Employees' time flexibility varied from no flexibility to total flexibility in schedules with the amount of caring responsibilities influencing the extent of flexibility. Half of participants' time preference did not match the flexibility they received from their supervisors. A few enjoyed flexibilities but up to limited extent with only one respondent having total flexibility. A majority of employees (17) confirmed that they were trained on the job for a few hours by experienced workers. Progression was however minimal with only two advancing. Many had their job titles changed to reflect current trends. A few had been promoted while others had been unsuccessful in their desire for progression.

Further, data reveals that for all involuntary part-timers, their inability to secure more hours created fear, anxiety, uncertainty, disappointment, frustration and psychological stress. They acknowledge being emotionally disturbed because they seem not to know when they are likely to be successful

in their search for more hours. To transition out of these emotional and financial challenges, the study also discussed the strategies they are utilizing to get into jobs with better quality. Also, previous involuntary part-timers shared their experiences of successful strategies used. Strategies included exhibiting positive work ethic and communicating the desirability of working more hours to superiors (the first and most common strategy).

To participants, work ethic was extremely relevant because managers were more likely to recommend employees who were hardworking. Beyond informing managers of the desire to work more hours, they had to demonstrate their ability to make the organisation succeed. While some employees showcased their potential by taking initiatives, others expressed interest in upgrading their skills through vocational training thereby reducing their vulnerability. Although most respondents were in the retail sector where higher qualifications were not typically a requirement, some believed having vocational training increases their chances of getting into full-time jobs and also their progression. Others shared their success stories of the union's interventions in securing more hours. Some were also more inclined to hold multiple jobs and possibly change their organisation.

## **Chapter 8: Discussion of qualitative findings**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided findings on the research question of how employees deal with inferior job quality. Specifically, the research findings explain the working conditions of past and involuntary part-timers. Also included were the emotional and financial challenges encountered by current involuntary part-timers due to insufficient hours. The study then presented the findings on both individual and collective strategies used by these employees in transitioning into ‘good jobs’ (full-time positions). This chapter now discusses these results with existing literature to identify commonalities, differences and the implications of the current study for theory and practice.

While in the international context the literature on the challenges confronting involuntary part-timers abounds (e.g., Glauber, 2013; Kauhanen, 2008), this thesis advances the literature by providing information that can equip some present involuntary part-timers with personal and a collective strategy that can enhance their transition into jobs of better quality. While this group of workers has some common features with the unemployed, that is they both lack hours (Statistics New Zealand, 2013), according to the OECD (2010; p.250), they do not get much assistance like the unemployed. For instance, although the unemployed tend to get unemployment benefits which serve as a buffer, the same cannot be said for the involuntary part-timers. An explanation given is that ‘activation measures, such as intensive interviews, may be mandatory for fully-unemployed people, but only voluntary for the underemployed. Participation in labour market programmes may also be more difficult for part-time workers given the time constraints imposed by their jobs’.

This qualitative research contributes to the literature as it extends the debate on the solutions to the emotional and financial challenges confronting involuntary part-timers. It broadens the scope of literature by stressing the emotional difficulties of involuntary part-timers because of inadequate hours and low-income levels. Further, the thesis provides possible strategies that have enabled past involuntary part-timers in New Zealand to transition into full-time jobs successfully. It addresses specific areas of low job quality as experienced by both past and present involuntary part-timers in New Zealand. Overall, this thesis examines the roles performed by both the employer and employee in making bad jobs better. While there are sparse pieces of literature on solutions used by the underemployed, this thesis extends the literature by providing more, new and successfully implemented strategies by some past involuntary part-timers and ongoing strategies by present involuntary part-timers. This is in answer to the call for improvements in employees' job quality. The thesis suggests that it demands the concerted effort of the employee and the employer. Without downplaying the role of other stakeholders, the qualitative chapter contributes to the job quality field of study by emphasising individual and management responsibilities in achieving this goal.

## **8.2. Job quality and involuntary part-time employment**

The study sample comprised ten participants who were in involuntary part-time jobs due to the lack of working hours, six participants who were previously full-timers but whose hours have been cut due to business slack and another four who are currently full-timers working forty hours. This combination of participants provided a deeper insight into their working conditions and strategies. While there are cost advantages on the part of employers in using part-timers (e.g., Kauhanen, 2008; Campbell and Chalmers, 2008), the involuntary part-timers interviewed were bearing the consequences of this type of contract on their lives overall (Campbell and Chalmers, 2008). Of the twenty respondents, ten described themselves as involuntary part-timers because of the mismatch

between their working hours' preference and what they get. This working time mismatch, according to Wooden et al. (2009), affects employees' job and life satisfaction because their hours' preferences have not been met on the job. This mismatch has a higher likelihood of affecting their psychological (satisfaction) and financial wellbeing because of the low-income levels. For instance, in the analysis, this study found that involuntary part-timers were worried and frustrated mainly because the number of hours affected their income levels and buying choices.

With the working conditions, this qualitative analysis reinforces the quantitative results on the fact that part-time jobs are not always secondary or peripheral. It holds true in the New Zealand context that part-time jobs, even with involuntary part-timers, comprise a mix of both positive and negative features (e.g., Munro, 2012; Tilly, 1997). The qualitative study confirms the stance that part-time jobs are not always of inferior job quality but rather dependent on the context (Gash, 2008). The study revealed that involuntary part-timers were dissatisfied mainly with their insufficient working hours which affected their income levels. Like Siebern-Thomas's (2005) finding, involuntary part-timers expressed their dissatisfaction with their hours and earnings but most of them were generally in secure jobs. All of them had guaranteed hours but these hours were insufficient. The advantage of having guaranteed hours is that employees have the assurance that they will not get fewer hours than those guaranteed (a worse form of under-employment). These findings are different from the European and Irish studies by Siebern-Thomas (2005) and Erlinghagen (2007), which found that involuntary part-time employees were also dissatisfied with job security and work content.

Regarding the dimension of job security, the majority of respondents (via the qualitative analysis, 80%), whether past or present involuntary part-timers, were confident that subjectively, they were in secure jobs now. They all had either full or part-time statuses with guaranteed hours. They were



only unsure of the distant future. For instance, a participant commented that he knew they could lose their jobs from a poor work ethic, but it was unlikely to be due to changes in the economic environment. The evidence to me suggests that, generally, employees are in secure jobs.

Consequently, this confirms the quantitative analysis which found employees are mildly in agreement that their jobs are secure. Also, from the 1997 and 2005 surveys, there were no differences in the perceptions of job security between full-timers and part-timers. In the qualitative analysis, both present and past involuntary part-timers (currently full-timers) were of the view that they were in secure jobs. This finding concurs with that of Weaver (2009) whose qualitative study of recent graduates in the tourism sector in New Zealand found that employees perceived that they had good job security and were not worried about losing their jobs. Therefore, they are not likely to lose financial and psychological benefits from their jobs due to job insecurity. Since job insecurity has a negative consequence on employee well-being (e.g., Gallie et al., 2016; O'Connell and Russell, 2007), this lack of insecurity will impact positively on employees' health and satisfaction (Jones et al, 2017) and by extension is more likely to improve the productivity of organisations (Erlinghagen, 2007) because highly secure workers tend to be more committed to their jobs or organisations (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). There is, however, still more room for improvement because employees were not too sure of their job security in the long run.

Another important finding was that most participants in the sample were satisfied with some aspects of their work content (e.g., positive relations with managers and colleagues, training, lower level of stress), unlike the European study by Siebern-Thomas (2005). Siebern-Thomas's (2005) study provides evidence to show that involuntary part-timers were dissatisfied with their job content. The findings are also different from McDonald et al.'s (2009) study in Australia which shows that on average, part-timers are at a disadvantage in relation to work intensity and supportive

relations with managers and colleagues. Most of the participants were comfortable with the positive relationships between them and their managers. The qualitative finding regarding collegial relations confirms the quantitative analysis which provides evidence of employees' perceptions of good relations at work. A few, however, felt there were personality clashes and rivalry, but they were in the minority. This finding is also consistent with the quantitative analysis that found no differences between full-time and part-time employees concerning collegial relations at work. In fact, regarding management relations, for the 1997 and 2015 surveys, part-timers were better off on this dimension than full-timers. These findings challenge previous literature which found part-timers to have poor relationships at work (e.g., Fagan et al., 2014; McDonald et al., 2009).

Consistent with the quantitative analysis, the qualitative section found that there was a lack of career progression for the majority of participants although most of them explained that they were moved to different departments to experience variety. Participants confirmed that they were being trained irrespective of their employment status, and that was helpful. They also attest to having their job titles changed to reflect current trends in job titles, but there had been no vertical progression. Since career progression is an important job quality indicator affecting other job features, little or no advancement opportunities in the long term makes a job inferior (e.g., Dill et al., 2012; McGovern et al., 2004). Little or no progression in the short run does not necessarily make a job bad but if it becomes a dead-end, then as argued by Siebern-Thomas (2005), it is more likely to impact negatively on employee satisfaction.

Dill et al.'s (2012) USA-based study of frontline healthcare workers found that promotional prospects influenced employees' decision to stay with their current employer. The reason career advancement is important is that it typically increases responsibilities, salary, security and prestige, hence affecting other areas of job quality (e.g., Dill et al., 2012; Weaver, 2009). The benefit of

career progression according to Eurofound (2011) is that organisations that allow employees to advance in their careers make them feel more secure and encourage them to recommend their organisation to others.

The qualitative finding in relation to skill utilisation contrasts with the quantitative analysis that shows that full-timers were at an advantage regarding this indicator. The qualitative study shows that the majority of both full-time and part-time workers reported that their skills were underutilized. This finding was particularly true for the participants who were in the retail sector because only three out of the twenty participants (i.e. one each from the banking, retail and publishing sectors) confirmed their skills were being utilised. It is known that jobs in the retail sector tend to be less complicated and more repetitive (Price, 2011). In the sample, both the part-timers and full-timers interviewed explained that they felt their skills were underutilized, a finding different from Lowe (2007), Eurofound (2007) and the quantitative analysis.

Time flexibility was also another dimension that many employees in the sample perceived a mismatch with their preferences. Half of the employees (50%) received schedules from their supervisors, and they had no control over their shifts. This finding is the same as Campbell and Chalmers's (2008) results in Australia. However, the study finds that this is not peculiar to part-time employees as it was also the case for full-timers.

Involuntary part-timers in New Zealand were rather concerned about the insufficiency of their earnings due to the inadequacy of work hours. For instance, a participant recounts that she would have preferred to be at work instead of being at home; thus representing 'underutilized labour' or 'idle labour resources' (Veliziotis et al., 2015; Campbell and Chalmers, 2008; Glauber, 2013; Valletta and Van Der List, 2015).

The primary reason for their dissatisfaction was because their current job only offered them part of what they wanted. The limited hours deprived them financially, thereby affecting their well-being. Inadequate hours with an effect on income levels have consistently been found to be a problem for involuntary part-timers (e.g., Dwyer and Ryan, 2008; Eurofound, 2001; Statistics, New Zealand, 2014). These financial challenges created emotional problems which affected their wellbeing negatively. Due to this, a participant recounted that she had to plan her meals carefully to meet her budget. She was not always comfortable with that but had no option due to the insufficient income levels. These findings, therefore, concur with studies by Young and Mattingly (2016), the OECD (2010) and the Eurofound (2001) which found that involuntary part-timers suffered more from negative financial well-being than their full-time counterparts. For instance, in the case of this study, two employees explained that because they had no savings, they had to keep working to save for emergencies or holidays, a consequence of inadequate working hours.

Although they were in employment, they had a lower standard of living (Horemans et al., 2016). This was evident in a participant's case who recounted how she had to depend on the Work and Income department (social benefit for the payment of her rent) for financial support to improve the quality of life for herself and her children. Before the interventions from the Work and Income department, this employee experienced a lot of emotional and financial challenges, thereby affecting her quality of life. Even with the intervention, she still claims that there is more to achieve from working. She would have loved to work more hours so she can be useful, utilise her skills and 'occupy her time'. All she earned from working catered for the purchase of groceries, clothing for the family, leaving them with nothing much for holidays. To her, the amount of income received does not cover much, thereby making her struggle although she has been working for 15 years. This is in agreement with what Horemans et al.'s (2016) study in Europe found about

involuntary part-timers. According to their findings, using the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, this group of workers suffers from in-work poverty just like the unemployed although the former is better off than the latter. Like the European context, New Zealand involuntary part-timers expressed similar sentiments. This lack of financial adequacy reduced their purchasing power (Young and Mattingly, 2016). For instance, an account by a respondent shows the difficulty in providing for her children in the coming weeks due to insufficient income. This working condition created anxiety, frustrations and uncertainties for some involuntary part-timers.

Corroborating the quantitative analysis, this study found that involuntary part-timers were less likely to report having high income than full-timers. This finding was because of the reduced hours but not due to lower pay rates as found by Fagan et al.'s (2014) study in Europe. In this study, the majority were of the view that there were no pay disparities by employment status. Many acknowledge the disparity was related to the number of years of working experience instead. This result may be explained by the fact that the employment rights in New Zealand, for both full-timers and part-timers, are the same (Employment New Zealand, 2017).

### **8.3 Transition strategies**

Improvements in employees' job quality are argued to be of common interest to all stakeholders (Warhurst and Trebeck, 2011). In support of this, Findlay et al. (2017) suggest that improvements must be a concerted effort by all stakeholders. These stakeholders, according to Coats and Lekhi (2008), Findlay et al., (2017), Knox et al., (2011), are employees, governments, employers and unions. This research found from the series of interviews that employees were relentless in their effort to find solutions to get into full-time jobs. All current involuntary part-timers were very

conscious of their responsibilities and were committed to using varying strategies to transition out into jobs of better quality.

All involuntary part-timers interviewed were using their part-time status as a mode of entering and re-entry into full-time positions, which was seen to be better than being unemployed (e.g., Borowczyk-Martins and Lale, 2016; Siebern-Thomas, 2005). For instance, for participants who were migrants and could not rely on the welfare system, this was certainly a better alternative than being unemployed. Nevertheless, all involuntary part-timers were dissatisfied with their hours. Owing to this challenge, all employees had strategies in place showing they were actively involved in improving their predicaments. Unfortunately, some employees have been in this situation for a long time (on average, ten years), and that may be because several stakeholders need to be involved in the entire process for success to be achieved (Pocock and Charlesworth, 2017). Most of the individual strategies outlined by employees show the crucial role of management without which transitioning into jobs of higher quality is difficult. For instance, career progression is only possible if management has created career ladders for employees to advance. Employees' ability to learn and advance also depends on transparency from management about essential skills that are required for advancement.

One of the strategies relayed by both previously and currently involuntary part-timers was gaining more skills. According to some participants, it was important to increase one's human capital because training had benefits for both the employee and the employer. While employees' competence and employability improve, the employer benefits with improved performance because employees are more competent at what they do. This strategy ties in well with Findlay et al.'s (2017) and Johri's (2005) studies whose findings show that employees can have better job quality if they develop their human capital. For instance, Kalleberg's (2011) and Erlinghagen's

(2007) studies show that low income and job insecurity are inversely related to increasing qualifications. Bockerman (2004), using the *Employment Options for the Future* survey confirms the assertion that job instability declines with higher educational qualifications.

The quantitative analysis also confirms the assertion that the highly educated were more likely to report receiving high incomes than the less educated. This implies that involuntary part-timers are on track in using this strategy to transition into full-time jobs. If they continuously learn more skills through either company sponsored or personal vocational training, they are more likely to have access to better opportunities either within or outside their organisations. Gorg, for instance, exemplified how he got a full-time job and within two years became a supervisor because of his possession of relevant 'scarce' skills. According to him, to attain his vocational training certificate, he underwent training for almost two years, which paid off in terms of a higher pay rate (above the minimum wage) and faster progression. This suggests that the acquisition of relevant knowledge and experience can help workers transition into good jobs as they tend to have an advantage over their counterparts with fewer skills.

Another strategy that emerged from the interviews was holding multiple jobs either in the same sector or different fields. However, using this strategy was quite challenging because of time constraints and the nature of their schedules. This finding concurs with Campbell and Chalmers's (2008) results in Australia, which found that most employees in the retail sector explained that combining more than one job was crucial in increasing income levels. For a few participants in this study, this strategy was not favourable because of the claim that a person's tax obligations were greater when jobs are combined. This move was also complicated by the lack of time flexibility on the part of other employees. Two presently involuntary part-timers who tried using this strategy shared similar sentiments of not getting shifts that quickly enable them to juggle

different jobs. They were challenged because they did not have much control over their shifts. Campbell and Chalmers's (2008) study in Australia found a similar challenge with utilising this strategy. In their research, they provide evidence to show that using this strategy posed a problem due to the schedules of employees.

The most common response to securing more hours or getting into full-time jobs was communicating and building rapport with managers. Both present and past involuntary part-timers believed that securing more hours in the current organisation was the most effective strategy. A similar result was found by Campbell and Chalmers (2008) whose Australian-based research showed that communicating with managers was the most familiar response to under-employment, a reason being that employees are less likely to have problems with clashes in schedules in the same organisation. This is more convenient than searching for more hours by juggling other jobs in other organisations where the likelihood of getting convenient schedules is low. Employees also tend to be very familiar with the work environment and with relations with colleagues and superiors. Tying in with this move was the ability to demonstrate a positive work ethic, taking initiatives and selling oneself to one's managers.

Success with this strategy was highly dependent on employees' ability to demonstrate their competence through their positive work ethic. Employees needed to work hard as proof to their managers that they are valuable and capable of working more hours. The findings show that it was not enough to only communicate with management but, more importantly, putting more efforts into whatever one was doing even when in a part-time position. The reasoning behind this is that, if employees are hardworking when working fewer hours, they are more likely to be hardworking when given more hours. This additional information was relayed by past involuntary part-timers.



What was missing in many of their accounts was that while past involuntary part-timers were sure that communicating with management was important, it was not the only solution. Equally important was a person's positive work ethic, ability to take initiatives and 'sell oneself'. This was lacking in most of the present involuntary part-timer's accounts. Most of them focused mainly on informing management of their availability, but this seems inadequate based on the experience of past involuntary part-timers. This implies that just informing management is not enough but there needs to be a stronger reason why management should increase their hours. This finding extends the results by Campbell and Chalmers (2008). Also, this outcome is slightly different from Campbell and Chalmers' (2008) results because this finding is based on past involuntary part-timers' account of successfully implemented strategies. Current involuntary part-timers, therefore, need to show they are suitable for the job through showcasing their work ethic, selling themselves and showing they can help their organisation to succeed. Overall, it boils down to the impact employees make on the quality of their performance. Working hard makes the difference. This is likely to be the reason some current involuntary part-timers are still in this state.

#### **8.4 The role of the union**

Some employees sought the intervention of their union after the use of personal strategies became futile. Most union workers (65% in the qualitative sample) were very confident in the union's ability to improve their outcomes. Both the union members and the union representatives (secretary and organiser) indicated that higher rates of pay are negotiated by the union. According to the union representatives, negotiations are done yearly or every two years with employers to increase employees' rate of pay. This increase is usually given across the board to all employees suggesting that, typically, all employees get the same rate of pay. However, besides the negotiated higher pay rates, there are some of provisions that apply to only union members. For instance,

there are extra financial benefits and entitlements such as service holidays, shoe allowance, and a 'one off' collective agreement allowance of \$65 in the First Union contract with Countdown.

Similarly, night fill team members who are union members receive two additional days paid leave.

Below is a communication from the union organiser on the benefits of union membership:

'While the pay is normally passed on, it isn't always. Also, at Countdown and Farmers, we often have a period of months where the union members get the increase, and the non-members do not. At a lot of stores where there is a performance review aspect, the workers never get the increases. Union members have us, the organisers, working to ensure they get every pay increase and that any performance aspect is graded fairly. There is often union-only clauses in our contracts. Shoe allowances, union-only allowance, at one of the banks they get a democracy payment of \$300. These goodies are not passed on. At many of the places, we have a collective agreement (CA) they also get improved sick leave and redundancy provision. Most retail workers on an Individual Employment Agreements (IEA) have no redundancy compensation. We actively work to ensure there are benefits for members' (Davies, 2017, union organiser).

Union members were therefore a bit better off than those with individual contracts.

Another past involuntary part-timer explained how she gained more hours with the union's assistance. Cross-checking this claim with the union organiser showed that they have clauses in their collective bargaining agreement with specific organisations where they indicate that all available hours be offered first to internal full and part-time workers before being made available to casuals and new employees. These arrangements were made for union members, but as mentioned earlier, it is highly possible for employers to implement them across the board. Below is an excerpt of the clause from the union's collective bargaining agreement:

'Within each worksite additional permanent hours/positions that become available, whether in trading or non-trading hours, shall be advertised internally. Dependent upon the Company's need to maintain a balanced team first consideration will be given to existing employees. Permanent additional vacancies at other worksites within the Company will also be displayed on the notice board' (Countdown CBA, 2017; p. 24).

Also, the union provides a clause explaining the order in which the allocation must be done:

‘The allocation of additional hours of work to employees will occur in the following order. Employees with the capability to undertake the work on offer currently working less than 20 contracted hours per week will be offered additional hours before such hours can be offered to employees working more than 20 hours per week, new employees or casuals’ (Countdown CBA, 2017; p. 5).

With these extras, some current involuntary part-timers were aiming to join and seek help from unions because of the benefit they were likely to get. This implies that unions have a higher tendency of helping currently involuntary part-timers transition into full-time jobs. The evidence to me shows that First Union has made important gains for workers in the retail sector thus performing their advocacy role for employees in precarious work as suggested by Keune (2013).

## **8.5 The role of employers**

Having discussed the role the employee and the union play in improving job quality, I move on now to consider the role of another stakeholder – the employer. Findlay et al. (2017) argue that employers are the main implementers of job quality and have the ability to affect job quality outcomes. This is made possible because, as Pocock and Charlesworth (2017) posit, the workplace is where regulations are implemented or hindered. For example, regulations on health and safety and legally paying employees at least the minimum wage are effected at the workplace. Management has a stake in improving job quality. Since management was not interviewed, this section focuses on how employees perceive the role of their employers.

As decisions made by employers regarding the range of working conditions determine employees’ job quality (Osterman, 2013), it becomes important for management to make conscious efforts to improve the experiences of employees at work. Choices by managers in the design of jobs, pay equity and work-life balance policies and career advancement prospects determine whether

employees' job quality will improve or deteriorate (Coats and Lekhi, 2008). This influence by the manager can be observed in the case of Cha, a former involuntary part-timer. Cha, explained how she got into a full-time position after an assessment by her manager. She emphasised that she gained the full-time job because the manager saw her competency after the assessment and gave her the opportunity. This signifies the crucial role of management in the creation of good jobs.

Simal, for instance, has been in her current position for about fifteen years without any progression although she has expressed interest in progressing, unlike other colleagues who preferred to maintain their current position. According to her, she had not been given the opportunity after many promises from management to recommend her and keep her informed of opportunities. She felt as though management was withholding information on promotional opportunities from her and this created mistrust. The reason is that any time she went for assessments, she informed management of her willingness to advance her career, and she also received positive feedback concerning her dealing with customers and other colleagues. Management's promise to recommend her was never kept and so, from the analysis, if management had provided her with more honest feedback concerning her performance and informed her of such opportunities, that would have been more beneficial.

For the majority of strategies discussed, accounts from employees show the importance of management's role in the transition process. All employees communicated their desire to do more hours in the organisation to their managers. If management is not empathetic to their plight to inform them of opportunities, provide training support and also develop career ladders, then improvements in employees' job quality can become quite difficult.

As employees in the retail sector are also described as low-waged and low-skilled, it will be a good opportunity for workers if management decided to improve their employability by encouraging

them to gain additional credentials and skills to advance in their career. Retail companies can have in-house training programmes that will be relevant to helping employees develop their career. Because they are low-waged and might not have enough money to learn in external institutions, they can be encouraged with in-house programs or company-sponsored programmes. For instance, in this case, Simal believed her inability to progress apart from her part-time work status is because she had been unable to learn more and new skills. While this might be difficult in small and medium-sized organisations, the possibility is much greater in larger organisations with better resources.

Dill and Morgan (2017) in a study of the low-wage health care sector explained how organisations in the USA created departmental ladders (enabling employees to rise upward in their departments) and paraprofessional credential programs (higher education to allow movement into a new occupation) for their employees not to be stuck at one position. After updating their skills, a deliberate decision by management to promote/hire from within first would be laudable. This would make employees perceive management to be interested in supporting their advancement.

McPhail and Fisher (2008) also demonstrate how organisations employing low waged employees used internal recruitment policies, internal training, career paths, and appraisals to enhance employees' career prospects, thereby improving their satisfaction and commitment. All of these commitments from management go to further emphasize that employers have a role to play in improving poor jobs.

Carre et al. (2012) suggest the use of high-road strategies like training and retraining employees to improve their job quality. Dill et al. (2012) in a US-based study show how the creation of career ladders ensured upward mobility and improved employee retention in the case study organisation. However, in the retail sector, this is quite challenging. Price (2011) acknowledges the difficulty in

creating these ladders in the Australian context. A finding from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses show that generally, many jobs do not offer career prospects for employees. Even with positive ethic, communication and gaining more skills, progression is only a possibility if the employer is able to create those career ladders in the organisation. This shows some challenges for employees in improving their job quality and the extent to which employers' interventions can be helpful. As already mentioned, this is highly possible in larger organisations.

If there are reported positive outcomes associated with good jobs and negative outcomes with bad jobs, then as argued by Findlay et al., (2017) a conscious decision must be made by firms to create quality jobs and make bad jobs better. For instance, Green (2009) and Eurofound (2012) are of the view that improving employees' skills enables them to improve their productivity, which is to the advantage of the organisation. From an employee's account, she was relying on the organisation for in-house training or employer-assisted training opportunities, so she can learn more skills to improve her competence. While some employees (3) were not interested in advancing in their career, the others who were interested could be encouraged and supported by the organisation to learn more skills, so the company can benefit from their experience and skills. While it is true that retail jobs can be filled quickly, employers and customers suffer during the period in which new employees are undergoing on-the-job training to get acquainted with the requirements of the job.

Siegrist et al. (2005) argue that there is a relationship between good jobs and well-being with well-being known to impact positively on employee attitudes and behaviours. For instance, in this analysis, it was found that some employees who were unsuccessful some time ago in transitioning into good jobs were planning to leave their organisations for other companies that could enhance their prospects of getting more hours. This move by some employees confirms Clark's (2005a) stance that dissatisfied employees (e.g. dissatisfied with their hours) are likely to look for better

jobs elsewhere. When high performing employees quit their jobs, managers must recruit to fill the gap. According to Eurofound (2012) and Erhel and Guergoat-Lariviere (2010), recruiting and initial training costs are increased when there is a high turnover of experienced and competent employees. This is certainly an avoidable turnover which the organisation can prevent.

Employers should actively assist in the improvement of bad jobs and the creation of jobs with better quality. While it is acknowledged that employers embark on cost-cutting strategies due to economic pressures to stay competitive (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Price, 2011), these impact on the quality of employees' jobs is bad. For instance, while employers benefit from scheduling part-time employees because such a move meets their need (Bozkurt and Grugulis, 2011), they should not lose sight of the emotional and financial effects on especially involuntary part-timers, and thus the impact on well-being and the performance of the organisation. As argued by Clark (2015), there is a business case for making bad jobs better and creating good ones. Several avenues are available for employers in realizing performance goals, one of which is to ensure that employees have good quality jobs. This is because quality jobs tend to have a strong positive relationship with employee well-being (e.g. Eurofound, 2012; Knox et al. 2015; Burgess et al. 2013). Generally, well-being is known to activate positive attitudes and behaviours in employees which eventually improves organisational performance and productivity.

## **Chapter 9: Conclusions**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This thesis has examined employees' perceptions of job quality and their strategies for dealing with jobs of inferior quality in the New Zealand context. Recent literature has suggested that the quality of jobs is deteriorating and that there is a rise in jobs of poor quality in developed economies (Findlay et al., 2017). While there are numerous studies of job quality in other countries, there has been a lack of empirical evidence on the topic within the New Zealand context. The theory of job quality has aroused a lot of interest because of the evidence that jobs of higher quality have a positive effect on employee well-being. This concluding chapter details the key theoretical contributions and practical implications of the thesis. Then it outlines the avenues for future research.

This thesis used a sequential mixed-method approach where employees' perceptions of their job quality were quantitatively measured first. A qualitative analysis then followed which enabled a deeper understanding of the working conditions and challenges of present involuntary part-time employees. Further, the study investigated the transition strategies used by past and present involuntary part-timers into jobs of better quality. Job quality was examined using the subjective approach which provides an understanding of employees' job quality after investigating their job values. The premise for the subjective approach is that job quality is more likely to be high if employees' work preferences are met by the conditions on the job. That is, the degree to which a job fulfils a worker's job preferences determines a person's job quality (Holman and McClelland, 2011).



Although an exhaustive list of dimensions was not used, this thesis employed eleven common indicators known in the literature to impact employee satisfaction including pay, job security, career prospects, working independently, social aspects of working (helping others and usefulness of the job to society) and having an interesting job. The relationships at work (with management and colleagues) and work intensity (hard physical effort and stressful work) were the other determinants of job quality used in this thesis.

Accordingly, this thesis was guided by the following research questions:

- Have there been changes in employees' job values over the years?
- Are there perceptions of improvements or deteriorations in employees' job quality over the years?
- How does job quality affect job satisfaction in New Zealand?
- Which groups of workers experience better job quality in New Zealand?
- What strategies do workers (involuntary part-timers) adopt to deal with jobs with 'inferior' quality?

## **9.2 Key contributions from the quantitative analysis**

This research advances the understanding of job quality by examining New Zealand (NZ) employees' perceptions. Many studies on job quality have been conducted in other economies, but this area is under-researched in NZ. This is, therefore, the first comprehensive study of employees' perceptions of their job quality in New Zealand. It is also the first study to track changes in NZ employees' values and job outcomes using the International Social Survey Programme datasets. Job quality differs from country to country (e.g., Eurofound, 2017; Carre et al., 2012), hence this research is expected to help close the literature gap on job quality in New Zealand. This notion was reaffirmed by Findlay et al. (2013; p. 448) who note that 'quality of work is very much a

contextual phenomenon, differing among persons, occupations and labour market segments, societies and historical periods.'

In relation to the first question which investigated the changes in job values, findings from this study show that over the past two decades, New Zealand, like other developed economies has seen broad stability in peoples' job preferences. Also, the findings of this research largely mirror the results of those conducted among OECD countries (e.g., Clark, 2005a, 2005b and 2010; Kaasa, 2011; Hauff and Kirchner, 2014) as modest changes regarding shifts in values were recorded. Except for job security, employees in New Zealand, like workers in the UK and the USA, place a higher priority on intrinsic job values.

In relation to the differences between genders, only slight differences are observed between men and women's job values. Gender seems less of an important factor in determining job values because these values are converging. The only differences are related to the altruistic drive of women at work (2005 and 2015), their desire for flexibility (2015) and job security (2005). The evidence from this study suggests that both genders now have similar job preferences.

Regarding differences between full-time and part-timers, one of the more significant findings that emerged from the analysis is that a discernible pattern of differences exists. While full-time workers placed greater importance on career prospects (2015), higher income (2005 and 2015) and having interesting jobs (2005), part-timers were more concerned about the social impact (jobs that allow help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society) of their jobs (1997 and 2005) and time flexibilities (2005). The results of this study support the idea that employees with full-time or part-time work statuses seek to achieve somewhat different goals from working. This suggests that people who need high income and career progression must consider full-time jobs.

Concerning the difference between the educated and the less educated, the study found that all categories of workers were similar for all the three surveys regarding the importance placed on working independently, utilizing skills and having flexible working hours. Employees with degrees (highly educated) attached greater value to career prospects (1997), the utility of work to society (2015), high income (1997 and 2015) and having interesting jobs (1997, 2005 and 2015). The less educated, on the other hand, placed more importance on being in jobs that enabled them to help others (2005), skill utilization (2015) and job security (1997, 2005 and 2015). Graduates do not just value intrinsic features but also extrinsic features. They tend to have greater expectations, valuing greater rewards from both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Clearly, the level of education influences what employees desire from their jobs. This confirms research elsewhere (e.g., Gallie et al, 2012; Tolbert and Moen, 1998; Jurgenson, 1978).

The implication is that managers need to be mindful of these differences as they affect what will satisfy each group of workers. An observation made during the literature review was the broad categorisation of job values as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic and extrinsic values cover a range of features. Although not contesting the use of such terms, this study found it too simplistic when some studies explain that a particular group of workers place more importance on intrinsic or extrinsic values without mentioning the specific job values. Specific intrinsic or extrinsic values need to be examined. On the basis of this study, the theory of job quality should avoid over-generalisation of intrinsic and extrinsic features as a whole.

Relating to the second question, the analysis revealed some improvements in employees' job quality. Specifically, perceptions regarding high income, an interesting job, good collegial relations, having a job that allows help to be given to others and the usefulness of the job to society and working independently have changed for the better since 1997, at least for a period (either for

1997 to 2005 or 2005 to 2015). Consistent with Findlay et al.'s (2017) argument that there are issues with job quality in developed economies, regarding stressful work, a significant negative change was observed between 2005 and 2015. There were no changes for job security, career prospects and good management relations over the twenty-year period. The overall pattern is that the average New Zealand worker has experienced improvements in several aspects of their jobs except for having stressful work. In comparison with studies in the UK and among OECD countries by Green (2005) and Clark (2005a), although the years are not equivalent, a similar pattern of rising stress levels is experienced by employees in those countries, an attribute known to impact job satisfaction negatively. The average worker in New Zealand has not seen any improvements in job security (from 1997 to 2015), but people tend to be fairly secure in their jobs. On average, New Zealand employees did not report any change (from 1997 to 2015) in promotion opportunities although career prospects rose for employees in OECD countries between 1997 to 2005 (Clark, 2010). Career prospects tend to be poorer in New Zealand and constitute a key contextual factor. This is more likely to be a problem in a small country dominated by small and medium-sized organisations.

Concerning the third question, the effect of job quality indicators on job satisfaction is widely known (e.g., Hoque et al., 2017; Hauff and Kirchner, 2014; Clark, 2005a). The focus was to find out which indicators were the strongest predictors of job satisfaction. The study found that in the New Zealand context, having an interesting job, good management relations and having a less stressful job were strong predictors of job satisfaction for all three surveys. The indicators of the usefulness of the job to society, high income and career prospects were strong predictors for at least one survey. This study found that although all indicators were strong predictors for all surveys by Clark (1998, 2005a) of the OECD countries, only these seven indicators were predictors of

employees' satisfaction in this sample. This implies that the determinants of job satisfaction are contextual and a universal generalization of these indicators is unhelpful.

Regarding question 4, this research found that both men and women were better off on some dimensions, disadvantaged on others and with no differences on others. Women tend to be better off in having jobs that are useful to society (2005 and 2015) and that help others (1997, 2005 and 2015). There was an enduring difference in perceptions of high income (2005 and 2015) and hard physical effort for men (evident for 1997, 2005 and 2015). There is, therefore, the need to re-evaluate our views on gender differences and job quality in New Zealand. The study found that it is quite unhelpful when an overall index is created, and a general statement about one category having a better job than the other is made. For instance, Clark (2005b) concludes using subjective measures that men have worse jobs in comparison to women. It seems to me that to get a realistic picture of the differences in gender, one has to keep in mind the separate indicators. Women are better off regarding having jobs that allow them to help others and contribute to society. Men report a greater perception of high income but also report harder physical effort. All other indicators are the same. The study suggests that it is unhelpful to be categorical that men or women have better jobs. What is more helpful is to explicitly emphasize the features that create the difference as the picture is nuanced and subtle.

The second category looked at the experiences of full-time and part-time workers. Using the New Zealand context, the study found that although part-timers have challenges with some aspects of their jobs, they also experience positive features like full-timers. This study mirrors those of Eurofound (2007) and Tilly (1997) that show that part-time jobs are a blend of positives and negatives. Although Kalleberg et al. (2000) argue that 'every type of non-standard employment is associated with more bad characteristics than is standard full-time employment', the study shows

that instead of viewing part-time jobs as peripheral, they should be viewed as ones with a mixture of good and bad features. Even with the involuntary part-timers in the sample, although they had challenges with the working hours which directly affected their income levels, the study found that their experience with other facets of the job was generally good. This thesis emphasizes that not all part-time jobs have poor features on all dimensions and so cannot be categorized as always of inferior quality. It contributes to the field of management research by challenging the assertion that part-time jobs are secondary. By 2008, Kalleberg had changed his views on the notion that part-time jobs are associated with many poor features. He now argues that part-time jobs are not always precarious, neither are full-time jobs always better (Kalleberg, 2008). This study's position is closer to his views expressed in 2008. Both groups had positive experiences on some dimensions and negative outcomes on the others. This makes it difficult to side with the assumption that some jobs are 'good' on all dimensions while others are 'bad' on all dimensions.

Overall, these studies and viewpoints challenge the dual labour market theory's assumption that good and bad jobs tend to congregate in such a way that a job that is good on one dimension is likely to have mostly good attributes (e.g. Doeringer and Piore, 1971). This thesis contends that it is simplistic to use such terms (good jobs or bad jobs) to describe jobs. The results of this thesis show that categorising all part-time jobs as 'bad jobs' is unhelpful. On average, part-time jobs were not bad on all dimensions. This thesis demonstrates that jobs can have a mixture of good and bad characteristics, which is suggestive of a need to rethink the assumptions of dual labour market theory. Some form of modification of its assumptions would be helpful. For instance, instead of classifying jobs as either primary or secondary, it would be helpful to see a continuum from very 'bad' jobs to very 'good' jobs. This thesis suggests a revised model of the theory because, in reality, most jobs are a blend of good and bad features.

The third category of people analysed is the experience of those with different educational levels. Overall, the highly educated had better experiences on the extrinsic features of career prospects (1997 and 2005) and high income (evident in 1997, 2005 and 2015) except that their jobs were more stressful (1997 and 2005). The less educated had better experiences with good management relations, but their jobs required harder physical effort (2005 and 2015). Although the intrinsic features (interesting jobs, the usefulness of the job society, collegial relations) did not get better with higher education, the extrinsic indicators did.

Overall, this thesis shows that there are not many differences in the job values between men and women and employees. There was, however, a discernible pattern of differences between part-timers and full-timers. Substantial differences exist between the highly educated and the less educated. Some aspects of employees' jobs have changed for the better, others have been stable, but stress has worsened. Seven indicators predicted job satisfaction but to varying degrees. Men and women, employees with full-time or part-time statuses, were better off on some dimensions, worse on others but no differences in their experiences for other indicators. Although the highly educated had a better experience on the extrinsic features of high income and career prospects, they also paid the price with more stressful jobs.

Finally, this thesis validates the job satisfaction hypothesis of the job characteristics model. This is because in spite of the fact that the average New Zealander is dissatisfied with the extrinsic job quality indicators, many rated their satisfaction to be high because their jobs possessed many of the characteristics espoused by the model. Although the mediating links were not tested, it appears employees were satisfied because they were in jobs that enabled them to work independently, had jobs that were beneficial to others and contributed to the society. These features inherent in their jobs describe Hackman and Oldham's (1980) task significance and autonomy characteristics of

the model. The JC model is however, being criticized for limiting the work features because results from this study show that the social environment can affect personal outcomes for employees.

### **9.3 Key contributions of the qualitative analysis**

Using the face-to-face interview gave me the opportunity to investigate the views of a group of employees about their working conditions and their challenges. On average, most employees' jobs were secure with good management and collegial relations. Most of them were in less stressful jobs and benefited from training. However, they were concerned about their promotion opportunities and the underutilization of their skills. To the involuntary part-timers, besides the previously mentioned challenges, they were also disappointed with the inadequate hours which affected their income levels. These working conditions created emotional and financial challenges for this group of workers. In order to help themselves, all had strategies they were using to transition into jobs of better quality. The study was not limited to on-going strategies being used by present involuntary part-timers but also successfully implemented strategies by past involuntary part-timers. The retail sector has serious difficulties with these issues because of the seasonal nature of their business. The findings of this thesis should be used to particularly help employees especially involuntary part-timers in low wage and low skill sectors who are more vulnerable.

According to the majority of the sample, there is a mismatch between the skills required to do the job and the skill they possessed. This mismatch affected their job satisfaction negatively because they did not get the opportunity to control the content of their jobs (Humphrys and O'Brien, 1986). It is likely that the underutilization of their skills indirectly affected their prospects for career advancements (Charlesworth et al. 2014). All but one from the retail sector emphasized that their skills were underutilized. This person felt her skills were utilized because she was putting into practice business concepts and theories she learnt in school.



Concerning the last question, the study found that the dominant strategies which were successfully implemented are speaking up to management and also demonstrating a positive work ethic. Voice is important, and this was done mainly by the employee and the union, but besides using voice, they had to be hardworking as proof to management of the quality of their performance. The closest study to this is the work of Campbell and Chalmers (2008). However, what this study adds that they do not say is that these workers transition more effectively when they use more than their voice by working hard. This thesis contributes to the debate for finding solutions to deteriorating job quality in developed economies. While the quantitative survey examined the perceptions of employees and did not tell how they transition into jobs of higher quality, the qualitative data was very insightful in providing a deeper understanding of what strategies are used for transitioning into higher quality jobs. The financial and emotional challenges spurred them on to be relentless in their desire to get into full-time positions. This thesis extends the international literature by not just exposing their challenges but also identifying successfully implemented strategies used by past-involuntary part-timers.

#### **9.4 Practical contributions (quantitative)**

In terms of practical implications, the thesis throws light on the factors that can significantly improve employees' job quality. As suggested by Warhurst and Wright (2015), job quality audits should be conducted so as to identify areas that need improvements. That is after auditing employees in New Zealand's job quality, the quantitative analysis found that the extrinsic features of job security, high income and promotion opportunities were indicators with the worst experiences. This therefore provides the basis for making improvements in these areas.

Since opening up career paths is the most challenging issue for management at the moment, it is important that avenues for improvements are examined. The lack of career progression was evident

in both the quantitative and qualitative analysis. This is a concern for many employees because advancing in one's career is an opportunity not only for increasing income but also for improving other job attributes such as security. This research suggests that managers who have risen up the ranks should encourage employees to learn more skills, thereby improving their employability. If promotion demands higher skill levels, then employees need to be assisted using either on-the-job training or formal training so they can be considered for higher responsibilities. Although training comes at a cost, it benefits the organisation too. Supervisors who have been successful in rising can be used as mentors to share their experiences and encourage employees who are interested in advancing. Finally, hardworking employees could be encouraged to apply for those managerial positions that become vacant. Also, managers in large organisations can be encouraged to recruit from within first as a sign of their commitment to supporting employees' career progression.

Also, having interesting jobs, good management relations, less stressful relations, high income, career prospects and the usefulness of jobs had the strongest impact on employees' satisfaction. This implies that managers who have problems with employee attitudes and behaviours should focus on designing jobs to have these features. Enriching jobs is a way of making employees' jobs more interesting. Because having an interesting job was always among the highest ranked values, managers need to have a critical look at this aspect of work. Kovach (1987) argues that enriching jobs is a difficult assignment and not as easy as increasing the pay rate. However, with time, managers can adopt the concept of enrichment to improve the quality of jobs. Other important factors are building skills and getting the commitment of top management. This research admits that the possibility of implementing this is greater in larger organisations with greater resources. Enriching jobs has a likelihood of making employees continuously learn on the job, and that can be stimulating and rewarding. Additionally, Dupre and Day (2007; p. 189) suggest that stimulating

work 'may be addressed during selection, promotion and placement. This is, organizations should optimize the match between employee and job requirements by assessing the skills and abilities of personnel in relationship to the abilities required by the job.'

Similarly, superiors should be encouraged to continuously create friendly relationships with their subordinates. This is because according to Dupre and Day (2007), employee satisfaction can be influenced by their superiors. Being more involved in their work-related issues is a way of helping them manage their work-related stresses. For example, managers should give employees clear expectations of the requirements of their jobs in order to reduce unnecessary frustrations that come with ambiguous instructions. This stance was confirmed by Dupre and Day (2007; p. 190), who note that employees 'tend to be more satisfied when there is clarity associated with their jobs.' As was evident in the qualitative analysis, some employees believed the supportive management and cordial relationships compensated for the difference in pay rates with other organisations. Because the concept of job quality is multi-dimensional, several indicators are important, and one such is having supervisors who are sympathetic and maintain positive relationships with subordinates.

Creating supportive management is in itself a way of managing employee stress. Another option would be to manage the long working hours of employees and encouraging employees to access work-life balance policies. As argued by Boxall and Macky (2014), working hours and work intensification can affect the work-life balance of employees and lead to stress. Managers can schedule employees to meet their preferences and not encourage excessively long working hours as this can lead to increased stress levels. Workplace practices like flexible work arrangements (telework, job sharing, flex-time, compressed workweeks, part-time work) can be encouraged, especially now that there is a departure from the traditional male breadwinner concept with a change in workforce composition.

## **9.5 Practical contributions (qualitative)**

Findings from this research expose the challenges that are experienced by employees in involuntary part-time employment. In this regard, managers should be motivated to contribute more effectively to alleviating these challenges. Personal and collective strategies that have been implemented successfully will be of help to others currently in this situation. Employees are more likely to be motivated knowing that they too can effectively transition into jobs of higher quality if they use these strategies.

This suggests that particularly employees with long tenure in the organisation and with a positive work ethic be given the opportunity to increase their hours. In the retail sector for instance, while some people see it as a stepping stone, to others it is a career for which reason, they choose to stay. In this sample for instance, an employee has been with the same organisation and the same store for 15 years without any progression. For these people, this study suggests that they are given the opportunity through the provision of honest and constructive feedback so they can get into full-time positions and also advance in their career.

To unions, findings of this study provide information on aspects of work that matter to members' satisfaction. In this regard, provisions can be created in their collective bargaining agreement to the benefit of employees. For instance, results from the qualitative section show that, on average, most workers perceive that their expectations concerning career prospects have not been met. This suggests that more advocacy work needs to be done in this regard. It is commendable that the First Union has provisions in their collective agreements protecting existing employees regarding the allocation of hours and pay increases for employees. It is also recommended that they consider how promotion opportunities would be created and managed. It will be useful for the unions to

think of provisions that can improve the skill utilization of workers in addition to helping them get full-time hours.

## **9.6 Avenues for future research**

This study suggests the conduct of a longitudinal study to examine the changes in job values and outcomes for the same group of people over a long period. Additionally, conducting a longitudinal study where there could be a follow up on current involuntary part-timers to know how they are faring is worth considering. Getting to know a year later if they have been successful in implementing their strategies would be commendable. Using cross-sectional data in this thesis did not allow for inferences about causality, which is possible with a longitudinal study. It would also be interesting to use a larger sample size to generate more feasible strategies that will be beneficial to the growing number of involuntary part-timers. More broadly, studies could focus on other vulnerable groups of employees like migrants, using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Also, having a comparative study between NZ and Australia to increase the sample size would also be academically and industrially informative. This is because, differences and similarities in job values and job quality between these countries would be observed.

Another interesting area important for further research is differences in the job values of part-timers and full-timers. This is because this study is one of the few, therefore there ought to be more.

Another area worth focusing on is how to improve job quality without increasing the stress levels of employees at the same time. From the quantitative analysis, the study found that although many aspects of employees' jobs were improving, they paid the price of higher stress levels. Studies into how this can be managed are highly recommended.

Another avenue for future research relates to the creation of career ladders in organisations. Due to the difficulty of managing career progressions in organizations, the study is suggesting studies into how a small developed country like New Zealand with many informally managed businesses and limited hierarchies can support the advancement of employees' careers.

During qualitative data collection, researchers are encouraged to conduct their interviews, if possible outside the workplace of participants because people are usually more relaxed in such environments than at their work premises. This is because, from the sample, employees who agreed to have their interviews at their homes or anywhere apart from their workplaces were very open and more comfortable than those who granted interviews at their workplaces.

## APPENDICES

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*Appendix A:* Participant Information Sheet

*Appendix B:* Participant Consent Form

*Appendix C:* Interview guide

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

### **Employee**

**Project title:** Strategies used by involuntary part-time workers in transitioning out of poor quality jobs

**Researcher's name:** Majoreen Osafoadu Amankwah

**Supervisor's name:** Prof. Peter Boxall

### **RESEARCHER INTRODUCTION:**

I am Majoreen Osafoadu Amankwah, a doctoral candidate at the University of Auckland Business School, supervised by Peter Boxall.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND INVITATION:**

My research generally aims to provide an insight into New Zealand employees' perceptions of their job quality. Specifically, the research will also explore some strategies used by past and present involuntary part-time workers in opting out of jobs with lower quality.

I would like to invite you to participate in the research I will be undertaking as part of my PhD thesis. Your participation will involve providing information on your employment situation with particular reference to how you transitioned or intend to transition into a job of higher quality. This is a one-off interview and will be arranged at a time suitable for you. Since the focus of the research is on personal strategies you have used (past involuntary part-timers) or intend to use to opt out of this type of employment, you are free to choose the location for the interview. Though the research involves you discussing your work experiences, information provided will be used for purely academic purposes and all avenues will be used to ensure confidentiality is maintained. Your employment status will not be affected in any way as a result of your participation or non-participation in this research, as your employer and your Union, will not be informed about your participation. Your participation is completely voluntary and it will be at your discretion whether or not you would like to take part in the study.



## **PROJECT PROCEDURES:**

### **Interview:**

I would like to interview you as the method of data collection. The expected time commitment from you will be between 30-45 minutes and the interview will be carried out at a place convenient to you.

I would like, with your permission, to audio record the interview, assuring you that the recording can be switched off at any time without giving a reason at your request. The recording will not be shared with any third party. I will make a transcript of the recording. The recording, along with the transcript will be stored securely in a locked cabinet at an office at the University of Auckland.

You can choose to receive a copy of the transcript of the interview and to request changes up to one week after receiving the transcript. Please indicate on the consent form if you wish to edit the transcript and also if you will like an executive summary report of the research findings. You are free to withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason, and you may withdraw your research data up to four months after the interview.

### **DATA STORAGE, USE AND DESTRUCTION:**

All data (electronic and hard copies) will be stored securely in an office at the University of Auckland, separate from the Consent Form for a period of 6 years after which it will be destroyed. Electronic data will be secured in a password protected computer in the University of Auckland and also backed up by the University's server. Hard copies will be stored in a cabinet at the university and will be shredded as the mode of destruction. Collected data will be used for the purpose of my thesis and for future publications and presentations.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY:**

If the interview data provided by you is included in any publication, it will be done in a way that does not identify you as its source. However, the name of the union will be mentioned in this thesis. Also note that even though you won't be named in the final reporting, there might be a possibility that your colleagues could identify you. In this regard, you will be disguised through a changing of your gender and title, as well as assigning pseudonyms in reporting. A copy of the research findings will be made available to you if you do so desire.

## CONTACT DETAILS AND APPROVAL WORDING

Researcher Name and contact details	Supervisor name and contact details	Head of Department name and contact details
Majoreen Osafoadu Amankwah m.amankwah@auckland.ac.nz	Peter Boxall Management and International Business p.boxall@auckland.ac.nz 09 373 7355  Helen Delaney Management and International Business h.delaney@auckland.ac.nz 09 373 2507	Rod McNaughton r.mcnaughton@auckland.ac.nz Management and International Business 09 373 7599

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 extn 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 06/09/1 for 3 years. Reference Number 017789

## **CONSENT FORM**

### **Employee**

**This form will be kept for a period of six years**

**Project title: Strategies used by involuntary part-time workers in transitioning out of poor quality jobs**

**Researcher's name:** Majoreen Osafroadu Amankwah

**Supervisor's name:** Professor Peter Boxall

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that the data will be kept until for 6 years, after which it will be destroyed.
- I understand that the data will be kept securely and separate from the Consent form.
- I understand that my employer will not be informed of either my participation or non-participation.
- I understand that information reported or published will not identify me as its source
- I understand that my identity will be kept confidential
- I wish / do not wish to receive the summary of findings.

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview:**

- I agree / do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded.
- I understand that even if I agree to be recorded, I can request that the recording be stopped at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that I may request a transcribed copy of my interview.
- I understand that I can make changes up to a week after receiving the transcript. I understand that transcription will be done by the researcher
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation at any time, and to withdraw any data traceable to me up to up to four months after the interview, without giving a reason.
- I understand that my participation in this interview does not affect my Union membership or my employment

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS  
COMMITTEE ON 06/09/16 FOR 3 YEARS. REFERENCE NUMBER 017789

## **Interview guide**

- How long have you been working?
- What jobs have you had in the past years?
- How did you get into your current job?
- How do you feel about this job?
- What do you think of your working conditions?
  - Job security
  - Training opportunities
  - Intrinsic job quality
  - Earnings and earnings progression
  - Exposure to hazards (less stressful)
  - Working time quality
  - Management-employee relations
  - Co-worker relations
- Are you satisfied with your working hours? Why? Why not?
- Have you tried to do something about it? What? How has this been helpful? Why? Why not?

### **Additional questions for past involuntary part-timers**

- What successful strategies did you employ?
- Why did that work?

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