

5-2018

Young Seasonal Employees : How Work Conditions and Burnout Contribute to Turnover Intentions

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Abstract

To date there has been little research conducted on young seasonal workers, leaving a dearth in the literature regarding such things as how they react to their work environment and the outcomes of those reactions. This study focuses on burnout in young seasonal workers in the amusement park industry, using the job demands-resource model to make predictions. Surveys from 155 young seasonal workers at six amusement parks on the eastern coast of the US responded to surveys at two points in time measuring job demands, job resources, burnout, and intention to turnover. Hypotheses were tested using moderated regression to investigate how job demands moderated by job resources influences burnout and how burnout influences turnover intention. While burnout was strongly related to turnover intention, the results challenged the notion that job resources moderates the relationship between job demands and burnout. A re-interpretation of the results suggests that job resources directly influence burnout and this is moderated job demands such that as job resources were low and job demand increased, burnout also increased. Results suggest that studying this population is important as young adults may react differently to their environment than mature adults working in fulltime jobs. In addition, as job lack of job resources was related to burnout, it is suggested interventions targeting managers could be used to mitigate burnout in this population.

Thesis Signature Page

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Young Seasonal Employees: How Work Conditions and Burnout Contribute to Turnover Intentions

by

Marlee Wanamaker

A Master's Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

Montclair State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Arts in Industrial & Organizational Psychology

May 2018

College/School: College of Humanities and Social Sciences Thesis Committee:

Department: Psychology



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YOUNG SEASONAL EMPLOYEES: HOW WORK CONDITIONS AND BURNOUT
CONTRIBUTE TO TURNOVER INTENTIONS

A THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

by

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Montclair, NJ

2018

Keywords: young seasonal employees, job demands, job resources, burnout, turnover intention,

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Introduction

High year to year retention of young seasonal employees can be advantageous for the amusement park industry. However, little research has been conducted on this population beyond a few studies on the impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention (Alverén, Andersson, Eriksson, Sandoff, & Wikhamn, 2012; McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012; Reynolds, Merritt, & Gladstein, 2004). However, due to the high demands implicit in these jobs such as working in the heat, handling equipment, unsafe storage of work materials, working quickly for long periods of time, helping multiple customers at once, and having to rush to finish tasks on time, standing in one place for extended periods of time (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017), walking or standing for long periods of time (White, 2011), regularly dealing with loud sounds and noise levels, and being exposed to extreme lighting (Recreation Attendants – Working Conditions, n.d.), another construct, burnout, might also affect the retention. The purpose of this research was to examine retention of young seasonal employees through the lens of the Job Demands/Resources model of burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005; Bakker & Demerouti, 2006; Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, Xanthopoulou, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004; Hakanen, Schaufeli, & Ahola 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) which has proven to be useful in understanding burnout and turnover in the general working population (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Kim & Stoner, 2008; Siefert, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1991; Houkes, Janssen, de Jonge, & Nijhuis, 2001; Kalliath & Beck, 2001) but not in this population.

This research adds to the literature in the following way. Little I/O research has been conducted on young seasonal employees. However, this is an important population to better understand as the young seasonal workers of today become the full-time workforce of tomorrow.

What they are learning about and how they are reacting to their current jobs will impact how they view work once they enter the workforce full time. This study will replicate and extend what we know about work conditions, burnout, and retention to these employees.

Young Seasonal Employees

To date neither the US Census nor the Bureau of Labor Statistics provide information regarding the aggregate number of seasonal positions that exist in a given year. Additionally, there is very little research about seasonal employees in general. Ainsworth & Purss (2009) suggest that seasonal industries revolving around tourism, including the amusement industry, rely heavily on the employment of young seasonal workers.

According to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), the United States has more than 400 amusement parks and attractions entertaining approximately 375 million customers per year (“Amusement Park and Attractions Industry Statistics,” 2016). This industry heavily depends on seasonal employment to operate (Ainsworth & Purss, 2009). Although no statistics exist on the number of seasonal hires per summer, there are more than 5,000 employees hired seasonally by members of an amusement association along the east coast of the United States each season (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). Common seasonal positions in this industry are games operator, rides operator, prize counter attendant, stockroom attendant, security, lifeguard, and food stand operator which exist between Memorial Day and Labor Day (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). Seasonal employees are contingent workers, meaning they do not hold a long-term employment contract and hours worked can change during employment.

This population has been understudied in social scientific research, therefore it is unknown if there are differences in aspects of these jobs. For example, currently there is little research examining the organizational aspects of young seasonal employees.

Currently there is little research examining work conditions, specifically job demands, job resources, burnout, and turnover intentions of employees in the young seasonal worker population, therefore it is unknown how such constructs impact these workers. This population is important to study because little is known about the nature of these positions and how members of this population respond to stimuli at work. Young seasonal employees hold a majority of seasonal positions that only exist during a fixed amount of time (or season) each year.

Actual turnover in seasonal positions tends to be high (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). One of the reasons this might be so is because job demands are high. As previously indicated, typical job demands pertain to conditions on the job that may be hazardous, high work volume, and a high pressure to work quickly and efficiently (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017; White, 2011; Recreation Attendants – Working Conditions, n.d.). According to Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema (2005), and Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, (2004) work conditions, specifically high job demands leads to burnout, which according to Siefert, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1991) leads to turnover intentions. That’s why burnout and job demands is a particularly interesting lens with which to look at this population.

Job Demands-Resources Model

The theory that I’m interested in is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model because the job demands of young seasonal workers can be challenging. In a personal interview with the president of a large-scale amusement industry on the east coast of the United States, he mentioned that a major concern for managers is that their employees will get burnout out at the

end of the season, which will influence their decision to return the next season. The term “burnout” is heavily used in the industry but understood to only refer to physical and emotional exhaustion associated with the job (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). Though it is understood within the industry that burnout can happen in a season, there has yet to be scientific research verifying these industry understandings.

The core concept behind the JD-R model (Bakker, Demerouti, De Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001) lies the assumption that occupation may have its own specific risk factors associated with burnout. These factors are categorized into two general categories (i.e., job demands and job resources), thus constituting an overarching model that may be applied to different occupational settings, regardless of the particular demands and resources involved.

Job demands and job resources are work conditions and are suggested to produce a state of employee well-being. Job demands refer to aspects of the job that require physical and/or psychological effort to complete (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to Bakker et al. (2003b; c) and Demerouti et al. (2001a; b) a central assumption of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model is that every occupation has unique risk factors associated with job stress, which can be classified as either job demands or job resources. Dimensions of job demands are hazardous conditions, work pressure, workload, (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006). Hazardous working conditions refers to exposure to toxins or dangerous environments (Karasek 1985). For seasonal employees, that may consist of working in the heat, handling equipment, and unsafe storage of work materials (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). Work pressure refers to the volume of intrinsic and extrinsic effort (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006) required of an employee (Spector & Jex, 1998). For a seasonal employee, work pressure may consist of working quickly for long periods of time, helping multiple customers at once, and having to rush to finish tasks on

time (A. Cappetta, personal interview, July 1, 2017). Workload can consist of physically demanding aspects of a job, such as standing in one place for extended periods of time (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). Other demands young seasonal employees may face are walking or standing for long periods of time (White, 2011), regularly dealing with loud sounds and noise levels, and being exposed to extreme lighting (Recreation Attendants – Working Conditions, n.d.)

Job resources are broadly defined as physical, psychological, and social aspects of a job that are functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands and related psychological and physiological costs, and encouraging and fostering personal growth, learning, and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006; Hakanen, Schaufeli, & Ahola, 2008). The JD-R model suggests that job resources buffer the impact of job demands on strain which may lead to burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, Euwema, 2005; Bakker et al., 2007). Dimensions of job resources are supervisor support, autonomy, and feedback (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006). Feedback refers to praise and encouragement given to good performers, coaching, and improvement for poor performers regarding how to improve performance (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005) and fostering learning for good and bad performers (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Autonomy regards independence from other workers while carrying out tasks and freedom to moderate one's own work pace (Bakker, Demerouti, Euwema, 2005). Supervisor support describes support given by supervisors where the supervisor uses his/her influence to help the subordinate manage demands (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004). Job demands and job resources are supported as being antecedents to burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

Burnout is defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Demerouti et al. 2001) and is characterized by exhaustion,

cynicism, and professional inefficacy (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). Exhaustion refers to exhaustion in a non-physical sense (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Cynicism, refers to indifference or a distant attitude towards work in general (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Professional inefficacy refers to an individual's satisfaction with accomplishments at work both socially and non-socially (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between job demands and burnout.

Hypothesis 1b: The positive relationship between job demands and burnout is moderated or buffered by job resources such that when resources are low and demands are high, this will lead to the highest burnout.

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is considered a conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Turnover intention is considered the second most extreme form of workplace withdraw. It is preceded by job attitudes such as high job dissatisfaction, low engagement, and high burnout, and precedes actual turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). Turnover intention is positively related to burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), which is expected to replicate and extend to young seasonal employees.

Hypothesis 2: Burnout is positively related to turnover intention.

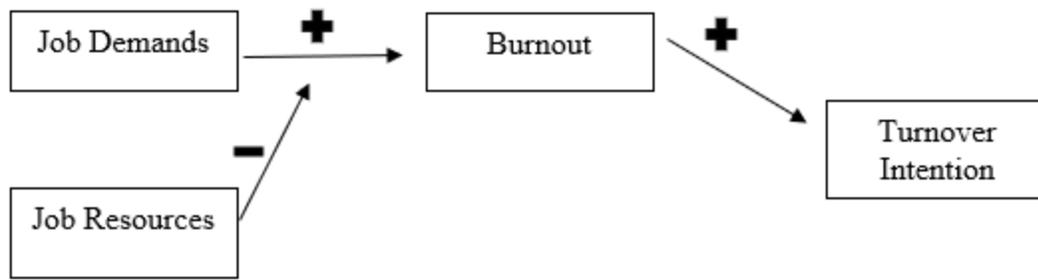


Figure 1. Hypothetical Model

Method

Participants

Upon approval from the president of the amusement park association on the east coast of the U.S., I approached organizational leaders of each of the six businesses varying in size from 20-100 employees and gained approval to survey their employees. In total, 155 incumbents participated in this study (response rate = 90%). Participants were selected based on the status of being a student in a high school or college setting, age 18 or older. Approximately half of the sample was male (54%) and the mean age is 21 (SD=2.0). The majority of this sample (92%) attends college or a trade school. Slightly more than half (57%) are Caucasian, 19% are Asian, 13% are Black/African American, and 11% are Hispanic.

Procedures

Physical surveys were distributed to employees of member businesses. Applicants were individually selected based on the aforementioned requirements. They completed each survey in an employee break room either before shift, during break, or after shift. Distribution of physical surveys occurred in two rounds. Approximately one month into the job, participants were approached as they entered the break room and were asked if they would be interested in

participating. If so, they were given a consent form with study details and a survey. 155 participants completed the survey between the end of June and beginning of July 2017. The first round measured job demands, job resources, burnout, and took participants approximately ten minutes to complete. 6 weeks later, the second round was distributed to those who participated in round one. All 155 participants agreed to participate. Again, participants were asked if they would be interested in participating. If so, they were given a second consent form reminding them of the study and the survey measured turnover intentions and took about 1 minute to complete. Preliminary analyses revealed that demographic variables of age, gender, and ethnicity were not substantially related to any constructs analyzed in this study and were therefore omitted from further analysis.

Measures

Job demands. Three types of job demands were included: work pressure, workload, and hazardous conditions. High work pressure, workload, and hazardous conditions were measured using items from Karasek's (1985) job content questionnaire (JCQ). The high work pressure scale consisted of five items. An example item is "My job requires working very hard." Items were scored on a 4-point Likert-type frequency scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). Two items were positively worded and three, negatively. The workload scale consisted of four items. An example item is "My job requires a lot of physical effort." Items were scored identically to those measuring high work pressure. All items were positively worded. The hazardous conditions scale consisted of four items. An example item is "Do you have a problem with exposure to things placed or stored dangerously on your job?" Items were scored on a 3-point Likert-type frequency scale (0 = not exposed, 1 = exposed but it is a slight problem, and 2

= exposed and it is a sizeable or great problem). All items were positively worded. The internal consistencies of the scales are generally good with the Cronbach's alphas being above .70.

Job resources. Three types of job resources were included: performance feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support. Feedback, autonomy, and support were measured using items from Karasek's (1985) JCQ. The feedback scale consisted of three items. An example item is "I often get information/feedback one way or another about how the customers or clients feel about the product or service I produce." Items were scored identically to those measuring high work pressure. All items were positively worded. The autonomy scale consisted of three items. An example item is "My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own." Items were scored identically to those measuring high work pressure. Two items were positively worded and one, negatively. The supervisor support scale consisted of four items. An example item is "My supervisor is concerned about the welfare of those under him/her." Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type frequency scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree, & 8 = I have no supervisor). All items were worded positively. The internal consistencies of the scales are generally good with the Cronbach's alphas being above .70, with two exceptions (feedback and coworker support having an alpha of .60).

Burnout. Three facets of burnout were included: exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. All facets of burnout were measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI Maslach, et al 1996). The exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy scales consist of five, five, and six items, respectively, with example items being "Working with people all day is really a strain for me", "I have become less enthusiastic about my work", and "At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done", respectively. All facets were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (0 = never, 6 = every day). All items are positively worded. The

internal consistencies of the scales are generally good with the Cronbach’s alphas being above .80. I ran a reliability analysis on the dimensions of burnout and realized these dimensions could be collapsed into a single scale measuring aggregate burnout because the Cronbach’s alpha of an aggregate scale was .86. Therefore, burnout is measured as an aggregate rather than as separate dimensions in this investigation.

Turnover intentions. The turnover intentions scale consisted of a single three-item scale created for this study. The items were “I often seriously consider leaving my current job,” “I intend to quit my current job,” and “I have started to look for other jobs.” All items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (0 = never, 6 = every day) and all items were positively worded. The internal consistency of the scale is very good with the Cronbach’s alpha being .90.

Factor Analysis

Principal components analyses were conducted on the job demands and job resources scales. Separate analyses were used to assess the scales for job demands and job resources. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 1. A cut-off value of 0.55 was used for the component loadings.

An overall score for job demands was calculated by averaging the scores for the 13 job demand items, all of which loaded satisfactorily on their respective 3 sub-scales. An overall score for job resources was calculated by averaging the scores for the 10 job resource items, all of which loaded satisfactorily on their respective 3 sub-scales.

Table 1
Results of the principal components analyses

	Principal Component Analysis		
	1	2	3
<i>Job demands</i>			
Hazardous conditions JCQ1	.63		
Hazardous conditions JCQ2	.55		
Hazardous conditions JCQ3	.63		

Hazardous conditions JCQ4	.70		
Work pressure JCQ5		.60	
Work pressure JCQ6		.69	
Work pressure JCQ7		.71	
Work pressure JCQ8		.75	
Work pressure JCQ9		.73	
Workload JCQ10			.72
Workload JCQ11			.75
Workload JCQ12			.66
Workload JCQ13			.57
<i>Job resources</i>			
Feedback JCQ1	.67		
Feedback JCQ2	.73		
Feedback JCQ3	.79		
Autonomy JCQ4		.87	
Autonomy JCQ5		.60	
Autonomy JCQ6		.91	
Supervisor support JCQ7			.55
Supervisor support JCQ8			.55
Supervisor support JCQ9			.87
Supervisor support JCQ10			.75

Note: Loadings greater than 0.40 are shown

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, correlations between variables, and internal consistencies of the scales included in the analyses. All scales display acceptable reliabilities, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients .72 or higher, except feedback at .60. Nearly all demands and resources are weak to highly moderately related to each other. Preliminary analyses revealed that demographic variables of age, gender, ethnicity (white and nonwhite), and academic year were neither substantially nor consistently related to job demands, job resources, burnout, or turnover intentions, therefore these were omitted from further analyses (see Table 3).

According to Table 2, hypothesis 1a stating that there is a positive relationship between job demands and burnout is partially supported. Only one of the three job demands was significantly positively correlated with burnout.

Table 2
Means, standard deviations, and correlations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. WKP	2.69	0.54	(.78)							
2. WKL	3.17	0.67	.59**	(.83)						
3. HAZ	0.19	0.30	.21**	.08	(.72)					
4. FDB	1.49	0.47	.10	-.05	.21*	(.60)				
5. AUT	3.17	0.65	-.08	.15	-.19*	-.29**	(.82)			
6. SUP	3.70	0.48	-.13	-.06	-.21**	-.21**	.35**	(.87)		
7. BRN	1.17	1.00	.08	-.10	.40**	.46**	-.47**	-.49**	(.86)	
8. TOV	2.06	1.37	.12	-.11	.21**	.31**	-.35**	-.39**	.66**	(.90)

Note. Correlations significant at the .05 and .01 level represented by * and **, respectively. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation. Alpha coefficients are reported in parentheses. WKP = Work Pressure; WKL = Workload; HAZ = Hazardous Conditions; FDB = Feedback; AUT = Autonomy; SUP = Supervisor Support; BRN = Burnout; TOV = Turnover Intention

Table 3
Means, standard deviations, and correlations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. AGE	21.04	4.18												
2. GND	1.45	0.50	-.09											
3. ETH	1.85	1.12	-.07	.02										
4. ACY	2.94	1.42	.55	.01	-.03									
5. WKP	2.69	0.54	-.04	-.22	-.02	.00								
6. WKL	3.17	0.67	.08	-.11	-.06	.02	.59**							
7. HAZ	0.19	0.30	.01	-.06	-.00	.05	.21**	.08						
8. FDB	1.49	0.47	.02	-.03	.03	.02	.10	-.05	.21**					
9. AUT	3.17	0.65	.02	.10	-.08	.02	-.08	.15	-.19*	-.29**				
10. SUS	3.70	0.48	-.14	.04	-.04	-.05	-.13	-.06	-.21**	-.21**	.35**			
11. BNO	1.17	1.00	-.04	.02	-.05	.02	.08	-.10	.40**	.46**	-.47**	-.49**		
12. TOV	2.06	1.38	-.03	-.03	.00	.01	.12	-.11	.21**	.31**	-.35**	-.39**	.66**	

Note. Correlations significant at the .05 and .01 level represented by * and **, respectively. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation. Alpha coefficients are reported in parentheses. AGE = Age; GND = Gender = Gender; ETH = Ethnicity; ACY = Academic Year; WKP = Work Pressure; WKL = Workload; HAZ = Hazardous Conditions; FDB = Feedback; AUT = Autonomy; SUS = Supervisory Support; BNO = Burnout; TOV = Turnover Intention

Moderated Regression

To test hypothesis 1, that there is a positive relationship between job demands and burnout that is moderated or buffered by job resources such that when resources are low and demands are high, this will lead to the highest burnout, nine moderated regressions were conducted. To test this model I did the following, first all variables were centered to account for multicollinearity in higher order constructs. Second, interaction terms were built from those centered variables using a single job demand and a single job resource for each interaction term. Third, nine moderate regression analyses were conducted. The results of these analyses are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Because of the use of multiple analyses, a Bonferroni Adjustment was calculated ($.05/9 = .006$) and the p value was set at .006 (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007). In the first step, the specific job demand (hazardous conditions, work pressure, and workload) and the specific job resource (feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support) were included and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance for burnout in three out of nine analyses. Next the interaction between each specific job demand and each specific job resource was added to the model (Aiken & West, 1991) which accounted for a significant amount of variance for burnout in three of the three significant analyses.

First, I looked at hazardous conditions with the three specific job resources of feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support.

Table 4

*Summary of Moderated Regression
Analyses for Variables Predicting Burnout*

	Step 1		Step 2	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Hazardous Conditions	.33*	.07	.26*	.06
Feedback	.39*	.07	.20*	.07
Hazardous Conditions x Feedback			.24*	.04
<i>R</i> ²	.31*		.44*	
ΔR^2	-		.12*	
Hazardous Conditions	.33*	.07	.29*	.06
Autonomy	-.41*	.07	-.29*	.07
Hazardous Conditions x Autonomy			-.22*	.05
<i>R</i> ²	.33*		.42*	
ΔR^2	-		.09*	
Hazardous Conditions	.32*	.07	.28*	.06
Supervisor Support	-.44*	.07	-.36*	.07
Hazardous Conditions x Supervisor Support			-.17*	.05
<i>R</i> ²	.34*		.39*	
ΔR^2	-		.05*	

Notes: * $p < .006$ (Bonferroni correction); *B*= Unstandardized beta; *SE*= Standard error of the estimate; *R*²= R squared; ΔR^2 = Change in R squared

The first analysis regressed hazardous conditions and performance feedback on burnout. In the first step, hazardous conditions and feedback were included ($\beta = .33$ ($p < .006$) and $.39$ ($p < .006$), respectively) and both variables accounted for a significant

amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .31$; $p < .001$). Next the interaction between hazardous conditions and feedback was added to the model ($\beta = .24$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .12$; $p < .001$) (see Table 4). Examination of a simple slopes analysis showed that there is a positive relationship between hazardous conditions and burnout that is moderated by feedback such that when feedback is high and hazardous are high, this will lead to the highest burnout ($p < .001$). These findings are in the opposite direction as was predicted by hypothesis 1b as the presence of feedback was expected to decrease burnout but it is found to increase burnout (see Figure 2). Therefore, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

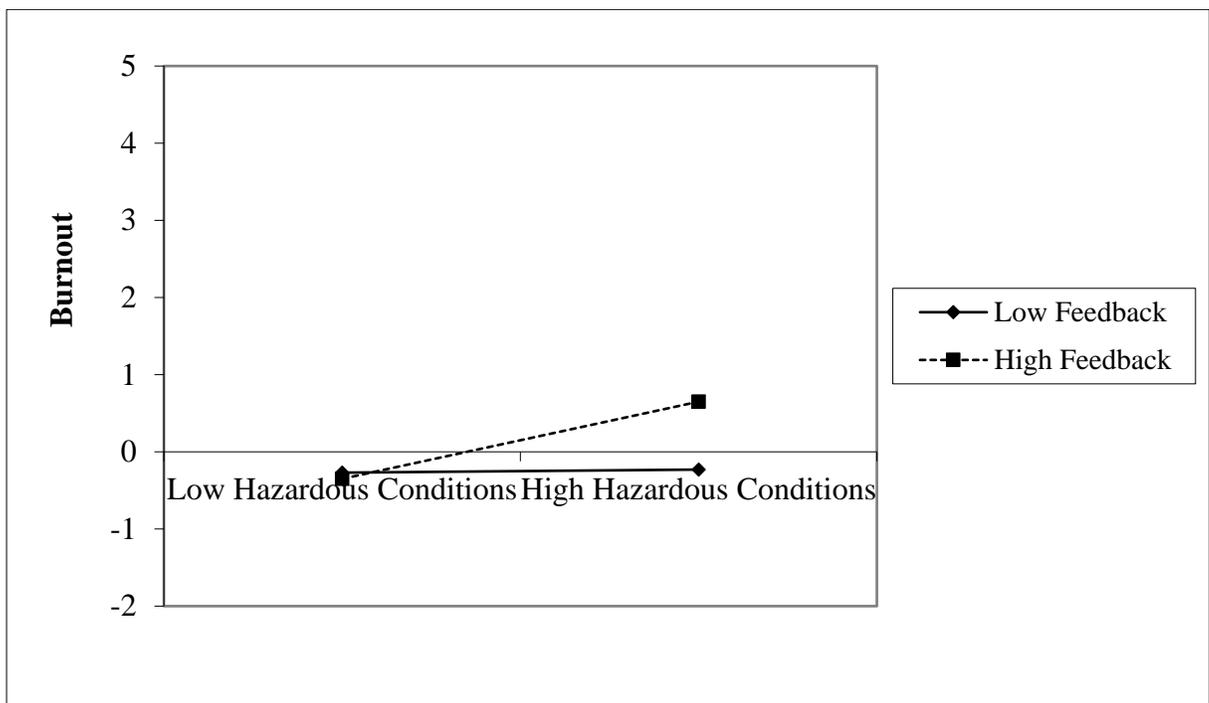


Figure 2. Burnout predicted by hazardous conditions moderated by feedback

The second analysis regressed hazardous conditions and autonomy on burnout. In the first step, hazardous conditions and autonomy were included ($\beta = .33$ ($p < .006$) and $-.41$ ($p < .006$), respectively) and both variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .33$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between hazardous conditions

and autonomy was added to the model ($\beta = -.22$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .001$) (see Table 4). Examination of a simple slopes analysis showed that there is a positive relationship between hazardous conditions and burnout that is moderated by autonomy such that when autonomy is high and hazardous conditions are low, this will lead to the lowest burnout ($p < .001$). There are no differences in burnout between low autonomy and high autonomy when hazardous conditions are high. These findings do not support hypothesis 1b. According to hypothesis 1b, high hazardous conditions and low autonomy is supposed to lead to the highest burnout. In Figure 3, burnout appears to be at about the same level regardless of change in autonomy. Therefore, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

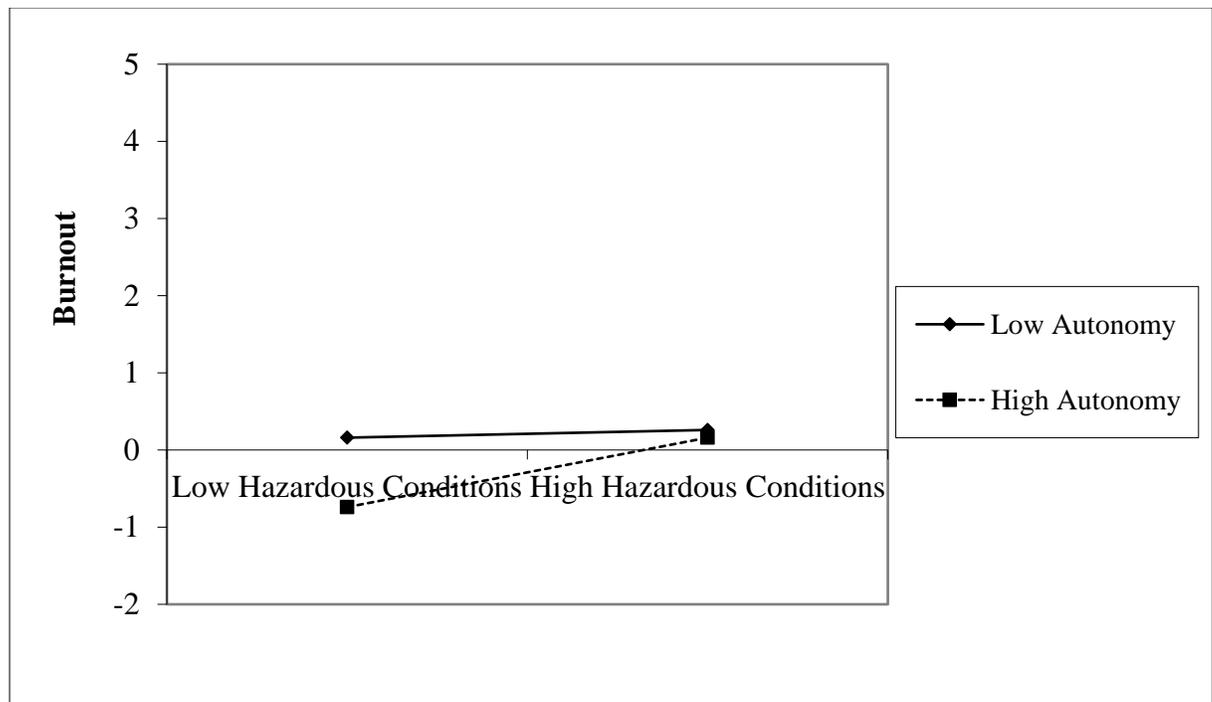


Figure 3. Burnout predicted by hazardous conditions moderated by autonomy

The third analysis regressed hazardous conditions and supervisor support on burnout. In the first step, hazardous conditions and supervisor support were included ($\beta = .32$ ($p < .006$) and $-.44$ ($p < .006$), respectively) and these variables accounted for a

significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .32$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between hazardous conditions and supervisor support was added to the model ($\beta = -.17$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .001$) (See Table 4). Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that there is a positive relationship between hazardous conditions and burnout that is moderated or buffered by supervisor support such that when supervisors is low and hazardous conditions are high, this will lead to the highest burnout. Therefore, hypothesis 1b was partially supported (see Figure 4).

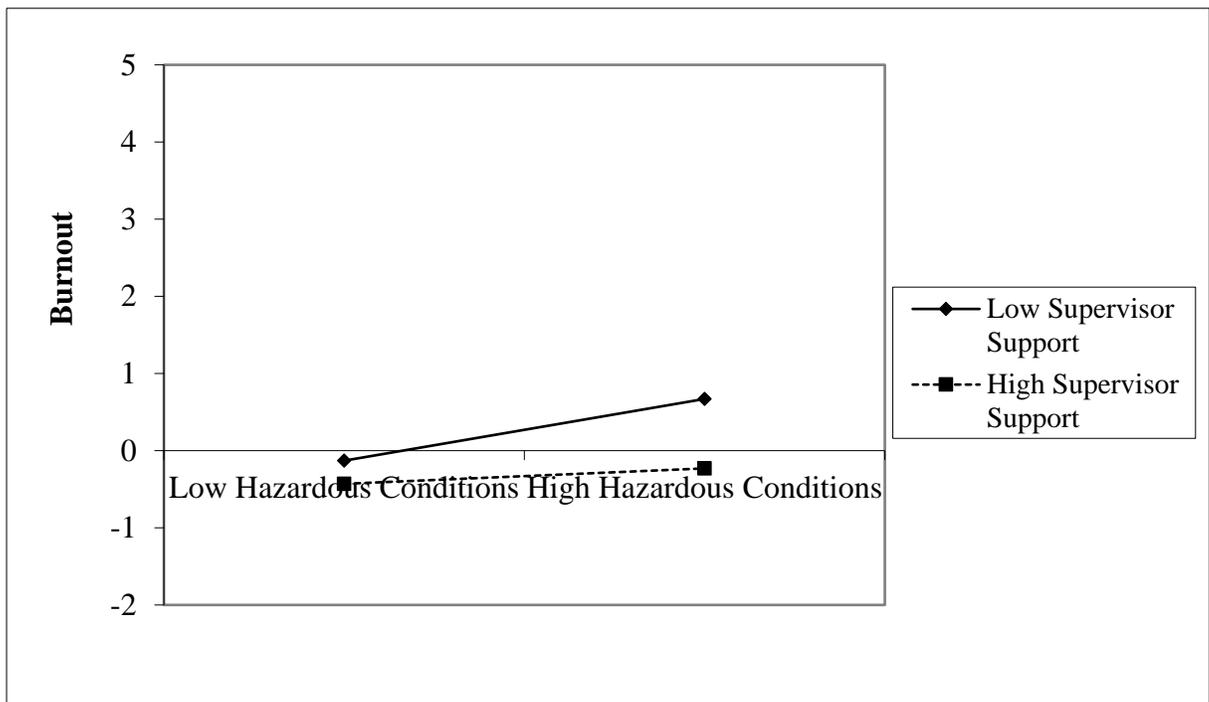


Figure 4. Burnout predicted by hazardous conditions moderated by supervisor support

All resources measured in this investigation were found to significantly moderate the relationship between job demands and burnout. However, only partial support was found in the one of the three analyses. The analysis examining hazardous conditions and feedback suggests that as feedback increases, burnout also increases. These results cause me to suspect that the feedback participants are receiving is negative feedback. The

analysis examining hazardous conditions and autonomy suggests that the presence of autonomy matters very little when hazardous conditions is high. In this case, I suspect that dealing with situations that have high hazardous conditions forces employees to develop a routine for their safety. With the presence of a routine, having the freedom to complete job tasks how individual employees would like may not be safe, so employees may tend to continue routines that have been proven safe than try anything new. The analysis examining hazardous conditions and supervisor support suggests that employees will experience less burnout under high hazardous conditions if they have more supervisor support as predicted by the model. According to Figure 4, the lowest burnout was found to exist with low hazardous conditions and high supervisor support. I suspect that these findings are due to the need for supervisor support in more aspects of one's job than when conditions are hazardous. The relationship with one's supervisor surrounding other social aspects of work may be influencing perceived supervisor support when conditions are hazardous.

Next, I looked at work pressure with the three specific job resources of feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support.

Table 5

*Summary of Moderated Regression
Analyses for Variables Predicting Burnout*

	Step 1		Step 2	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Work Pressure	.04	.07	.08	.07
Feedback	.45*	.07	.37*	.08
Work Pressure x Feedback			.17*	.07
R^2	.21*		.25*	
ΔR^2	-		.04*	

Work Pressure	.05	.07	.05	.07
Autonomy	-.47*	.07	-.38*	.07
Work Pressure			-.27*	.06
x				
Autonomy				
R ²	.23*		.32*	
ΔR ²	-		.09*	
Work Pressure	.02	.07	.05	.07
Supervisor Support	-.51*	.07	-.38*	.07
Work Pressure			-.27*	.06
x				
Supervisor Support				
R ²	.34*		.39*	
ΔR ²	-		.05*	

Notes: * $p < .006$ (Bonferroni correction); B = Unstandardized beta; SE = Standard error of the estimate; R^2 = R squared; ΔR^2 = Change in R squared

The fourth analysis regressed work pressure and feedback on burnout. In the first step, work pressure and feedback were included ($\beta = .04$ (ns) and $.45$ ($p < .006$), respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .21$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between work pressure and feedback was added to the model ($\beta = .17$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .001$) (see Table 5). However, the beta weight for work pressure did not obtain significance, therefore hypothesis 1b was not supported as it isn't certain if these are true differences or error.

The fifth analysis regressed work pressure and autonomy on burnout. In the first step, work pressure and autonomy were included ($\beta = .05$ (ns) and $-.47$ ($p < .006$) respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in

burnout ($R^2 = .23$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between work pressure and autonomy was added to the model ($\beta = -.27$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .001$) (see Table 5). However, the beta weight for work pressure did not obtain significance, therefore hypothesis 1b was not supported as it isn't certain if these are true differences or error.

The sixth analysis regressed work pressure and supervisor support on burnout. In the first step, work pressure and supervisor support were included ($\beta = .02$ (ns) and $-.51$ ($p < .006$) respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .23$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between work pressure and supervisor support was added to the model ($\beta = -.27$ ($p < .006$)), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $p < .001$) (see Table 5). However, the beta weight for work pressure did not obtain significance, therefore hypothesis 1b was not supported as it isn't certain if these are true differences or error.

None of the three analyses surrounding work pressure were found to produce a significant model containing both one job demand and one job resource. However, all resources measured in this set of analyses were found to be significant in the first and second step of the analyses even as job demands failed to achieve significance during any of these analyses.

Finally, I looked at workload with the three specific job resources of feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support.

Table 6

*Summary of Moderated Regression
Analyses for Variables Predicting Burnout*

	Step 1		Step 2	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Workload	-.06	.07	-.07	.07

Feedback	.45*	.07	.43*	.07
Workload			.13	.08
x				
Feedback				
R ²	.22*		.23	
ΔR ²	-		.02	
Workload	-.01	.07	-.04	.07
Autonomy	-.47*	.07	-.46*	.07
Workload			-.14	.07
x				
Autonomy				
R ²	.23*		.25	
ΔR ²	-		.02	
Workload	-.13	.07	-.11	.07
Supervisor	-.52*	.07	-.50*	.07
Support				
Workload			-.20*	.07
x				
Supervisor				
Support				
R ²	.26*		.30*	
ΔR ²	-		.04*	

Notes: * $p < .006$ (Bonferroni correction); B = Unstandardized beta; SE = Standard error of the estimate; R^2 = R squared; ΔR^2 = Change in R squared

The seventh analysis regressed workload and performance feedback on burnout. In the first step, workload and performance feedback were included ($\beta = -.06$ (ns) and $-.45$ ($p < .006$) respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .21$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between workload and performance feedback was added to the model ($\beta = -.13$ (ns) respectively), which did not account for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .01$ (ns)) (see Table 6). Therefore, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

The eighth analysis regressed workload and autonomy on burnout. In the first step, workload and autonomy were included ($\beta = -.01$ (ns) and $.47$ ($p < .006$) respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .23$,

$p < .001$). Next the interaction between workload and autonomy was added to the model ($\beta = -.14$ (ns) respectively), which did not account for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .02$ (ns)) (see Table 6). Therefore, hypothesis 1b was not supported.

The ninth analysis regressed workload and supervisor support on burnout. In the first step, workload and supervisor support were included ($\beta = -.13$ (ns) and $-.52$ ($p < .006$) respectively) and these variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in burnout ($R^2 = .24$, $p < .001$). Next the interaction between workload and supervisor support was added to the model ($\beta = -.20$ ($p < .006$) respectively), which accounted for a significant portion of the variance in aggregate burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $p < .001$) (See Table 6). However, the beta weight for work pressure did not obtain significance, therefore hypothesis 1b was not supported as it isn't certain if these are true differences or error.

Again, none of the three analyses surrounding workload were found to produce a significant model containing both one job demand and job resource. However, all resources measured in this set of analyses were found to be significant even as job demands failed to achieve significance during any of these analyses.

Of the three moderated regression analyses that were significant, one of them aligned with hypothesis 1b. Therefore, hypothesis 1b, that there is a positive relationship between job demands and burnout that is moderated or buffered by job resources such that when resources are low and demands are high, this will lead to the highest burnout, was partially supported.

However, I noted throughout the investigation that the three resources were significant across all nine analyses. In addition, the interaction terms were significant in

seven of the nine analyses. I noted that the three resources had significant main effects on burnout regardless of whether demands were significant or not. Therefore, I explored whether in this sample job resources were impacting burnout as moderated by job demands. I altered hypothesis 1 to explain the relationship if job resources were the main effect and the job demands were the moderator (see Figure 5).

Post Hoc Hypothesis 1a: There is a negative relationship between job resources and burnout. **Post Hoc Hypothesis 1b:** This is moderated by job demands such that when job demands are high and resources are low, this will lead to the highest burnout.

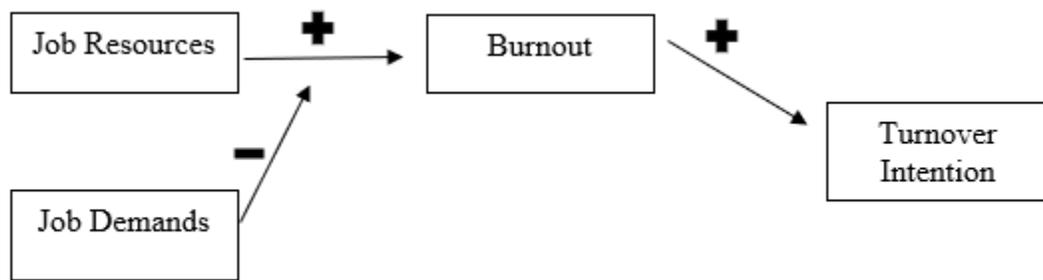


Figure 5. Modified Hypothetical Model

Post Hoc Analyses

Post hoc analyses were conducted to test whether the relationship could be reversed such that the relationship between job resources and burnout is moderated by job demands. This would mean that the main effect of job resources on burnout will be determined by the moderating effect of job demands. Further examination of simple slopes analyses supported the notion that job resources are the independent variable and job demands can be the moderator.

When feedback is moderated by hazardous conditions, it is suggested that hazardous conditions strengthens the relationship between feedback and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when hazardous conditions and feedback are the highest, burnout is the highest. This does not support the new hypothesis.

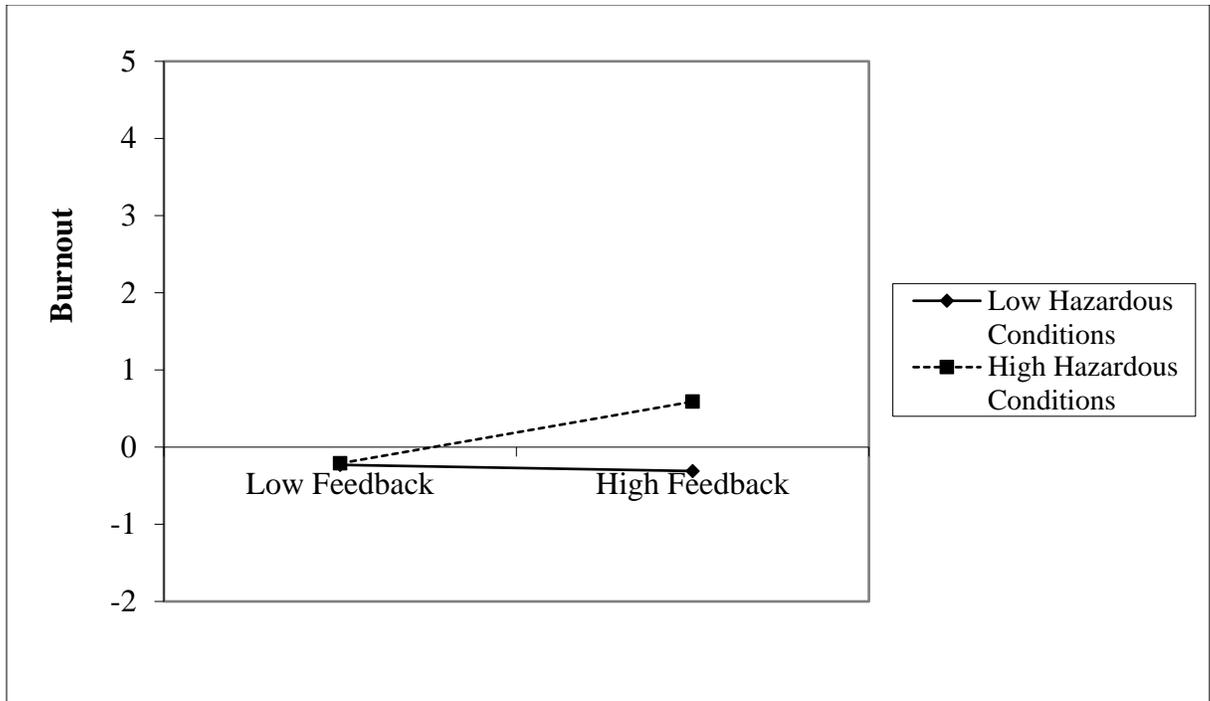


Figure 6. Burnout predicted by feedback moderated by hazardous conditions

When autonomy is moderated by hazardous conditions, it is suggested that hazardous conditions weakens the relationship between autonomy and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when autonomy is low and hazardous conditions is high, burnout is highest (see Figure 7). This supports the new hypothesis.

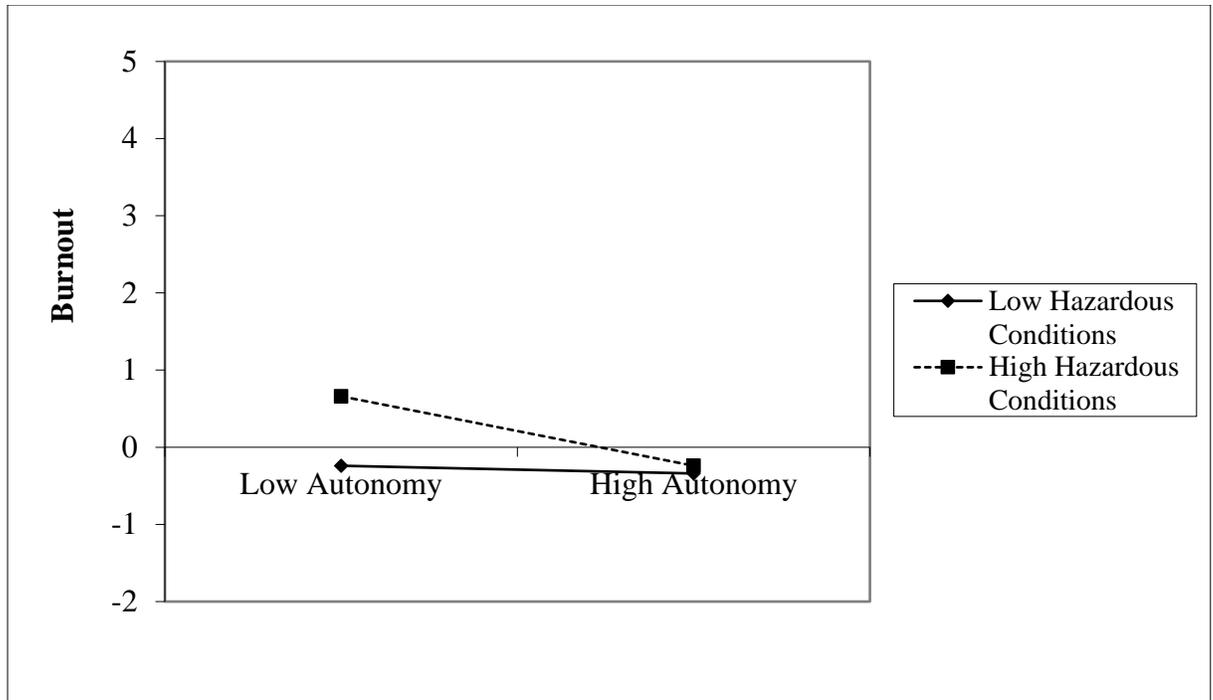


Figure 7. Burnout predicted by autonomy moderated by hazardous conditions

When supervisor support is moderated by hazardous conditions, it is suggested that hazardous conditions weakens the relationship between supervisor support and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when supervisor support is and low hazardous conditions is high, burnout is the highest $p < .001$ (see Figure 8). This supports the new hypothesis.

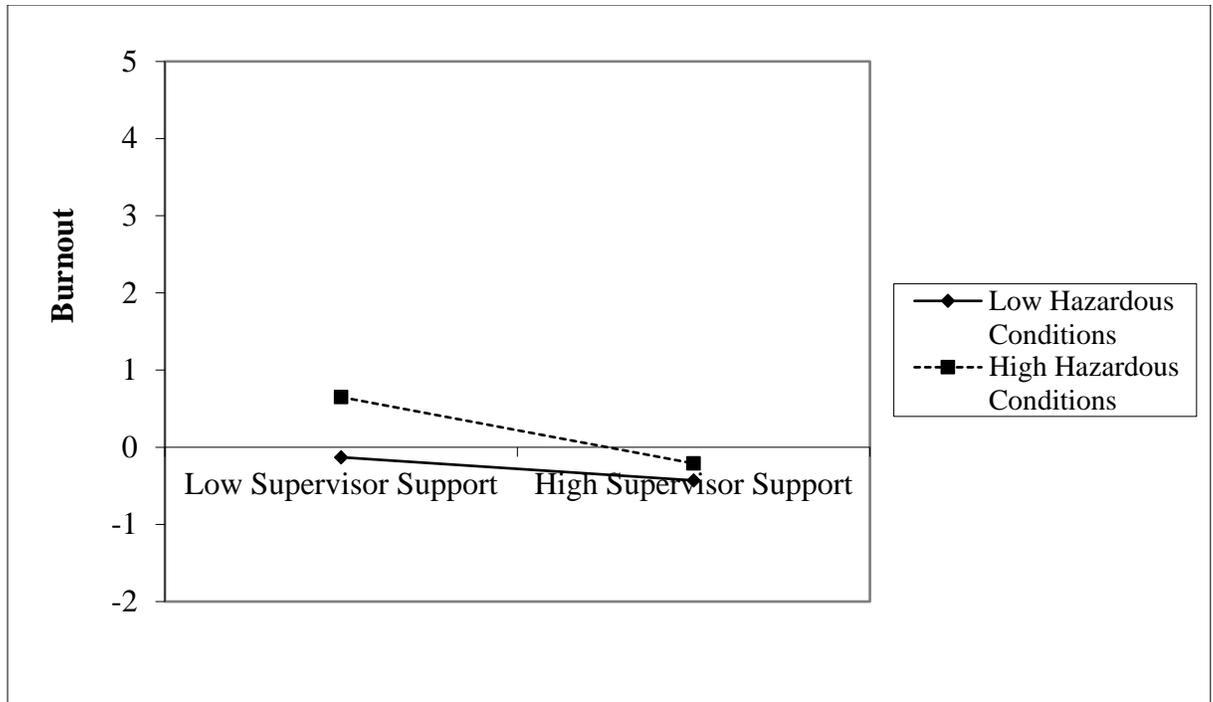


Figure 8. Burnout predicted by supervisor support moderated by hazardous conditions

When feedback is moderated by work pressure, it is suggested that work pressure strengthens the relationship between feedback and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when feedback is low and work pressure is high, burnout will be the lowest $p < .001$ (see Figure 11). This does not support the new hypothesis.

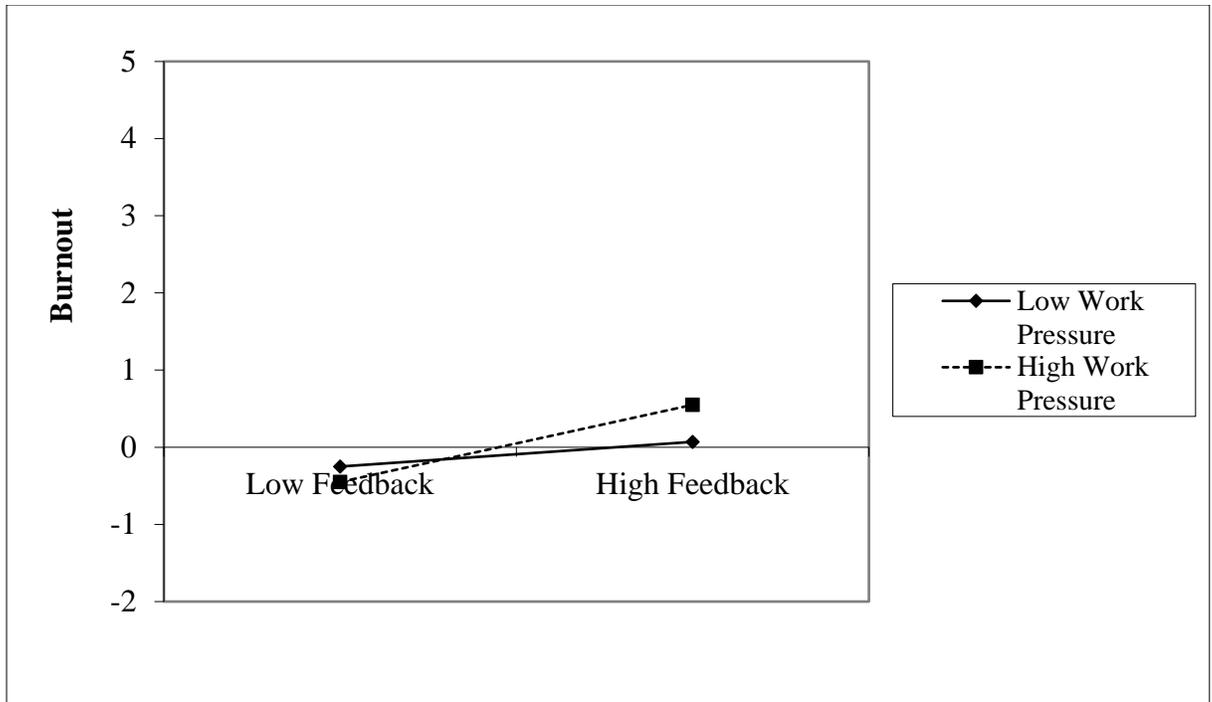


Figure 9. Burnout predicted by feedback moderated by work pressure

When autonomy is moderated by work pressure, it is suggested that work pressure weakens the relationship between autonomy and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when autonomy is low and work pressure is high, burnout is highest (see Figure 10). This supports the new hypothesis.

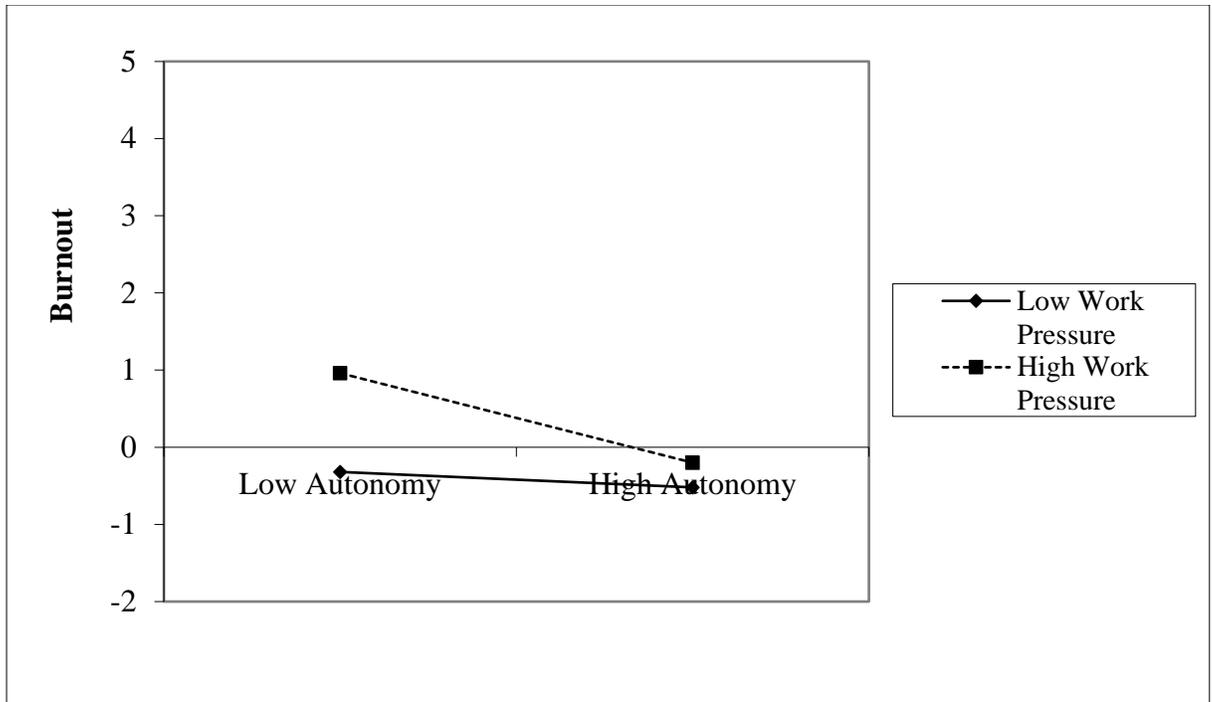


Figure 10. Burnout predicted by autonomy moderated by work pressure

When supervisor support is moderated by work pressure, it is suggested that work pressure buffers the relationship between supervisor support and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when supervisor support is low and work pressure is high, burnout will be the highest $p < .001$ (see Figure 11). This supports the new hypothesis.

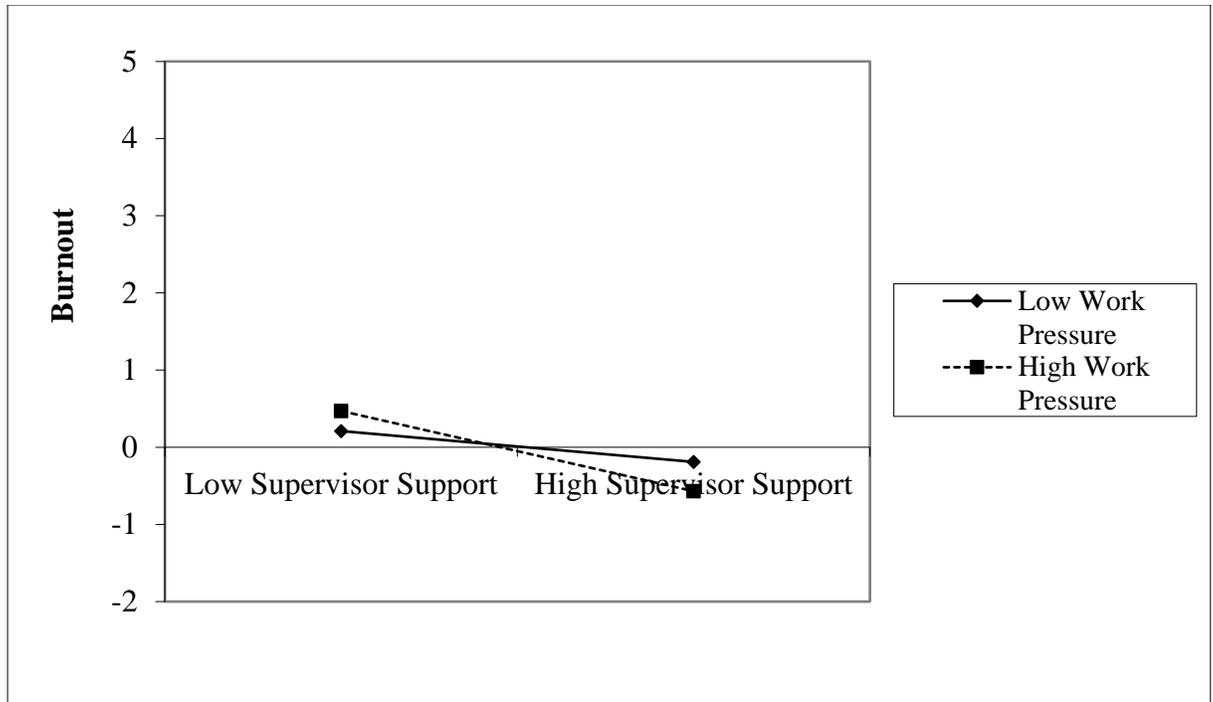


Figure 11. Burnout predicted by supervisor support moderated by work pressure

When supervisor support is moderated by workload, it is suggested that workload buffers the relationship between supervisor support and burnout. Examination of a simple slopes analysis suggests that when supervisor support is low and workload is high, burnout will be the highest $p < .001$ (see Figure 12). This supports the new hypothesis.

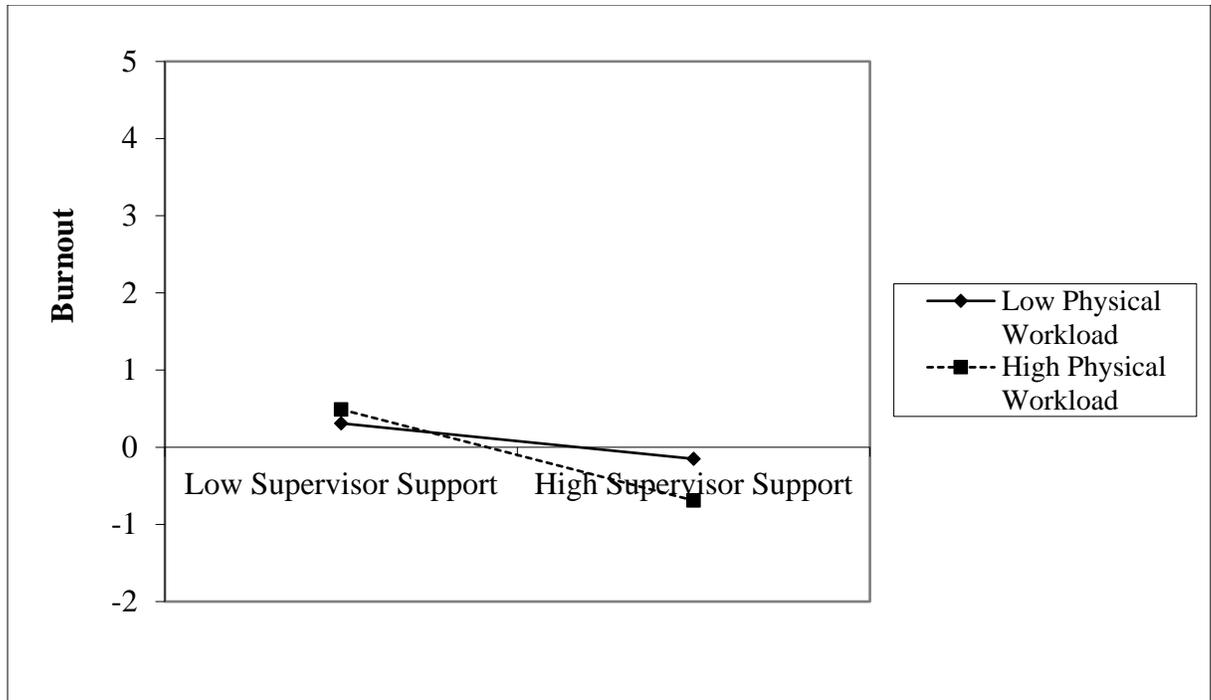


Figure 12. Burnout predicted by supervisor support moderated by workload

As can be seen in Tables 4-6, in terms of main effects, only hazardous conditions was positively related to burnout while work pressure and workload were not significantly related providing partial support for post hoc hypothesis 1a. In terms of main effects for job resources, autonomy and supervisor support were negatively related to burnout providing support for post hoc hypothesis 1a. However main effects for feedback was positively related to burnout, which was not supported by the post hoc hypothesis 1a, thus providing partial support for hypothesis 1a.

In all seven out of seven analyses, job demands were found to moderate the relationship between job resources and burnout. These findings suggest that the role of job demands and job resources in their relationship to burnout can be switched, such that job resources is the independent variable and job demands is the moderator. Supervisor support best fits this model as the moderating effect that any of the three observed job

demands increases burnout. Autonomy somewhat fits the model clearly demonstrating in two out of three post hoc analyses that there is a moderating effect of the two of the three job demands on the relationship between autonomy and burnout. Feedback does not fit the model. Results surrounding the relationship between feedback and burnout moderated by job demands is not supported in any of the analyses. Unlike the other two job resources, feedback seems to have a positive relationship with burnout. This suggests that feedback may be negative.

To test hypothesis 2 that burnout is positively related to turnover intention, I looked at the correlation between burnout and turnover intentions ($r = .66$ ($p < .01$)) (see Table 2). To support the causal relationship between burnout and turnover intentions, three conditions to establish causation. The first condition is temporal precedence; that cause precedes effect. In this case, burnout preceded turnover intentions by six weeks. The second condition is that cause is related to effect. A correlation of $r = .66$ ($p < .01$) establishes the relationship. The third condition is ruling out alternative explanations. In this case, big effects can help to rule out alternative explanations and I would consider $r = .66$ ($p < .01$) a large effect. An additional fourth condition is the understanding of how one causes the other. Burnout has been found to be an antecedent to turnover intentions (Austin, Weatherly, & Gravina, 2005; DeRiso & Ludwig, 2012). It doesn't make sense to say that turnover intentions cause burnout because turnover intentions have been found to be the final step before actual turnover (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). This suggests that as employees experience more burnout, their desire to leave the organization increases, thus hypothesis 2 was supported.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to replicate the research on the job demands resources model (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005) on burnout and turnover intention to the young adult seasonal population. The main hypotheses from the JD-R model is that job demands are positively related to burnout and that job resources would moderate or buffer the impact of job demands on burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). Testing the whole model from job demands and job resources to burnout to turnover intention has rarely been studied.

Similar to previous research, this research also found a relationship between burnout and turnover intentions (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Kim, & Stoner, 2008). This investigation found that young seasonal workers that experience higher burnout have an increased likelihood of having higher turnover intentions (Kim, & Stoner, 2008). Findings from this research did not replicate the findings from the JD-R model research based on the fulltime adult working population. That research consistently shows that job demands is linked to burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, De Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001). In other investigations, it has been found that job resources on job demands also demonstrates support for this hypothesis (Bakker, Demerouti, Euwema, 2005). In other investigations, it has been found that job demands predicts burnout, but this relationship is buffered by the presence of job resources (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, (2005). Previous research found in many cases that high job demands did not lead to high burnout if employees received feedback, experienced autonomy, and felt supported by their supervisors. The research conducted in this study did not support all findings from previous research. Instead, results from this research consistently demonstrated that the job resources of autonomy and supervisor support had a negative

main effect on burnout and many of the interactions of these job resources with job demands were also significant. In looking at the data from a different perspective, data suggests that a better interpretation of the results would be to consider job resources as the main independent variable and job demands as the moderator. Data are suggesting that as these young workers receive fewer resources and more demands, burnout increased.

In this population, although there is no research yet, young seasonal workers may not have labeled such things as standing outside in the hot sun, standing for long periods of time, regularly dealing with loud noises, and operating machinery as job stressors.

In this study, as the job resources of supervisor support and job autonomy increased, burnout decreased. In terms of supervisor support and autonomy, young seasonal employees may feel comfortable knowing that their supervisor is concerned about their welfare but is willing to let them try maneuvering the demanding aspects of their jobs (such as hazardous conditions, work pressure, and physically demanding conditions) on their own. This would give them a sense of control but at the same time know that they had someone to turn to if needed.

In addition, the influence of feedback on burnout is worthy of discussion in its own right as it was opposite of what was expected. Feedback had a positive main effect on burnout, that is more feedback was associated with more burnout. Although this could not be determined in this research, this relationship leads to the question of what kind of feedback were these young seasonal workers receiving? Although more research needs to be conducted to determine the answer, perhaps the feedback they were receiving was only negative or they might only be receiving feedback when doing something wrong.

Previous research suggests that feedback may be viewed more negatively if the feedback is only corrective (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).

Limitations

A first limitation was that the sample was only collected from seasonal workers in the amusement industry in a single state in the United States of America and therefore the results might not generalize to seasonal workers in other states or industries. However, the seasonal business model is similar across industries, therefore the results likely generalize to seasonal organizations in different industries. A second limitation is that due to the non-replication of study findings, research on larger numbers of young seasonal workers needs to be conducted before making any conclusions on these results. A third limitation is that all investigations of work conditions always consider job demand components equally as done in this study as well. Future research might consider looking deeper into different types of job demands and the weight each demand has on employees in particular jobs.

Future Directions

As stated above, we need to do this in larger numbers and different parts of the country to see if this holds to see if this reinterpretation of job resources and job demands replicates in this population. I want to do more research to understand the relationship between feedback and turnover intention. As suggested by Kluger and DeNisi (1996), it is possible that feedback received could be a stressor if it is only negative/corrective feedback. More research is needed to understand if this is what is happening with these young seasonal employees. Therefore, the next step in this research will be to conduct a positive-feedback intervention in one of the organizations in this investigation. In this

investigation, feedback was not found to be a resource to alleviate demanding aspects of the position. As it was positively related to the demands measured, one can argue that feedback in this population is more of an additional stressor than a resource to alleviate stress. Because of this I have designed a positive-feedback intervention that will be implemented this summer. This intervention consists of training managers to recognize good employee behavior using a behavioral checklist of behaviors that warrant positive feedback in real time (such as handling a difficult customer in a professional manner). Turnover and exit interview data were collected before implementing this intervention. This intervention will be considered a success if the turnover rate decreases and the reason for leaving the organization changes from issues with feedback to other issues that the organization cannot correct (such as employees moving out of state).

Second, research should examine the relationship between work conditions and job attitudes using a longitudinal design where participants are administered the same measures in the beginning of the season and at the end to understand the change in job demands and resources over time and how those changes influence burnout and turnover intentions. This could explain how the change in job demands and resources influences job attitudes from the beginning to end of a job with a fixed lifespan (one season at a time).

Third, research should examine the same constructs by somewhat replicating this design with a different industry with a different time of operation (such as the Christmas season in retail workers) to establish examine the generalizability of these findings in other seasonal industries.

Practical Implications

These results suggest that it's worthy to consider young seasonal workers as a population of interest to industrial & organizational psychologists that may not mirror those of fulltime workers.

Jobs in the amusement industry may be inherently high on job demands which isn't something to worry about. However, an area of concern is that managers may need to learn how to support these employees while also allowing them autonomy in their jobs. Additionally, merely increasing some resources may not always coincide with a decrease in symptoms of burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). It is necessary to target particular resources that are lacking in an organization and make adjustments as is needed.

The point to take away from this investigation is that organizations should try to provide their employees adequate resources. However, this does not mean that enhancing current resources should be the only concern. An organization would be best to design the job demands in a way that employees can fulfill them without damaging their health. If in some cases it is not possible to lessen or enhance specific demands, the task of the practitioner or the organization is to find the proper job resource that can (effectively) buffer the effect of the specific job demand.

Conclusion

The results of this investigation provide an interesting view of the JD-R model and turnover intentions in seasonal employees. In the young seasonal employee population, burnout appears to be influenced by job resources, suggesting that the original JD-R model is not an appropriate model of its antecedents. Job demands don't seem to have a direct influence on burnout as is suggested in previous research regarding

the JD-R model. And consistent with burnout-turnover research, burnout was found to be positively related to turnover intentions.

In short, this investigation has led to a number of interesting and unexpected findings about the JD-R model and young seasonal workers. The next step is to test for these same patterns in other populations of seasonal employees as well as fulltime employees to see if these results generalize. Confirmation of these results would give researchers a better understanding of the flexibility and fluidity of the model and may inform practitioners that interventions to improve resources may be more fruitful than interventions to reduce demands.

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