

Manager Autonomy Support as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Subjective Wellbeing

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## Abstract

Job insecurity is an inescapable workplace experience in the United States that reduces wellbeing and health (e.g., Burgard et al., 2009; De Witte et al., 2016; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Hellgren et al., 1999; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002) and organizational commitment behaviors (e.g., Cheng & Chan, 2008; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Shoss, 2017). Job insecurity correlates to job control (e.g., Brockner et al., 2004; Karasek, 1979; Schreurs et al., 2010) and employees who experienced restricted autonomy, one application of a lack of job control, demonstrated lower health and work performance (Fallman et al., 2019). Conversely, employees who experienced job control were less negatively influenced by job insecurity (e.g., Schreurs et al., 2010) and reported increased wellbeing (Lee & Ravichandran, 2019). Rooney et al. (2009) observed that managers influenced employees' perceptions of job control. Manager autonomy support, which is a managerial style that allows employees to make decisions about their work, determine their work tasks and goals, and provide input on work matters, is one way managers can enable job control.

A quantitative survey methodology was employed to understand the relationships between manager autonomy support, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing and between work climate, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing. The survey methodology allowed for consistent data collection of the following: perception of manager autonomy support received via participative decision making and autonomy providing behaviors, positive affect and life satisfaction experienced (subjective wellbeing), the presence of job insecurity and details about work climate experienced by participants. The sample consisted of employees in the United States within a large global high tech/manufacturing organization.

In addition to correlational results between the study's variables, the findings identified that manager autonomy support was a predictor of positive affect and job insecurity was a predictor of subjective wellbeing. Limitations, study contributions, and implications for future research and practice are provided.

*Keywords:* psychological needs, autonomy, wellbeing, job insecurity, manager autonomy support, work climate

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Manager autonomy support is a leadership approach that managers and supervisors can enact to provide more autonomy and job control to the people they lead. Employees demonstrate positive work behaviors (Slemp et al., 2018) and report higher wellbeing when their psychological need for autonomy is met (Gillet et al., 2012; Molix & Nichols, 2013; Van den Broeck et al., 2010). One way that psychological needs can be met is through enabling job control, encouraging job autonomy, and providing manager autonomy support, all of which enhance employee wellbeing (Yong et al., 2015). Job demands, in consideration with the number of job-related resources, is another work-related factor that impacts employee wellbeing, since demands without resources increase strain because control is reduced (Karasek, 1979).

Job insecurity is a pervasive quality of working life in the United States that frustrates the need for autonomy, and thus reduces employee wellbeing (Vander Elst et al., 2012). Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman, and Mohr (2021) added that organizations, as well as employees, experience negative effects when employees feel insecure about their job. Considering the previously mentioned constructs, psychological needs, manager autonomy support, wellbeing, job demands, and job insecurity, this study examined whether manager autonomy support moderates job insecurity and wellbeing. More simply stated, does receiving manager autonomy support protect an employee's subjective wellbeing when they feel insecure in their job? Relatedly, the secondary research question included in this study is whether work climate, defined as the manager support provided through actions that reflect care, empathy and trust, moderates job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. This study has important implications for Human Resource Development (HRD) practitioners and researchers because according to Ghosh et al. (2014), leadership research is an emerging theme and since manager autonomy support is a leadership

style that has the potential for providing a positive impact on an organization's employees (De Witte et al., 2016), it is worthwhile to learn more about the style.

## **Background**

This study's purpose was to explore additional aspects of the relationships among the following constructs: psychological needs, wellbeing, job insecurity, job control, and job demands. Since job insecurity is a dominant feature of working life that influences wellbeing and organizational citizenship behaviors, understanding the relationship between these constructs and potential moderators could provide new insight for the study and practice of management and HRD.

### ***Psychological Needs and Wellbeing***

The research on psychological needs has confirmed that psychological needs are an innate set of prerequisites for intrinsic motivation and if these needs are satisfied, an improvement in wellbeing can occur. Self-determination theory (SDT), a key element in the theoretical framework for this study, attests that psychological needs must be met for people to feel intrinsically motivated, and that motivation is the driving force behind all human behaviors (Shin et al., 2019; Van den Broeck et al., 2010). According to Deci and Ryan (2000), autonomy is the most important of the three psychological needs. Deci and Ryan stated that individuals have an innate need to have choice in their lives and to oversee their actions and decisions. Frustration can occur without choice and oversight:

Low levels of job autonomy and participation in decision making might add to frustration of the need for autonomy: employees with low levels of job autonomy and participation in decision making may, for example, have few possibilities to make their own decisions or express their voice. (Vander Elst, et al., 2012, p. 254)

SDT has been used to explain that a person's functioning is directly influenced by the work environment and whether psychological needs are met or frustrated (Deci & Ryan).

The links between psychological needs and wellbeing is a topic that has gained a significant amount of attention in the last several years, not only by academia but also by governments, non-profits, for-profit organizations, and individuals (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Gallup Sharecare Well-Being Index, 2017; New Economics Foundation, 2016; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (n.d.-a); Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). There is a wide-spread desire to define, understand, measure, and increase wellbeing. Many definitions of wellbeing exist, along with a variety of approaches to measure diverse aspects of wellbeing. Wellbeing initiatives have been implemented within many organizations over the last several years, often managed by the employee benefits team, but at times led by HRD as a tool to create change and organizational growth. This connection was articulated in this study's review of the literature and will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Two.

### ***Wellbeing and Job Control***

One of the core human psychological needs is autonomy, and if not met, for example during job insecurity, may relate to lower than ideal psychological health and wellbeing (Vander Elst et al., 2012). Wellbeing and met psychological needs, along with mental and physical health, can be diminished when autonomy and control decrease (e.g., Fallman et al., 2019; Gardner, 2020; Kath et al., 2012; Rooney et al., 2009; Yong et al., 2015). Van Doninck et al. (2023) recently uncovered a negative correlation between perceived job autonomy and stress related to COVID-19 safety measures. This indicated that for employees who had more perceived job autonomy, it was likely that they felt less work stress related to COVID-19 safety measures

instituted at work. Conversely, when autonomy rises, one of the often-reported benefits is increased wellbeing (e.g., Slemp et al., 2018). The correlation between autonomy and wellbeing has the potential to significantly impact individuals and organizations since there are many benefits to high wellbeing, such as increased job performance, reduced stress, increased job satisfaction, increased psychological need satisfaction, and overall better health outcomes (e.g., Fallman et al., 2019; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Slemp et al.).

Wellbeing can increase or decrease because of workplace factors which impact how much job control an employee will experience. Pfeffer (2018) wrote that workplaces are important environments for employees as it pertains to health and wellbeing. Workplace factors include organization culture, the presence of manager autonomy support, and national culture.

Sometimes organizational cultures are labeled as toxic and according to Pfeffer (2018), create work/life balance issues because of a requirement for long hours, low employee support, high job demands, a lack of autonomy and control, perceptions of unfair decision making, and high job insecurity. These elements of toxic organizational cultures can cause stress and create specific health problems (Pfeffer). Being unemployed, whether through a layoff or another means, has also been reported as leading to lower wellbeing (Lucas et al., 2004; Pfeffer).

Manager autonomy support is often perceived as a positive managerial behavior, but Stiglbauer and Kovacs (2018) wanted to understand if too much autonomy could decrease employee wellbeing. They conducted two studies and observed partial evidence that a negative impact on wellbeing may have resulted from too much autonomy, especially when the amount of autonomy did not match the individual characteristics of the employee receiving the high autonomy (Stiglbauer & Kovacs). This study points to the importance of understanding

employee desires for autonomy and managers responding accordingly with their leadership approach.

Finally, some studies have identified that national culture can impact the perception of stress. Kim et al. (2020) found that stress levels depended on the level of job control for South Korean employees, but not employees from the United States “due to the rigid, hierarchical, and collectivistic culture in South Korea” (16).

### ***Job Insecurity, Job Control, Job Demands, and Wellbeing***

Employee layoffs create job insecurity and reduce employee control and autonomy not only for employees directly impacted, but also for employees who fear they may lose their job in the future. If an organization reduces headcount, it is a legitimate concern that more jobs may need to be removed in the future. The inverted-U theory, also known as the Yerkes-Dodson Law, and written about in Brockner et al. (1992), has been used to understand the impact of reduced control because it explains one view of the relationship between performance and pressure; when pressure is either low or high, performance drops, but when pressure is moderate, performance increases. Job insecurity may create low or high pressure, but in both situations, it is the lack of control and autonomy that reduces job-related effort and motivation. Job insecurity can also be understood through the lenses of appraisal theory and the psychological contract theories.

Appraisal theory articulates that individuals subjectively assess situations and events in their lives, resulting in specific emotions and reactions (Scherer, 1999). Vander Elst et al. (2016) extended appraisal theory to consider that job insecurity is viewed as threatening and stressful because features of an employee’s work may be removed. In this situation, the employee may have insufficient personal resources to handle the change since job insecurity is synonymous with unpredictability and uncontrollability.

Psychological contract theory is attributed to Rousseau (1989) and is defined as the employee's understanding of what their obligations are concerning the organization, and the organization's duties to the employees. The psychological contract involves the perception of reciprocity on behalf of the employee (Rousseau). The employer could be expected to reduce insecurity through establishing job expectations, clarifying desired behaviors, and enabling job control. In turn, the employee is expected to demonstrate higher job involvement, performance, and satisfaction (Cheng & Chan, 2008). If job insecurity is experienced, the perception may be that the psychological contract has been compromised (Rousseau). Vander Elst, Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, and De Witte (2014) stated that a perceived violation of the psychological contract and thus, the organization's obligations to an employee, may decrease employee loyalty, which occurs as the employee attempts to preserve the employer/employee balance that is theorized as a core stabilizing feature in the psychological contract theory.

The Job Demand-Control Model, a work stress theory developed by Karasek in 1979, may provide insight into the correlation between job control and job-related stress and strain. The Job Demand-Control Model would suggest that as job demands (e.g., role ambiguity and heavy workload) increase, job strain (e.g., effort, difficulty, pressure, and psychological stressors) is likely to increase. Also, as job control increases, job strain is likely to decrease because job control is a buffer between job demands and the resulting job strain (Karasek, 1979). An example of a job demand is job insecurity because job insecurity presents uncertainties and ambiguity that accompanies the potential employment loss or job responsibility changes.

The Job Demand-Control Model has also defined that poorer health and wellbeing are affiliated with job insecurity because of the perceived lack of control that is associated with job insecurity (De Witte et al., 2016). Van der Doef and Maes (1999) stated that the Job-Demand-

Control Model theorizes that employees with high demands with low job control experience the lowest wellbeing. In Van der Doef and Maes' narrative review of 63 studies published between 1979 and 1997, they found that job control must be directly related to the specific demands of the job for wellbeing to be positively impacted. Karasek and Theorell (1990) noted that individuals can handle work stressors, such as those created by job insecurity, by using skills that enable autonomy and control in their job. The Job Demand-Control Model highlights that increased control creates less job strain, and managers who provide manager autonomy support can enable job control, thus decreasing strain.

### **Definitions**

The following section is intended to provide clear definitions of the key constructs included in this research study: job demands, job insecurity, manager autonomy support, psychological needs, subjective wellbeing, and work climate.

#### ***Job Demands***

Using the lens of the Job Demand-Control Model, job demands are defined as the demands on one's workload and are psychological stressors in the work environment which are affiliated with accomplishing the work (Karasek, 1979). Karasek defined stressors, or job demands, as follows: working fast, working hard, having an excessive amount of work, not having enough time to complete the job, and experiencing conflicting demands. When job demands exceed the level of job control or decision-making latitude, strain is likely to result, according to the Job Demand-Control Model.

#### ***Job Insecurity***

Job insecurity is an employee reaction to workplace events such as restructuring, employee layoffs and plant closures, which communicate to employees that employment is not

secure and job features are not permanent (Hellgren & Sverke, 2003). Job insecurity has been recognized as a common stressor in the workplace and employees have no choice but to manage it (Allvin et al., 2011; Hellgren & Sverke). Work environments change when industries or organizations face difficult economic times, leading to layoffs, changing job responsibilities, restructuring of teams, or the potential threat of these actions. Pfeffer (2018) noted that these actions can lead to “a sense of insecurity and instability in the employment relationship” (p. 68). Job insecurity is a reaction to the work environment; a work environment that is downsizing, reorganizing, or laying off employees, creating a negative impact for employees and the organizations themselves. One possible explanatory theory derives from the Job Control-Demand Model which explains the phenomenon that increased demands, alongside decreased control, increases stress and strain (Karasek, 1979). The threat of a job loss can create additional job demands, including psychological demands, as one fears they may lose their job, but also additional, tangible workload left behind by the employees who were laid off or downsized. Employees in this position also do not tend to feel in control of the fate of their job (e.g., Glavin, 2013; Keim et al., 2014; Schreurs et al., 2010).

### ***Manager Autonomy Support***

Manager Autonomy Support is a style of management demonstrated when managers acknowledge their employees’ perspectives, ask for input, encourage self-starting, allow for employee discretion on what to do and how to do it, communicate to inform not control, and avoid rewards for specific behavior (Baard et al., 2004; Hardré & Reeve, 2009; Hocine et al., 2014; Pfeffer, 2018; Su & Reeve, 2011). Baard et al. (2004) specifically noted that autonomy support refers to the interpersonal environment created by the manager that exists when executing supervisory tasks such as goal setting, decision making, and work planning with direct

reports. This leadership approach contrasts with managers making decisions for their employees and directing how their work tasks get accomplished. Güntert (2015), for example, stated that manager autonomy support as a managerial style meets psychological needs, increasing wellbeing, performance, and motivation. Stiglbauer and Kovacs (2018) learned that employees are rarely given high levels of autonomy and self-reported autonomy is not high enough, according to study participant preferences.

### ***Psychological Needs***

The innate set of psychological needs important for individuals that include autonomy (sense of control over one's life), competence (sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem, and a sense that an individual can meaningfully impact their environment), and relatedness (feeling close to others and knowing that others care about you). These psychological needs are derived from SDT, which is a leading, empirically based psychological theory of motivation which states that humans are intrinsically motivated when their innate psychological needs are met (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

### ***Subjective Wellbeing***

Organizations and researchers measure and define wellbeing differently, choosing to focus on inequality, education, life satisfaction, or financial health. Some researchers study psychological wellbeing, which consists of both subjective wellbeing (sometimes referred to as happiness or hedonic wellbeing according to Rojas and Veenhoven (2013)) and eudemonic wellbeing, which refers to self-realization and meaning and assesses the level to which someone is fully functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Others study only subjective or eudemonic wellbeing, while another set of researchers' label wellbeing as workplace or employee wellbeing.

This study focused on subjective wellbeing, which includes happiness, attaining pleasure, and avoiding pain. Subjective wellbeing relates to the degree positive emotions and happy feelings are experienced and is considered both a momentary state, such as mood, and a fairly stable trait, such as life satisfaction (Benjamin et al., 2012; Cheung & Lucas, 2014; Diener, 1984; 2000; 2006; Diener & Chan, 2011; Eid & Diener, 2004; Fava & Ruini, 2003; Johnson et al., 2018; Keyes & Haidt, 2003; Molix & Nichols, 2013; Ryan et al., 2008; Salsman et al., 2014). Diener (1984) stated that subjective wellbeing has three core elements: 1) it is focused on the individual's personal experience and perspective, 2) it reflects positive emotions; not just the absence of negative emotions, and 3) it reflects a cohesive assessment of one's life. Subjective wellbeing can reflect both cognitive and affective responses to life satisfaction; a cognitive reaction would be reflecting on or judging one's life or work satisfaction and an affective reaction occurs in the form of feelings, such as feeling excitement, joy, contentment, sadness, and loneliness (Cheung & Lucas, 2014; Diener, 2006; Johnson et al.; Pressman & Cohen, 2005). Salsman et al. added that the cognitive evaluation of life satisfaction is influenced strongly by expectations an individual has for their life. As stated, this study's research variable is subjective wellbeing but since researchers use many definitions and names for wellbeing, as noted here, the review of literature used the general term, wellbeing.

### ***Work Climate***

Work climate is a set of managerial behaviors that measures manager autonomy support, as well as general supportive behaviors, such as listening, caring, and trusting (Baard et al., 2004). Generally, the literature supports that leadership behaviors, especially those exhibited by a direct manager, influence wellbeing (Inceoglu et al., 2018) and motivation (Rigby & Ryan, 2018) and the behaviors referred to as work climate describe many of these leadership behaviors.

For example, Charoensukmongkol et al., (2016), Cole et al. (2006) and Tummers et al., (2018) found that managers have a critical role in decreasing the psychological impact on employees and sustaining morale during time of crisis. Phungsoonthorn and Charoensukmongkol (2019) reported that managers are a key source of support because they can provide encouragement, motivation, and protection. Managers were often able to provide information that can ease employees' concerns about job uncertainties, which occur during times of job insecurity (Skiba & Wildman, 2019).

### **Research Purpose and Questions**

This research study incorporated the constructs of autonomy, wellbeing, job insecurity, manager autonomy support, and work climate as they relate to organizational and individual outcomes. More specifically, these are considered in the examination of the following: 1) there are continued high levels of reported job insecurity due to organizational decisions, 2) a sense of control or autonomy is critical for satisfying psychological needs and wellbeing and mitigating the impact of job insecurity and, 3) the benefits of wellbeing are important for both organizations and employees. This study conducted an examination into manager autonomy support as an enabler of subjective wellbeing because it satisfies the psychological need of autonomy and provides control over job tasks and decisions for the employee. This study also investigated the relationship between manager autonomy support and work climate, a related construct, with subjective wellbeing and job insecurity. Theoretical support for this study stems from SDT, inverted-U theory, Job Demand-Control Model, appraisal theory, and psychological contract theory.

The primary research question for this study was: Does manager autonomy support moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing? This question was

further explored with the corresponding hypotheses, informed by the theoretical framework that supports the phenomenon under investigation.

Research Question 1: Does manager autonomy support moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing?

- Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 3: Manager autonomy support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.

The secondary research question was: Does work climate moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing? This question was explored through three hypotheses informed by the theoretical framework that supports this investigation.

Research Question 2: Does work climate moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing?

- Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and work climate.
- Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between work climate and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 6: Work climate will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study, completed in 2022, contributed an updated perspective on the relationship between wellbeing, autonomy, and job insecurity since it was conducted in a post-COVID-19

global pandemic environment. The review of literature in this dissertation shared examples of COVID-19 related job insecurity (e.g., Ahmed, 2020; Nemteanu & Dabija, 2023) and COVID-19 related wellbeing impact (Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman, & Hack-Polay, 2021; Mahmoud, Reisel, Hack-Polay, & Fuxman, 2021; Van Doninck et al., 2023). Understanding the unemployment rate provides context about how the timing of this study provided new insight. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020) reported an unemployment rate of 8.1% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, which likely reflected a high rate of job insecurity, accompanied by negative effects. Prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the literature substantiated the prevalence of organizational changes that lead to job insecurity, including Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's (2010) review of theory and research on job insecurity. The Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt article cites their 1977 research regarding personal and organizational consequences of job insecurity, including mental health problems, family conflict, turnover, reduced productivity, and management resistance. Since that time, researchers have observed similar outcomes, stating that job insecurity has detrimental effects (e.g., Davy et al., 1991; Smith, 2013). This study's findings contributed new knowledge related to job insecurity post-COVID-19, and its relationship to subjective wellbeing, work climate, and one aspect of autonomy, manager autonomy support.

Secondly, this study provides an opportunity to consider new perspectives on workplace factors that impact wellbeing, in part but not solely limited to the global pandemic, and the relationship between wellbeing and autonomy. It is accepted from existing literature that satisfied psychological needs enable higher levels of intrinsic motivation and wellbeing, and furthermore, that job insecurity reduces employee control, thus frustrating psychological needs and reducing subjective wellbeing and intrinsic motivation. The existing literature has also

demonstrated that manager autonomy support provides a sense of autonomy, or job control, which increased wellbeing (Pfeffer, 2018). The unexplored relationship that this study investigated is whether job control and autonomy can be delivered through the mechanism of manager autonomy support to moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. Thus, this study contributed to what is known about the relationship between manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing.

In addition to enhanced knowledge, an HRD practitioner application opportunity exists with this research study. Practitioners who introduce or focus on manager autonomy support as a style of managing work that could also reduce stress and enhance wellbeing, provide a valuable benefit to employees and organizations. HRD practitioners are likely the conduit for sharing new knowledge regarding managerial practices within organizations because they often are tasked to deliver organizational development interventions. For example, HRD programs can support organizational culture changes that encourage behaviors related to provision of manager autonomy support, through initiatives such as measuring effectiveness through engagement surveys and subsequent action planning, leadership development programs, top talent selection criteria, job design, performance management processes, promotion decisions, and upward feedback practices.

This study also contributes to knowledge because it addressed workplace issues, which is a timelessly important topic since more than 157 million people comprised the United States workforce in 2019 (Desilver, 2019). The 2020 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report said that of the nation's 82.6 million families, 81.1% had at least one employed member in 2019. Roser (2013) reported that work hours in most countries, including the United States, have increased since 2009. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021) reported that working hours in 2019 for part-

and full-time employees averaged eight hours per weekday. The highest number of hours reported was an average of 8.5 per weekday by full-time workers, followed by 8.43 hours per weekday for multiple job holders and high school graduates. Furthermore, employees reported weekend work too, with an average of 5.42 hours worked per weekend day (The Bureau of Labor Statistics). The impact of job insecurity as an important societal issue and the amount of autonomy experienced in the workplace is exacerbated by the number of people who work, and the hours spent working. Thus, all workplaces can create a space where employees' psychological needs can be met through autonomy. Finally, since many published studies do not report the number of people experiencing high wellbeing, high manager autonomy support, high work climate, or low job insecurity, this study contributed knowledge about one sample's perspective on these constructs.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I provided an overview of the study constructs and identified two primary research questions and corresponding hypotheses. I introduced and defined the relevant constructs: job demands, job insecurity, manager autonomy support, psychological needs, subjective wellbeing, and work climate. To examine the relationships among these constructs, I introduced relevant theories of appraisal theory, psychological contract theory, SDT, Job Demand-Control Model, and inverted-U theory. In the subsequent chapter, I further develop the framework drawn from these theories to propose an approach to understand the relationships of the constructs in this study. Since satisfied psychological needs support wellbeing through the mechanism of control or autonomy, it is possible that managers who provide autonomy in the workplace can increase the life-impacting workplace factor of subjective wellbeing.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter includes a review of the literature to situate this study to examine employee perceptions of lack of control and autonomy, job insecurity and wellbeing as it relates to manager autonomy support and work climate. I first examine the literature to explore how satisfying psychological needs leads to not only intrinsic motivation, but also to wellbeing. The somewhat mixed findings on psychological needs satisfaction and wellbeing relationship is then reviewed. A key idea from this body of literature is that one of the psychological needs, autonomy, is a known contributor to wellbeing and the review of literature shares facets of autonomy, including manager autonomy support, job control and locus of control. Next, two common factors in the United States workplace, increasing work hours and job insecurity, are explored, with a focus on studies that have connected job insecurity, in particular, to reduced wellbeing. Job insecurity reduces control, which in turn reduces wellbeing and certain positive work behaviors such as retention and job satisfaction. Lastly, further building on the established relationship between manager autonomy support and wellbeing, literature is reviewed to consider the potential moderating role of manager autonomy support between wellbeing and job insecurity.

### **Psychological Needs, Motivation, and Manager Autonomy Support**

Meeting psychological needs has been recognized as a significant predictor of a person's wellbeing and optimal functioning (Gillet et al., 2012; Molix & Nichols, 2013; Rothmann, 2013; Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Importantly, Vander Elst et al. (2012) noted that SDT claimed that satisfied needs are critical for psychological health; "frustration of the psychological needs is expected to lead to energy depletion, malfunctioning and sickness, and might develop under chaotic, controlling or other hard circumstances" (p. 254). A lack of job control could be defined

as a hard circumstance. There is a correlation between met psychological needs and feeling satisfied and experiencing positive emotions, which correlates with the definition of subjective wellbeing.

This positive relationship between met psychological needs and positive emotions appears to be a universal finding independent of major cultural differences. Deci and Ryan (2000) asserted that, “according to SDT, the three basic psychological needs are universal and thus must be satisfied in all cultures to be optimally healthy” (p. 246). Slemp et al. (2018) noticed through a meta-analysis that individualistic and collectivist cultures did not differ in terms of the impact of providing manager autonomy support on intrinsic motivation and psychological need satisfaction. Neither collectivist or individualistic cultures performed as a moderator of general wellbeing, distress, or autonomous motivation. Furthermore, Molix and Nichols (2013) wrote that there is a cross-cultural and universal innate desire to satisfy psychological needs to drive intrinsic motivation and experience close relationships, self-efficacy, and decision-making.

In the workplace, having autonomy, job control, or manager autonomy support satisfies the need for autonomy, one of the three psychological needs, and correlates to wellbeing. Liu et al.’s (2020) supported the finding that employees who received autonomy support also experienced satisfied psychological needs. Autonomy, in general, means having the perspective that one is behaving due to personal choice and not being controlled by others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the work environment, autonomy can result in motivation to execute the job and secondly, may occur within the climate established by the immediate manager (Gagné, 2005). A manager’s role is to provide work direction and ensure the work gets done so this person has an influence over the overall work climate and employee experience.

Job control was defined by Karasek (1979) as autonomy to make decisions or have discretion in one's job. Research has shown that overall, when autonomy increases, job stress decreases, job satisfaction increases, physical and mental health increase, and wellbeing increases (Fallman et al., 2019; Gardner, 2020; Kath et al., 2012; Morgeson et al., 2005; Rooney et al., 2009; Slemp et al., 2018; Yong et al., 2015). Discovering and reinforcing ways to increase autonomy and job control in the workplace is important due to the significant impact autonomy and job control have on people's lives.

Inceoglu et al. (2018) completed a review of the literature regarding leadership behavior and employee wellbeing and observed a consistent theme: leaders have the power to shape the work environment, which impacts many aspects of wellbeing, including access to resources such as autonomy. In general,

Managers' behaviors may influence employees' perceptions of control over aspects of their job or work environment. They can reward employees who show initiative on the job or propose new ideas, or they can engage in a directive style of "over the shoulder" supervision that can undermine employees' sense of job autonomy (Rooney et al., 2009, p. 414).

Chiang et al. (2016) noted that "supervisors can be more or less autonomy supportive in their managerial style" (p. 1223), indicating the ability to control how much autonomy support is provided to direct reports.

A phenomenon related to autonomy in general is called manager autonomy support. This is defined as a collection of leadership behaviors, including enabling decision-making, that meet an employee's needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which in turn produces intrinsic motivation, wellbeing, and performance (Güntert, 2015; Lee & Ravichandran, 2019;

Oostlander et al., 2014; Slemp et al., 2018). Research has connected manager autonomy support directly to wellbeing outcomes, while other research has identified a correlation between manager autonomy support and employee psychological need satisfaction, which in turn supports wellbeing. For example, Ryan et al. (2008) noted that through satisfying the basic psychological needs, high reported wellbeing over the short and long-term would be reported. Life satisfaction, a marker of wellbeing, is related to the satisfaction experienced on the job and when managers provide autonomy, employees experience greater job satisfaction (Deci, 2017; Güntert; Slemp et al.).

A theoretical explanation for the relationship between satisfaction and wellbeing has been provided by SDT which articulates that an individual's functioning is impacted through their work environment. In addition to the impact of the work environment, all the elements that comprise it, including whether managers provide manager autonomy support, have the potential to frustrate or satisfy psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For example, Jungert et al. (2021) found that the presence of autonomy support at work increased intrinsic motivation. Further, these same authors reported that manager autonomy support, as compared to co-worker autonomy support, created high intrinsic motivation in a conventional occupational context (e.g., work environments that included hierarchical relationships) and co-worker autonomy support was more effective in fostering intrinsic motivation in a social occupational context (e.g., work environments that were dominated mostly by peer or non-hierarchical communication). This finding suggested that when an employee has their psychological needs met at work, they feel more responsible for work outcomes and will likely demonstrate increased motivation, thus behaving in ways that satisfy their psychological needs in the future.

Humans are motivated to act to satisfy innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000). The outcome of an employee's needs being met is higher quality performance and goal persistence (Ryan et al., 2006). Managers, appreciating the higher performance, may be reinforced to provide additional autonomy and job control in the future. It is a repeatable cycle, reinforced through both employee and manager actions and stimulated by satisfied psychological needs.

Providing manager autonomy support is a research-confirmed managerial behavior. For example, Yong et al. (2015) found that while managers can be trained to demonstrate manager autonomy support, "these skills can also be diluted by organizational factors such as pressures and managerial behavior" (p. 1). If the organization's culture does not support managers in providing autonomy support, or even reinforces a leadership style that opposes autonomy support, such as an authoritarian, command and control style, managers are likely to follow the cultural norms and not provide autonomy support, to the detriment of the employee's wellbeing and psychological needs. Fallman et al. (2019) suggested that additional research is needed to explore organizations' top management approach to their own leadership behavior.

### **Manager Autonomy Support Correlates with Organizational Benefits**

In addition to wellbeing outcomes, when manager autonomy support is provided, job satisfaction and work engagement result from employee behaviors such as job performance, work motivation, responsibility-taking, proactiveness, work commitment; ultimately resulting in organizational outcomes such as increased revenue and market performance (Deci et al., 2017; Gallup Sharecare Well-being Index, 2017; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). A specific example of increased job performance due to manager autonomy support was provided by Slemp et al.'s (2018) meta-analysis which revealed a moderate connection between manager autonomy support

and job performance and a stronger correlation between self-reported performance and manager autonomy support. Wickramasinghe and Wickramasinghe (2017) discovered, in their study of employees and their direct managers in a Sri Lanka shopfloor, that manager autonomy support and satisfied psychological needs lead to strong job performance and that the “contribution of autonomy in the overall need fulfillment is the highest” (p. 332) over the need for relatedness or competence, in terms of need satisfaction. Furthermore, Kanat-Maymon and Reizer (2017) discovered that when managers provided autonomy support over time, job performance climbed higher and also decelerated at a slower rate, while Baard et al. (2004) found that satisfied employee needs led to increased job performance during times of job insecurity. Recently, Mokgata et al. (2022) agreed and observed that autonomy support was correlated with performance through its affiliation with engagement and autonomy satisfaction. Relatedly, Fallman et al. (2019) reported that employees who were restricted in their autonomy to make decisions due to management control showed not only decreased health but decreased work performance. Wong et al. (2022) observed that performance can somewhat improve when accompanied by autonomy.

Slemp et al. (2018) noted a strong correlation between manager autonomy support and autonomous, but not controlled, work motivation. Autonomous work motivation is the drive behind taking independent initiative at work and feeds the psychological need for autonomy. Deci et al. (1994) reported that when autonomy support is provided, employees are inspired to take responsibility for goal achievement and behaviors at work. In a more recent study, Deci et al. (2017) concurred with earlier findings, stating that employees who believe they are permitted to conduct their work in the way they chose, within an environment of autonomy support, are more likely to say that work is appealing, rate the job as more favorable, show higher

engagement, and demonstrate proactive behaviors with their colleagues. When managers provide autonomy, employees experience greater job satisfaction (Deci, 2017; Güntert, 2015; Slemp et al., 2018). For example, school principals who perceive manager autonomy support feel more satisfied and committed to their job (Chang et al., 2015). Slemp et al. also uncovered the following correlations with manager autonomy support: a moderately positive correlation with both prosocial work behaviors and work-related engagement, a strongly positive correlation with proactive behavior, and a strongly negative correlation with turnover intentions. Gillet et al. (2015) stated that work engagement is positively impacted by providing resources such as control, participative decision making and a variety of experiences. Jungert et al. (2021) found that autonomy-supportive behaviors, from either a manager or a co-worker, versus controlling actions (for example, pressuring employees to act in a defined way), resulted in higher intrinsic motivation from employees, which could result in commitment or engagement.

Since manager autonomy support relates to improved wellbeing, met psychological needs, and work motivation and performance, increasing the number of managers providing the support is a worthwhile HRD endeavor because wellbeing is associated with numerous health, job, and personal benefits. Since manager autonomy support is an action managers can choose to take, it is significant to note that there are several benefits for both employees and the organizations that employ them, as well as all organizational stakeholders.

### **Job Insecurity Resulting from Macro-Economic Events**

Macro-economic changes in the last 40 years have greatly impacted the United States workforce, bringing forth extraordinary transformation, creating a ripple effect of organizational internal changes that impact the workforce and thus create job insecurity. Organizations internalize external environmental changes, such as globalization, competition, economic

challenges, politics, and technology transformations. To compete, organizations sometimes make decisions that negatively impact their employees, such as restructuring, downsizing, outsourcing, plant closures or offshoring (e.g., Burke & Nelson, 1998; de Jong et al., 2016; Van Hootegeem et al., 2018). Smith (2013) summarized the literature regarding why organizations make changes that result in job insecurity, and the impact:

In response to environmental pressures, organizations have implemented several cost-cutting and restructuring measures that have led to a crisis of job insecurity. Job threatening organizational change initiatives in the form of downsizings, mergers and acquisitions, plant closures, and workforce reorganizations affect millions of U.S. employees each year. (p. 27)

Pfeffer (2018) added that “layoffs and other forms of economic insecurity such as contingent, part-time, and contract work have become increasingly commonplace in contemporary labor-market arrangements” (p. 69).

Job insecurity is prevalent in today’s work environment with evidence that the phenomenon has impacted workers in increasing levels over the last 40 years. Prior to the 1970’s, many organizations tended to be paternalistic, promising life-time employment. Uchitelle (2006) gave an example of how companies benefit from committed employees when he wrote that productivity in the United States grew after World War II due in part to innovation and investments, but also because employees were committed, and job stability encouraged employee commitment. However, in the 1970’s and 1980’s, management practices started to change as organizations became more interested in shareholder investment through creating lean organizations, leading to the goal of eliminating seemingly unnecessary resources, including employees (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 2010). Uchitelle acknowledged that layoffs started as a

necessary response to global competition, which escalated over time. In the late 1990's, it had become normal to conduct employee layoffs; Uchitelle noted that there was a parallel between the ordinariness of layoffs in the 1990's to the accepted normalcy of job security as a core feature of the employment relationship for the previous 25 years. In the 1960's and 1970's, about 1% of organizations restructured whereas between just 1981 and 1987, an estimated 20 – 50% of Fortune 500 companies restructured with significant employee layoff often involved (Markides, 1990). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020), between 1960 and 2020, unemployment ranged from 3.5% (in 1969) to 9.7% (in 1982).

Fullerton and Wallace (2007) reported that the number of United States workers who believed that their jobs were insecure rose since the 1970's. Furthermore, the “American Great Recession,” occurring between December 2007 and June 2009, was the longest recession since World War II, and “...created the largest economic upheaval in the United States since the Great Depression of the 1930s” (Kalleberg & Von Wachter, 2017, p. 1). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020) reported an unemployment rate of 9.6% in 2010, three years into the “American Great Recession.” While economic declines are a recurrent phenomenon, the “American Great Recession” was notable due to not only the duration, but the depth to which it impacted the economy (Kalleberg & Von Wachter). Kalleberg and Von Wachter reported that during the “American Great Recession,” unemployment dramatically increased, and housing prices, household net worth, and stock portfolios significantly decreased. Rich (2013) added that real gross domestic product (GDP) demonstrated the largest postwar era decline, as of October 2013. While the unemployment rate steadily decreased between its “American Great Recession” high of 9.6% to 3.7% in 2019, unemployment spiked again to 8.1% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 global pandemic (Bureau of Labor Statistics). In the fourth quarter of 2020, the jobless rate was

6.7%, almost double the number it was one year earlier (Smith, et al., 2021). Furthermore, the number of people employed decreased by 8.8 million in 2020 and, at year-end, the number of people who were either temporarily laid off, had lost their jobs, and or were unemployed for 27 weeks or more, exceeded the numbers from a year earlier (Smith, et al., 2021). An example outside the United States of the impact of the global pandemic is the finding by Imran and Ahmed (2020) who stated that people employed in the Bangladesh private education sector during the COVID-19 pandemic were likely experiencing increased job insecurity. Furthermore, research on teleworking during COVID-19, conducted by Nemteanu and Dabija (2023), showed a statistically significant and positive correlation between teleworking and job insecurity for employees in Romania.

In addition to tracking restructuring and unemployment rates, understanding worker displacement is another way to understand the prevalence of job insecurity. Uchitelle (2006) wrote that the Bureau of Labor Statistics began to track worker displacement in 1984 because of continuing layoffs and “by 2004, the Bureau had counted at least 30 million full-time workers who had been permanently separated from their jobs and their paychecks against their wishes” (p. 5). This number did not reflect the impact on those that survived layoffs or other organizational decisions that impact job insecurity.

Job insecurity can decrease wellbeing and frustrate the psychological need for autonomy due to the inherent lack of job control one experiences during job insecurity. Prior to the 1977 research conducted by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt and written about by the same authors in a 2010 *International Studies of Management and Organization* article, job insecurity was understood as a unidimensional phenomenon, defined as a feeling of helplessness to be able to keep a job when it was being threatened. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (2010) presented a

multidimensional model of job insecurity which was based on a framework the authors developed in the 1980's (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). This model presented a four-dimensional framework through which to understand job insecurity: 1) desire for job continuity, 2) threat of job loss, 3) job features at risk (such as losing appealing tasks), and 4) powerlessness to impact the outcome. Three of the dimensions, desire for job continuity, threat of job loss, and powerlessness to impact the outcome could be considered quantitative job insecurity, which correlated with Hellgren et al., (1999) and Vander Elst et al. (2012) who defined quantitative job insecurity as a threat of job loss. The final dimension in Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's job insecurity model, the risk of job features, could be considered by Hellgren et al. and Vander Elst et al. as a qualitative element, which is defined as a threat to characteristics of one's job, such as career prospects and/or compensation increases. Recently, Knežević and Krstić (2019) added that job insecurity is generally defined as a subjective reaction to one's interpretation of the direct work environment.

In addition to reduced control, organizational actions that enabled job insecurity also created a new employee/employer relationship (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 2010), in which an employee feels helpless or fearful about losing their job, which may or may not result in unemployment (De Witte, 1999; Glavin & Schieman, 2014; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). This new relationship violated the psychological contract, which is used to explain the informal agreement to describe the employee provision of labor as well as behaviors helpful to the business, such as commitment and productivity, in return for security and clear job expectations from the employing organization. Bohle, et al. (2017) stated that large layoffs are likely to be viewed as a psychological contract breach or violation, signaling to employees that the organization no longer fulfils their part of the psychological contract. Removing security

changed the dynamic between an employee and their organization by introducing job insecurity, creating uncertainty for the employee, and raising questions about how committed they should be towards the organization that no longer promised job security.

Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (2010) wrote that through their research in the late 1970's, they had discovered that job insecurity created strong reactions, both psychologically and behaviorally, which could be counterproductive to work goals. Job insecurity arises from the possibility – or the threat – that one will lose their job. Theoretical support for this research is the Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) job insecurity model which said that job insecurity is highest when the perceived threat of job loss is significant and perceived control is low. Control in this situation was defined as an action that either the employee or their employer can take to offset the negative outcomes of job loss.

An alternative theoretical perspective was presented with the inverted-U theory which expands on Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's job insecurity theory and explains why performance, motivation, and effort decrease when control is low and the pressure, in this case, job insecurity, is high. Wellbeing is connected to psychological needs, specifically autonomy, which is correlated with the lack of control that an employee experiences during times of high job insecurity. Klandermans and van Vuuren (1999) stated that there was evidence that more psychological damage is done when an employee perceives a threat of a job loss than a threat of a loss of specific job features. In 2010, Klandermans et al. identified that the personal reaction to even the perceived threat of job loss can reduce factors such as absenteeism due to illness and self-rated health. Sverke and Hellgren (2002) observed that the potential of losing one's job, which creates uncertainty, could enable chronic stress that frustrates the need for control. Kalleberg (2011) added that organizational restructuring, which caused actions such as layoffs,

contributed to the spread of insecure work environments in the recent decades, resulting in individual uncertainty about employment that influences one's sense of personal control.

An additional theoretical approach is presented by Vander Elst et al. (2016) who extended appraisal theory to explain the association of job insecurity and poorer health and wellbeing. This explanation articulated that employees view job insecurity as stressful and threatening because important work functions may be lost. Employees facing insecurity view their current resources as insufficient because job insecurity conveys unpredictability and uncontrollability (De Witte, 1999). Job insecurity disables the utilization of resources, leading to poorer health and wellbeing, due to the lack of control present during times of job insecurity (Vander Elst, Richter, Sverke, Näswall, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2014; Vander Elst, Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2014). In addition to individual damage, organizations also suffer from the consequences of job insecurity. For example, Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) noticed, using the theoretical lens of appraisal theory, that employees who are feeling powerless to control the fate of their job are likely to withdraw from the organization; this could result in decreased job performance and commitment, initiated by an effort to reduce the impact of possible future job loss or current job insecurity.

One specific psychological contract theory, the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Kiazad et al., 2014), provides explanation for situations when there is a threat to resources, such as when the psychological contract has been breached. The application of COR has been used to explain work-related behaviors from employees who will work to procure, retain, defend, and nurture valuable job-related resources during events of perceived threat to the stability of their psychological contract. The extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of being employed is an example of a

valuable resource and if threatened, job strain is likely to result, reducing job engagement and productivity because of the subsequent withdrawal behaviors that accompany job strain.

Employment and its associated resources, such as financial rewards and relationships, are threatened during job insecurity. For many, employment is a key contributor to economic livelihood, or as Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (2010) said, employment is “the economic substance of modern life” (p. 9). Employees often rely on the financial rewards associated with paid work to care for their families, save for the future, and enjoy life. Since outcomes are uncertain, employees may not invest resources into their job but may attempt to conserve their resources so that in the future, fewer resources will be lost in the future. Protecting and defending existing resources takes energy. Ultimately, few resources are left, leaving the employee feeling strained, resulting in poorer health and wellbeing (De Witte et al., 2016). Unemployment, whether due to a global pandemic, or company decisions, likely provokes the feeling of job insecurity, so employees cannot assume job security is guaranteed. Sverke et al. (2006) wrote that “job insecurity is a lasting characteristic of working life” (p. 23).

### **Job Insecurity and Perceptions of Control Influence Wellbeing**

Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (2010) reported that “...most studies show that job insecurity is not simply another work attitude but a source of deep trauma and life-disruption” (p. 12). Sverke et al. (2006) noted that while reactions to economic pressures differ, they tend to share the outcome of a worried workforce who questioned whether the job itself or desirable job features will be present. According to De Witte (1999) job insecurity was observed as one of the biggest stressors at work and was equally stressful for those who lost their jobs and those that kept theirs. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt further wrote that their research from 1977 found employees working for the state of New York who survived layoffs were deeply distressed. For

this sample, job insecurity signaled economic loss and reflected a personal meaning that no matter how hard they worked, or for how long they had served the state, it was out of their control if they were going to keep their job.

Researchers have learned that by experiencing two characteristics of job insecurity, unpredictability and uncontrollability, the feeling of control is reduced (De Witte, 1999; Joelson & Wahlquist, 1987). Employees who lost a job, or perceived a threat of future job loss, both suffered the consequences of job insecurity. If employees felt like they had control, an ability to predict and control their future, they were likely to not experience as much job insecurity and the resulting decrease in health and wellbeing. Employees who experience higher locus of control are less likely to anticipate a job loss, and thus have lower job insecurity (Keim et al, 2014.).

The idea of a lack of control has repeatedly been identified in research as a key construct not to be overlooked. As the inverted-U theory explains, performance, effort, and motivation decrease if the pressure, in this case, job insecurity, gets too high. Pressure, if too extraordinary, can create a feeling of overwhelm that minimizes a feeling of being in control over one's work, resulting in less effort demonstrated. The theory also explains that when pressure is low, performance, effort, and motivation can also drop because it seems acceptable to put in minimal effort.

The lack of control that an employee experiences during times of job insecurity reduces wellbeing. The frustration of psychological needs, particularly autonomy, was observed by Vander Elst et al. (2012) to mediate, or explain, the relationship between work-related wellbeing and job insecurity. Urbanaviciute et al. (2018) studied psychological needs and turnover intentions and found, like Vander Elst et al., that job insecurity was negatively correlated with the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Furthermore, Knežević and

Krstić (2019) identified that the psychological needs of competence and autonomy, if satisfied, were a buffer to the negative impacts of job insecurity.

Internal locus of control is related to the psychological need for autonomy and is defined as the degree to which individuals view life events as determined mostly by their own behaviors, whereas external locus of control means an individual sees events as controlled by environmental factors (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control was found to be lower for employees experiencing high job insecurity, compared with employees experiencing low job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; König et al., 2010). Keim et al. (2014) corroborated these findings and stated that a higher level of job security was associated with having an internal locus of control, as well as higher amounts of role ambiguity and less role conflict.

The research has also noted a positive impact of employee job control. For example, De Witte et al. (2016) uncovered that higher mental wellbeing is somewhat correlated with the volume of autonomy provided at work. Similarly, Glavin and Schieman (2014) studied employee perceived control and its ability to be a personal resource for maintaining mental health during job insecurity. The authors observed that employees who believed they had personal control experienced better mental health during times of employment stability, but when personal control was challenged by the threat of losing a job, distress was an outcome. Schreurs et al. (2010) studied job control as it related to job security and uncovered that employees who had job control were less negatively impacted by job insecurity, as it pertained to their health. Furthermore, having job control prevented the need for recovery time from stress at work during times of job insecurity which is an additional way job control buffers against workplace challenges (Schreurs et al.). Job control directly relates to autonomy because job control is defined by Karasek (1979) as "the extent to which employees have the potential to control their

tasks and conduct throughout the working day" (p. 290). This aspect of potential to control is aligned with the SDT definition of autonomy as one of the psychological needs that if met, leads to intrinsic motivation because of having a sense of control over one's life.

Job demands relate to job control and autonomy. The Job Demand-Control Model developed by Karasek in 1979, indicated that as job demands increase, job strain (e.g., effort, difficulty, pressure, and psychological stressors) is likely to also increase. Job demands could come in the form of additional work now assigned to an individual previously done by laid off colleagues (De Witte, 2016; Kozlowski et al., 1993), which could result in increased job strain and lower wellbeing. Job quality may decrease due to the increased job demands, as reported by Glavin (2013). For example, not only do surviving employees perceive an uncertain future for themselves, but they often have additional work and elevated job expectations placed upon them, which can increase job strain while lowering wellbeing. Since job demands were thought to be correlated with the output of an organization (Karasek, 1979), there is a possibility that organizations would keep job demands high to produce shareholder and stakeholder value. Reducing costs, including employee headcount, likely creates a favorable financial situation for the organization, while reducing the wellbeing for employees. At the same time, to compete and meet customer demands, organizations may keep the pressure high through job demands, which could further reduce wellbeing.

As stated, a lack of job control accompanies job insecurity, which in turn, impacts emotions, mental health, wellbeing, and physical health. According to a meta-analysis of 57 longitudinal studies, 89% of the studies demonstrated a negative correlation between job insecurity and psychological health and wellbeing (De Witte et al., 2016). Psychological health and wellbeing included mental wellbeing, job exhaustion, strain, and mental health concerns

such as depressive symptoms. Almost 11% of the meta-analysis studies noticed no correlation between job insecurity and psychological health and wellbeing, perhaps due to meta-analysis limitations (e.g., some studies only studied males or females, and some included a narrow dimension of wellbeing, such as job satisfaction). Despite these limitations, the evidence supporting correlation between job insecurity and wellbeing was considered substantial by the authors. De Witte et al.'s meta-analysis also noted that self-reported health was described to be negatively correlated with job insecurity over time, with health concerns noted that included sleep problems, heart disease, metabolic markers, and psychosomatic complaints. Additional research has supported a negative correlation between job insecurity and wellbeing, mental health (e.g., depression and anxiety), and physical health, and a positive correlation with stress (Bentzen et al., 2020; Cheng & Chan, 2008; de Jong et al., 2016; De Witte, 1999; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995, Haar & Brougham, 2020; Hair, 2016; Hellgren et al., 1999; Morgan, 2018; Pfeffer, 2018; Shoss, 2017; Sverke et al., 2002). Recently, a study during COVID-19 found that employees who experienced more intense COVID-19 perceptions also experienced higher levels of job insecurity and psychosocial factors, such as anxiety and depression (Mahmoud, Reisel, Hack-Polay, & Fuxman, 2021). This effect was exacerbated for employees who had an external locus of control, versus employees with an internal locus of control (Mahmoud, Reisel, Hack-Polay, & Fuxman).

Of note are two studies that claimed a causal or predictive effect between job insecurity and health. Hellgren and Sverke (2003) demonstrated a causal relationship between job insecurity and mental and physical health; it was more likely that job insecurity affected mental and physical health versus the opposite, even when variables such as gender and age were controlled. In addition, Burgard et al. (2009) adjusted for variables such as health prior to

baseline and hypertension and observed that job insecurity remained a significant predictor of health, especially when job insecurity persisted over time.

Regarding emotions, Yu et al. (2020) reported that job insecurity significantly and negatively impacted employees' positive emotions, de Jong et al. (2016) identified an increase in employee emotional exhaustion when job insecurity increased and Charoensukmongkol and Phungsoonthorn (2021) observed that employee emotional exhaustion was impacted by the negative effect of perceived uncertainties they experience.

Even managers who make or communicate employee layoff decisions experienced stress and as a result, poorer health (Pfeffer, 2018). The whole organizational ecosystem is impacted by employee layoffs and other organizational decisions that create job insecurity.

It should be noted that job insecurity extends beyond short-term impacts. A long-term effect of job insecurity was uncovered by Glavin (2013) who stated that extended, but not recent, job insecurity was affiliated with lower personal control. Only employees who had long-term job insecurity, compared with a recent event that created job insecurity, felt they had less decision-making ability in the workplace. Hellgren et al.'s (1999) study found that job insecurity had an enduring effect on job satisfaction, mental and physical health, and turnover intentions, meaning that the negative impact of job insecurity did not decrease over time. Furthermore, the meta-analysis performed by De Witte et al. (2016) documented the tendency for ongoing job insecurity to be a chronic source of stress, culminating in reduced health and wellbeing. Employee layoffs are a form of job insecurity and impact both white- and blue-collar employees and Lucas et al. (2004) saw that wellbeing did not return to the previous level of, indicating a long-term impact of the layoff. Recently, Too et al. (2021) identified that psychosocial job stressors, such as job insecurity, accumulated over time and deteriorated mental health.

In addition to the enduring impact of job insecurity, just the threat of losing one's job is detrimental to health. Glavin (2013) stated that the threat may have created a more pronounced feeling of powerlessness since employment was an important aspect of self-identity. De Witte et al. (2016) completed a meta-analysis of research on the impact of job insecurity on psychological health and wellbeing and the findings corroborated with Dekker and Schaufeli's (1995) results that job dismissal was less negative on health and wellbeing than the threat of job loss. Dekker and Schaufeli produced one of the first longitudinal studies on the impact of job insecurity and wellbeing and health and learned that feeling insecure about job loss losing one's job was more harmful for psychological health and wellbeing than for insecurity relating to the loss of a job. This result may be explained by the Job Demand-Control Model since job insecurity could be perceived as a job demand, which increases job strain.

### **Lack of Control and Job Insecurity Related to Work Behaviors**

Sometimes the work environment produces a feeling of job insecurity, which frustrates psychological needs, and thus reduces intrinsic motivation. For example, Shin, et al. (2019) noted that when surveying research and development professionals in South Korea that intrinsic motivation was negatively related to job insecurity, which then was found to have a positive relationship to performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior. Considering the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman, and Hack-Polay (2021) discovered that employees who are externally controlled experience negative emotions induced by COVID-19 related job insecurity, as well as lower engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2022) uncovered that job insecurity has a positive relationship with counterproductive work behavior but a negative relationship with organizational citizenship behaviors. Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman, and

Mohr (2021) found that intrinsic motivation, which SDT would predict as a result from autonomy, was positively related to job satisfaction. Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman, and Mohr also identified job insecurity to indirectly lower the likelihood that employees would demonstrate organizational citizenship behaviors through the reduction of intrinsic motivation, which in turn, also lowered job satisfaction. Furthermore, Van den Broeck et al. (2010) found that organizational commitment decreases when employees' psychological needs are not met, likely resulting in less frequent speaking up to share ideas for improvement or challenge the status quo.

Unrelated directly to intrinsic motivation, many researchers have identified several negative effects of job insecurity on organizations such as decreasing organizational commitment behaviors, productivity, trust in management and job performance, as well as increasing turnover intentions, absence, and job dissatisfaction (Ashford et al., 1989; Cheng & Chan, 2008; Davy et al., 1991; de Jong et al., 2016; Hair, 2016; Kelliher et al., 2012; Kuhnert & Palmer, 1991; Morgan, 2018; Piccoli et al., 2019; Probst, 2008; Shoss, 2017; Sverke et al., 2002). Specific examples from this body of literature are discussed in greater detail. First, Kelliher et al. (2012) observed that managers working in a multinational organization experiencing restructuring demonstrated decreased motivation and commitment to the organization due to a lack of decision-making ability and flexibility, as well as job responsibility confusion. Employees who feel insecure in their jobs because of job insecurity-producing situations, including but not limited to restructuring, may create negative consequences for the organization. Chirumbolo et al. (2017) found that both qualitative and quantitative job insecurity were negatively correlated to job satisfaction and organizational commitment but were positively related to stress and turnover intentions. Davy et al. (1991) observed that the relationship between turnover intentions and job security was mediated by job satisfaction and organizational commitment, meaning that an

employee's perception that they have job security, may create job satisfaction and organizational commitment versus directly affecting turnover intentions. Furthermore, Urbanaviciute et al. (2018) stated that psychological needs and job insecurity were significantly correlated to turnover intentions, with only competence being positively related, and both autonomy and relatedness satisfaction negatively related to turnover intentions. A positive indirect relationship was identified between job insecurity and turnover intentions through the moderator of autonomy. Job insecurity, which tends to be involuntary, results in a lack of predictability and control, which ultimately may encourage the employee to leave the organization. The negative relationship between relatedness and turnover intentions could be due to decreasing trust, collaboration and communication that occur during times of job insecurity.

Brockner et al. (2004) conducted two studies regarding the impact of layoff survivor's organizational commitment as it pertained to job control. One study identified a reduced impact to organizational commitment for layoff survivors when job control was believed to be relatively high and the second study reported that if job control was believed to be relatively high following surviving a layoff, job performance was not adversely impacted, even if there was a high threat to wellbeing. Both studies illuminated the positive impact that autonomy and control have on the organization through organizational commitment and job performance.

Uchitelle (2006) wrote about another organizational impact due to a lack of control caused by job insecurity, specifically that employee layoffs are damaging for organizations because first, they undermine the productivity of those employees who survive the layoff because they feel vulnerable, and second, productivity is impacted for those who are laid off but gain employment again. One example of research connecting productivity measures and job insecurity was completed by Strunk et al. (2018) who observed that teachers who were either

given a reduction in force notice, but not laid off, or laid off and then rehired, showed lower productivity and effectiveness on the job, in the year or two following the incident, likely due to faltering job commitment resulting from the layoff or layoff threat. Conversely, Probst et al. (2007) found that a threat of layoffs increased productivity, which could be explained by the inverted-U theory if the threat of layoffs was considered moderate, under which circumstances, performance increases. Bohle et al. (2017) a decrease in organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance as a reaction to large-scale layoffs, mediated by the breach of the psychological contract.

Additional organizational behaviors found to be impacted by job insecurity include Yu et al.'s (2020) finding that job insecurity significantly and negatively impacted employee engagement and Otto et al. (2011) observed that job involvement and career satisfaction decreased when job insecurity was high. Related to engagement, Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) noticed that job and organizational withdrawal happened for employees who witnessed but did not personally experience a job loss or redeployment. Also, Probst et al. (2007) identified lower creative problem-solving ability for employees who felt threatened by layoffs. This finding was also reported by De Spiegelaere et al. (2014) who found that job insecurity and autonomy were related with innovative work behavior, directly and indirectly through work engagement. Two precursors of innovative work behavior are autonomy and engagement and De Spiegelaere et al. sought to study the relationship between these three constructs. Autonomy proved to have a positive relationship with innovative work behaviors while job insecurity had a negative correlation to work engagement and produced a smaller and negative relationship with innovative work behavior. Related to innovation and creative problem solving is idea generation; Teng et al. (2019) and Van Hootegem et al. (2018) both found a positive relationship between

job insecurity and employee irritation or strain, resulting in lower idea generation, as well as concentration.

Additional work behaviors impacted by job insecurity include safety compliance, bullying and employee silence, and learning. Jiang and Probst (2014) uncovered that job insecurity contributed to diminished compliance with safety standards and additional work-related injuries. DeCuyper et al. (2009) discovered that workplace bullying accompanied job insecurity. Breevaart et al. (2020) stated that job insecurity created a sense of lack of control for the future and spoiled the fulfillment of psychological needs, which, consequently, weakened employee voice and fueled employee silence. In summary, these findings suggest that if an employee felt unsure about future employment at their current workplace, it may not be necessary to take risks or make improvements if they are not employed to appreciate the benefits. Finally, informal learning, described by Van Hootegem and De Witte (2019) as seeking information and feedback from others, was found to decrease when job insecurity was high. The employees' "job insecurity was related to perceived breach of the psychological contract" (Van Hootegem & De Witte, p. 19). Finally, a lack of informal learning could lead to a decline in knowledge, skills, or abilities, resulting in both an individual and organizational impact (Van Hootegem & De Witte).

Decision making is a behavior related to job control and autonomy that may lead to positive outcomes. Probst (2005) observed that blue collar workers from the United States and China who were able to participate in decision making during times of job insecurity reported fewer negative outcomes, including more job satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, and less frequent withdrawal behaviors, such as arriving to work late. It seems that the ability to make one's own decisions drives organizationally important behaviors.

## **Social Support and Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Wellbeing**

The secondary research question that was addressed in this study asked if work climate moderated the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. The Work Climate Questionnaire (WCQ) has often been used to measure manager autonomy support (Baard et al., 2004) but this study took a broad view of the survey items, to measure general support from the manager, experienced through, for example, the extent to which an employee feels their manager cares about them or handles their emotions. The WCQ measures the work environment in a multi-faceted way, and in general measures leadership quality and supervisor support. There is little literature specifically about work climate and the impact on wellbeing, from this broader context of work climate items. However, of note is the study of Wu and Li (2019) who learned that a supportive work climate, measured by the WCQ, had an indirect effect on life satisfaction through the mechanism associated with individual autonomous motivation.

Work climate and social support are related constructs and social support specifically is supported in some of the literature as a moderator of job insecurity and wellbeing. First, it should be noted that some research has not identified social support as a moderator, or buffer, of job insecurity. For example, Van Doninck et al. (2023) identified that affective organizational commitment and social support at work did not buffer the strain experienced through COVID-19 measures and Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) found that social support from management, unions, or colleagues, was not a buffer to negative impacts during times of job insecurity. However, other researchers have found that social support, as well as job control, moderate job insecurity (Gillet et al., 2015; Lim, 1997; Schreurs et al., 2010; Teng et al., 2019; Umrani et al., 2019). Specifically, Teng et al. (2019) observed that the negative effects of job insecurity on creativity were minimized when employees received support and gave support to others; this occurred

because support reduced the connection between irritation and job insecurity. Furthermore, Morgan (2018) observed that perceived organizational support had a direct relationship with job insecurity while Haar and Brougham (2020) observed that supportive teams are a buffer for anxiety and depression during times of high job insecurity.

In other related research, Bohle et al. (2017) uncovered an unexpected result in their study on layoffs and psychological contract breach. These authors found a negative relationship between breach of psychological contract and both job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors for employees who received high levels of support from their managers. This result could be due to high support employees feeling betrayed upon a breach of the psychological contract or fearing they will have to give up considerable resources they have gained through the support of their managers. The authors further observed that for employees receiving low support, a breach of contract has a weak relationship between job outcomes, possibly because receiving low support formerly, the psychological contract breach has less of an impact. In summary, this suggests that social support and the impact vary, possibly due to study sample sizes or mediating study factors.

In a related area of research, Hämmig and Vetsch (2021) found that social support, along with job autonomy and work climate, were significantly negatively related to increased burnout and poor self-reported health. In addition, these constructs were partly correlated with reducing the negative effects of work-related stress on both general and mental health. Regarding the original WCQ items and job insecurity, Deci et al. (1989) observed that manager support for autonomy and other self-determination behaviors was not enough to buffer organizational actions that negatively affected pay or security. More recently, Charoensukmongkol and Phungsoonthorn (2021) discovered that “supervisor support is negatively associated with

employees' perceived uncertainties. In addition, the analysis shows that perceived uncertainties significantly mediate the negative effect of supervisor support on emotional exhaustion," (p. 445). Furthermore, during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, Platts et al. (2022) identified that a significant predictor of burnout and stress was lower leadership quality; furthermore, for employees over the age of 45, lower leadership quality significantly impacted the degree of depressive symptoms. Finally, Nemteanu et al. (2021) discovered that job insecurity was negatively correlated with job satisfaction, but only regarding supervisor support and promotion opportunities.

### **Reported Variation in Wellbeing Status**

A lack of control and autonomy experienced during job insecurity contributes to frustrated psychological needs, leading to lower wellbeing. Reported wellbeing in the United States is measured inconsistently, with a variety of assessments and reported results, based on a variety of definitions of wellbeing, including the definition focused on for this study, subjective wellbeing.

A study on wellbeing done by Kobau, et al. (2013) who studied 18,622 adults in three states, assessing life satisfaction, physical wellbeing and satisfaction with emotional and social support using the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) instrument. The authors controlled for state of residence, demographic, and health characteristics and reported that 68% of survey respondents declared positive life satisfaction. "At the item level, 73% reported that their lives were close to ideal, 76% thought the conditions of their lives were excellent, 83% reported being satisfied with their lives, and 80% felt they had gotten the important things in life" (p. 8). Happiness was reported to be even higher with 89%, and 84% of the respondents reporting they usually or always receive the support they need, in the form of either social

support or emotional support. Kobau, et al. described differences in wellbeing according to factors such as age, marital status, health behaviors, and chronic conditions, which they said is consistent with the findings from previous studies. Researchers using the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System assessment uncovered that 5.6% of US adults said that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the state of their lives and 8.6% of survey respondents reported that they rarely or never received social and emotional support (Strine, Chapman, Balluz, & Mokdad, 2008; Strine, Chapman, Balluz, Moriarty, & Mokdad, 2008). Using a different assessment, the Porter Novelli HealthStyles assessment, which measures health orientations and practices, Kobau et al. (2010) gathered data from adult subjects in 2008 and reported that, in the last month, 11% felt cheerful all the time, 15% felt calm all of the time, and 13% felt full of life. The authors also reported that respondents strongly agreed with the following statements: 9.8% said they are close to living their ideal life, 19% said that they are satisfied with their life, 21% said that they have a clear sense of purpose and 30% said that on most days they feel a sense of accomplishment.

Additionally, the Gallup Sharecare Well-Being Index (2017) captures how people in the United States feel about their daily lives by seeking to understand five elements of wellbeing: purpose, social, physical, financial, and community. The index measures wellbeing at the national and state levels and in 2017, Gallup conducted phone interviews with a random sample of 160,498 adults living in all 50 of the United States and the District of Columbia. The wellbeing score for the nation was 61.5 (out of 100), representing a decline from 62.1 in 2016. Additionally, another resource for measuring life satisfaction, among other factors, is the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (n.d.-a; n.d.-b), which evaluates wellbeing across the globe. The OECD reported on wellbeing through two reports, the

Better Life Index and How's Life? Index. The How's Life? Index reported that between 2005 and 2015/2016, life satisfaction in the United States decreased from 7.3 to 6.9 on a 0 to 10-point scale, reflecting a decrease twice as large as the OECD country average (OECD, n.d.-b). The Better Life index currently also reported wellbeing at 6.9 on a 0 to 10-point scale, giving the United States a ranking of 17 out of 40 countries (OECD, n.d.-a). Most of these outcomes do not reflect high wellbeing and it may be that, since job insecurity is rampant in the United States and psychological needs are not met during job insecurity due to the inherent lack of control one experiences during job insecurity.

### **Chapter Summary**

The literature review included in this study reported on findings related to shared how satisfied psychological needs are related to wellbeing and that even during times of job insecurity, created by an organization's response to macro-economic events, meeting psychological needs can moderate the impact on wellbeing, health, and job behaviors. It is the presence of autonomy or more specifically, control that is critical for employees' wellbeing and job factors, such as satisfaction, productivity, organizational commitment, and performance.

The circumstances that create job insecurity were explored through the review of literature, as well as the impact of job insecurity on wellbeing and job behaviors. Macro-economic events such as globalization create competition and push organizations to make decisions that negatively impact their employee's job stability, ability to control and act autonomously, as well as their frustration of psychological needs and lack of wellbeing. Job insecurity also reduces the same job behaviors that autonomy and control create, such as productivity.

The autonomy-related action that managers can take, called manager autonomy support, is the focus of this study, as it is hypothesized that this could be a potential moderator of psychological subjective wellbeing and job insecurity. Manager autonomy support, like general autonomy, provides the benefits that job insecurity reduces, such as wellbeing, psychological needs, job performance, and job satisfaction. The research has not connected manager autonomy support with the circumstance of job insecurity as a mechanism to provide a sense of autonomy and control, nor has existing scholarship outlined the role work climate can provide in moderating job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. Thus, these are the primary research questions included in this study.

While organizations may not be able to eliminate the situations that create job insecurity, with the help of HRD, and applying additional research on these constructs, organizations can choose to act to reduce the negative consequences of job insecurity, benefiting both individual employees and organizational outcomes.

### **Chapter 3: Methods**

This study aimed to understand the relationship between manager autonomy support, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing. A second goal of the study was to explore relationships among work climate, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing. The study's main purpose was to answer the following two research questions: 1) Does manager autonomy support moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing? and 2) Does work climate moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing? To address these questions, a quantitative research methodology was employed, utilizing an online survey, which enabled the collection of consistent data across respondents. This chapter describes the research setting and sample, the research design, procedures for data collection, as well as the techniques for data analysis.

#### **Research Setting and Sample**

The sample included in this study were United States based employees who resided within two business units at a large global organization with operations in several states, as well as several international locations. I am an employee of this organization. This publicly traded company had 2022 revenues of \$651.5 million and currently has approximately 2,100 global employees. The organization is considered both a high tech and a manufacturing organization with a reputation as a leader in the field in which it competes. The organization's headquarters is outside the United States with half of the workforce living in the United States and the other half living in at least 13 other countries.

The number of employees has been consistent over the last several years with increases in headcount through acquisitions of complementary businesses offset by periodic reduction in headcount through employee layoffs. The organization has attempted to add technological competencies to its portfolio of customer offerings while, at the same time, addressing business

inefficiencies and low performing units. Of note are two major employee layoff events, which occurred in the summer of 2020 and in the summer of 2022, both of which impacted the business units in the study's sample.

### **Sample Demographics**

A total of 705 employees were invited to participate in the survey; 348 employees within this population did not have daily access to email so it was expected that this subgroup's participation would be low. The total number of survey responses received was 299 and after removing 117 responses that Qualtrics identified to be either duplicates or of poor quality, 182 responses remained. Upon further review of the downloaded data file, applying the listwise deletion approach, 17 more response sets were removed because 10 or more responses were missing. In most of the 17 cases where the response sets were removed, there were zero responses. Lastly, reCAPTCHA values, relevant ID duplicate, ID duplicate score, relevant fraud score and relevant last start dates were examined, and an additional three respondents' data was removed due to the concern that the data was duplicated. Furthermore, two of these responses had a last start date entry that occurred before the survey was administered, making the responses untrustworthy. Thirty-eight additional response sets had a relevant fraud score of 30 or greater but I decided to leave this data in since the other indicators of fraud did not point to these replies being fraudulent as determined by my review or Qualtrics automatic process of removing fraudulent or bot replies. Thus, the final sample included 162 respondents, representing a final response rate of 23%. In terms of my sample size, Maxwell (2000) stated that for two predictors, a sample size of 141 is a sufficient sample size and this study includes two predictor variables, manager autonomy support and work climate. Furthermore, at a 95% confidence level, with a population size of 705, and a 7% margin of error, the ideal sample size is 156, which this study

has exceeded (Qualtrics, n.d.). This means that this study's sample size of 162 is sufficient to be representative of the target population.

In addition to the survey items, respondents were asked to provide an answer to the following demographic items: gender, age range, highest educational level attained, total years spent in the workforce, total years in current job field, current job level, and if their current role included people management. Between 155 and 162 respondents answered each demographic question and a summary of the sample's demographics is presented in Table 1.

The gender demographic characteristics for the sample included 84% who self-identified as males and 15% as females. A third gender option was available, labeled "them," of which 1% of the sample identified. Regarding age, except for the age ranges of 18-24 and 65-74, the distribution of respondents was evenly distributed, with the age range of 35-44 the largest group, containing 30% of the sample. The highest level of educational attainment resulted in 48% of the sample indicating they had earned a bachelor's degree, followed by 19% having earned a master's degree, 17% having had some college and 12% having earned an associate degree. Two questions were asked about years worked: total years in the workforce and total years in their current role. In terms of the total years worked, 69% of the sample had spent 15 or more years in the workforce and an additional 15% had spent between 10-14 years. Representing total years spent in their current role, 23% had spent 15 or more years, 27% had spent 3-5 years, and 25% had spent 6-9 years in their current role. Respondents could choose between three job levels and most of the respondents (41%) said they were at the professional job level, 30% were at the operational/technical/administrative level, and 29% were at supervisory/managerial level. Finally, 32% of the respondents said they were people managers and 68% said they were not.

**Table 1***Demographic Characteristics Table*

Demographic Variable	n	%	N
Gender			155
Male	130	84	
Female	24	15	
Them	1	1	
Age Range			161
18-24	3	2	
25-34	34	21	
35-44	48	30	
45-54	33	20	
55-64	38	24	
65-74	5	3	
Highest Educational Level Attained			161
High School	4	2	
Some college	27	17	
Associate degree	19	12	
Bachelor's degree	78	48	
Master's degree	30	19	
Doctorate	2	1	
Professional	1	1	
Total Years Spent in the Workforce			162
Less than 1 year	3	2	
3-5 years	8	5	
6-9 years	15	9	
10-14 years	24	15	
15+ years	112	69	
Total Years in Current Job Field			161
Less than 1 year	13	8	
1-2 years	13	8	
3-5 years	43	27	
6-9 years	40	25	
10-14 years	15	9	
15+ years	37	23	
Current Job Level			161
Operational/Technical/Administrative	49	30	
Professional	66	41	
Supervisory/Managerial	46	29	
People Manager			160
No	109	68	
Yes	51	32	

## **Research Design and Data Collection**

Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), my committee, and from the sponsoring organization, the data collection process was initiated. First, as a way of field testing the survey and the experience for respondents of the overall data collection approach, I engaged six employees to complete the study scales and review the email instructions and consent form. Feedback was gathered, and in some cases, changes implemented, regarding efforts to improve their understanding of the survey questions and the consent form, as well as usability of the survey technology and the length of time to complete the scales. Next, a convenience sample, composed of employees in two business units whose leaders' provided permission for their employees to be invited to participate in the research, were invited to participate in the study. Potential participants received two emails: the first was a notification from the business units' senior leadership that expressed the company's support for the survey (see Appendix A), and the second email, from me (see Appendix B), contained the consent form, instructions, and survey link. Finally, data was collected through an electronic survey, which included 49 questions with items drawn from six existing scales. Three reminder emails were sent to the sample during the survey data collection timeframe, which extended to two months due to the initial lower than anticipated response rate. Reminders were sent only to employees that had not provided their email address to be entered into a drawing for an Amazon gift card as I knew these people had replied and did not need a reminder.

## ***Measures***

To measure the variables included in the research questions, scales were selected that in past studies, had reported data with demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability as well as

satisfactory or higher levels of internal reliability or consistency. A summary of the scales is presented in Table 2; to see all scales used, see Appendix C.

**Table 2**

*Survey Construct*

Construct	No. of Items	Response Format	Scales
Participative Decision Making (Manager Autonomy Support)	6	5-point Likert-type scale	Original: Probst (2005)
Work Climate Autonomy Questions (WCQ) (Manager Autonomy Support)	6	6-point Likert-type scale	Original: 6-item version of The Work Climate Questionnaire by Baard et al., 2004
Work Climate	15	7-point Likert-type scale	Original: Baard et al. (2004)
Job Insecurity	7	5-point Likert-type scale	Original: Hellgren, et al. (1999)
Positive Affect (Subjective Wellbeing)	10	5-point Likert-type scale	Original: Watson et al. (1988)
Satisfaction with Life (SLWS) (Subjective Wellbeing)	5	7-point Likert-type scale	Original: Diener et al. (1985); Pavot & Diener (1993)

Details for each scale, including data reliability, validity and internal reliability or consistency are provided below.

**Manager Autonomy Support.** Two scales were selected to measure manager autonomy support, with the first being the 6-item version of the 15-item WCQ, developed by Baard et al. (2004). These 6-items have been used by other researchers (e.g., Baard et al., 2004 & Chiang et

al., 2016) to measure manager autonomy support. Responses for each WCQ item are selected on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Sample items in the 6-item version of the WCQ are: “I feel that my manager provides me choices and options” and “My manager listens to how I would like to do things.” The Center for Self-Determination Theory (n.d.) stated that the alpha coefficient of internal consistency for the 6-item version is almost always more than .90 across all five of their WCQ, which use the same questions with very slight modifications to fit the sample being measured, such as healthcare or sports. The Center for Self-Determination theory added, regarding alpha coefficients, that “The short form may be slightly less but has always been good” (n.d., para. 2). Related, an amended 8-item WCQ used in Chiang et al. (2016) demonstrated good data reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha of .91. The WCQ was also used to assess work climate, which was related to the second research question.

A second measure of manager autonomy support, the Participative Decision Making scale, developed by Probst (2005), was chosen because manager-encouraged decision-making is included in the definition of manager autonomy support. The scale includes six items and sample questions include: “Managers encourage employees to set their own work-related goals” and “Employees are often given a chance to voice their opinions about work-related issues.” Slight modifications to the wording of the questions were made; changing “supervisor” to “manager” and “worker” to “employee.” Responses can range from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*, on a 5-point Likert-type scale. This scale was written by Probst and used for the first time in a 2005 study, to measure participative decision making within six organizations. To provide validity evidence, Probst conducted a factor analysis for the measured constructs and found that factor loadings for participative decision making were between .53 and .74. In addition, the author

completed a goodness-of-fit index and reported that the measurement model proved a moderately acceptable fit. Lastly, Probst found in their study that the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the scale to be .79 (2005).

**Job Insecurity.** The Hellgren Job Insecurity scale was administered to measure qualitative and quantitative job insecurity. This scale was developed by Hellgren et al. (1999) to assess perceived continuation of the current job (quantitative) and perceived concern about losing job features such as career options (qualitative). The scale includes seven items and uses a 5-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Sample items are: "I feel uneasy about losing my job in the near future" and "I believe that [the organization] will need my competence also in the future." Hellgren et al. gathered validity evidence of the internal structure through factor analysis. A principal component analysis which, according to Jolliffe and Cadima (2016), is a technique for decreasing the dimensionality of large datasets while improving interpretability and diminishing the loss of information, demonstrated that the qualitative and quantitative job insecurity items measured different elements of job insecurity, reflecting loading on the respective elements. Quantitative and qualitative job insecurity were moderately correlated, indicating that they each represent distinct aspects of job insecurity. Internal consistency was considered satisfactory for both the qualitative and quantitative job insecurity items, with an alpha coefficient of .75 for qualitative job insecurity items and .79 for quantitative job insecurity items (Hellgren et al).

**Subjective Wellbeing.** Two scales were used to measure subjective wellbeing because the construct definition adopted in this study included dimensions of both positive emotions and life satisfaction. To measure positive emotions, the 10 positive affect questions from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale developed by Watson et al. (1988) were

administered. The 10 negative affect questions from the PANAS were removed because they measure mood factors not relevant to subjective wellbeing, which includes the presence of positive emotions or mood. The scale uses a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *very slightly or not at all* to *extremely*. Sample positive emotions measured by the scale include “Interested,” “Excited,” and “Proud.” Watson et al. used a rigorous process in determining the validity of the PANAS internal structure and found scale and item validity, demonstrating that the PANAS scales adequately captured the underlying mood factors. Internal consistency, regardless of the timeframe provided in the instructions (moment, today, past few days, past few weeks, year, or general), was satisfactory or higher, and ranged from .86 to .90 on the positive affect questions and .85 to .87 on the negative affect questions (Watson et al).

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was selected as the second scale to measure subjective wellbeing. This scale was submitted for publication in 1983 by Diener et al. and was published in the *Journal of Personality* two years later (Diener et al., 1985). This scale uses a 7-point Likert-type scale to assess five questions, with responses ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Sample questions are as follows: “In most ways my life is close to my ideal” and “The conditions of my life are excellent.” Larson et al. (1983) provided validity evidence and stated that all items on the SWLS showed high-factor loadings on one common factor, satisfaction with one’s life. Furthermore, Diener et al. stated that the scale had very high internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Additional validation and reliability testing has been done on data reported using this scale; for example, Cheung and Lucas (2014) used the SWLS to measure life satisfaction in two states, Oregon, and Washington, and analyzed data from over 15,000 respondents. They reported high internal consistency with an alpha of .89 from respondents in Washington and an alpha of .90 from respondents in Oregon. Furthermore, in

2016, López-Ortega et al. reported on a 2012 life satisfaction study with over 13,000 Mexican adults, finding the SWLS to have good internal consistency with an alpha of .74.

**Work Climate.** The WCQ was developed by Baard et al. (2004) and includes 15 items. Responses for each WCQ item are selected on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Sample items in the WCQ are: “I feel that my manager provides me choices and options” and “My manager listens to how I would like to do things.” This scale was derived from two related questionnaires; one of which was utilized to understand patients’ perceptions of how much autonomy support health care providers provided (Williams et al., 1996) and demonstrated a Cronbach’s alpha of .92. The second questionnaire that was used to develop the WCQ was a version that was used to understand students’ perceptions of how much autonomy support college and medical school instructors provided (Williams & Deci, 1996), and reflected a Cronbach’s alpha of .96. The present study used the WCQ as a measure of the general support received from a manager, not just manager autonomy support, which based on previous research, does not seem to be a common utilization of this scale.

**Demographics.** To better understand and describe the sample, respondents were asked to answer a set of demographic questions regarding gender, age range, highest educational level attained, total years spent in the workforce, total years in current job field, current job level, and if their current role included people management.

### **Data Analysis**

The software program SPSS 28.0 was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were gathered and are reported in the following chapter. A multiple regression analysis was conducted, and the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables calculated. Prediction information includes the following: unstandardized and standardized

coefficients, coefficient standard error, confidence intervals, and percentage of variation the independent variable has on the dependent variable and how strong the relationship is (significance value). Finally, moderation analysis was completed to understand the effect of the moderator variables on the independent variables. Before both regression analyses were performed, normality, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity were tested to ensure the required conditions were met.

### ***Multiple Regression Analysis***

Multiple regression is a statistical analysis technique that measures the strength of the relationship between a dependent variable and several predictor, or independent, variables (Moore et al., 2006 & Petchko, 2018). Multiple regression analysis also clarifies if the independent variables predict the value of a dependent value (Moore et al., 2006), or, in other words, the importance of each of the predictor variables to the relationship (Petchko, 2018). Before I used SPSS to run a multiple linear regression analysis, I ensured the data met the assumptions for regression analysis (e.g., homoscedasticity and a linear relationship between the variables). The output included descriptive statistics, correlations, and predictive indicators. Four of the six hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis and are as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and work climate.
- Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between work climate and subjective wellbeing.

### *Moderation Analysis*

Next, to understand if the moderation hypotheses were supported, I conducted moderation analysis in two steps using SPSS to test for the influence one variable, in this case, manager autonomy support and separately, work climate, had on the relationship between two other variables, job insecurity and subjective wellbeing (Blair, n.d.). However, before I was able to run the analysis, I created standardized values as variables in the SPSS software. Even though the variables being tested were not continuous, I standardized, or centered, the variables to avoid possible multicollinearity issues. Next, I calculated the interaction term and then I performed moderation analysis in SPSS by conducting a linear regression analysis to test the interaction effect. The output displayed three tables as follows: a model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients. The model summary reports what percent of the variation on the dependent variable can explained by the independent variable. The ANOVA table tells if any of the reported means are statistically significantly different from one another. Finally, the coefficient table reports if there is a causal effect between the independent and dependent variable.

Then, to calculate moderation in SPSS, to understand under what conditions an effect occurred (Blair, n.d.), I ran a second regression using a PROCESS macro extension. This effect, if it is demonstrated, is not constant and would occur because of the influence that the moderator variable had on the two other variables (Hair et al., 2021). The SPSS output included a model table that listed p-values for the variables and the intercept. This data reports on whether a causal effect exists between the moderator variable and the dependent variable and if the interaction term meets any significance threshold. From this information, it can be concluded whether the moderator variable influences the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The moderation output included a table that reported the conditional effects of the focal predictor

at values of the moderator; in other words, the table indicates what effect the focal predictor had on the dependent variable and if the interaction was significant or not. A significant interaction indicates that the focal predictor depends on the value of the moderator. Two of the six hypotheses were tested using moderation analysis and are as follows:

- Hypothesis 3: Manager autonomy support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 6: Work climate will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter defined the research setting and sample, which was described as 162 United States employees at a global organization that qualifies as both high tech and manufacturing. The research design and the data collection procedure were detailed, and included scales used in previous studies as well as presentation of the data collection and survey administration procedure. Finally, the steps taken to perform data analysis were shared, which included multiple regression and moderation analyses.

## Chapter 4: Results

This study investigated the relationships between manager autonomy support, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing, as well as relationships among work climate, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing. To complete this investigation, descriptive statistics were analyzed and both multiple regression analyses and moderation analyses were completed. This chapter presents the study's results.

### Descriptive Statistics

Before testing for correlation, prediction, and moderation, I checked to see if the data and distribution curves were normally distributed by reviewing the score frequencies, Q-Q plots, and histograms. I also examined the data's central tendencies of mean, median, and mode. Lastly, I ran tests of normality and looked at the Shapiro-Wilk test output which indicated that two variables were normally distributed: job insecurity and participative decision making. Life satisfaction, positive affect, and work climate were not normally distributed, possibly due to the number of outliers. After removing outliers from these data, the Shapiro-Wilk failed to demonstrate normality, so I decided to leave the outliers in the data set for further analysis. The decision to leave outliers in for further analysis was influenced by events that took place within the participating organization, a year prior to the survey being initiated, as was discussed in chapter three. These events included restructuring work teams, employee layoffs, leadership changes, and partial furloughs. These workplace events may have influenced how respondents felt about the factors measured in the survey as previous research found these types of job events to create uncertainty, thus reducing subjective wellbeing and workplace behaviors (e.g., Glavin, 2013, Keim et al., Pfeffer, 2018). It is possible to have respondent data not normally distributed, as a result.

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The standard deviation for each scale, except for work climate and work climate autonomy, appeared to be relatively small as compared to the value of the mean. This indicated that the data points are close to the mean, reflecting small variability from the mean scores. For most scales, the mean, median, and mode were relatively similar, indicating normally distributed data. Also, the mode is near the center for most scales, indicating normally distributed data.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Statistics for Scales*

Scale	No. of Items	N	M	SD	Median	Mode	Range
Life Satisfaction	5	162	5.01	1.18	5.20	6.00	6.00
Positive Affect	10	160	3.70	0.67	3.80	4.00	3.80
Participative Decision Making	6	160	3.79	0.68	3.83	4.00	4.00
Work Climate Autonomy	6	162	34.29	7.38	36.00	42.00	35.00
Work Climate	15	162	85.88	17.48	90.00	105.00	87.00
Job Insecurity	7	162	2.60	0.75	2.57	6.00	6.00

To better understand the data from an exploratory perspective, I looked at the percentage of the sample respondents who said they were experiencing high subjective wellbeing, high job insecurity, and high manager autonomy support. I compared the mean plus one standard deviation to each respondent's mean on each scale. The results were as follows:

- Job insecurity: Twenty-seven of the respondents, or 17%, indicated that they experienced high job insecurity as reflected through the comparison of respondent means to the sample's mean, 2.60, plus one standard deviation of 0.75, which equaled 3.35.
- Work climate: Seventeen respondents, or 10%, said they experienced a strong work climate. This was determined by adding the sample's mean (85.88) to one standard

deviation (17.48), equaling 103.37 and comparing the respondent means to that number.

It should be noted that this set of data is not normally distributed.

- Participative decision making: Twenty-nine respondents, or 18%, said that they experienced manager autonomy support, as reflected in the participative decision-making items. This was determined by comparing the sample's mean of 3.79 plus one standard deviation of 0.68, equaling 4.47, to each respondent's mean.
- Autonomy-related questions: Twenty-one respondents, or 13%, indicated that they received autonomy from their manager, as measured by work climate autonomy. This was calculated by comparing respondent means to the sample's mean plus one standard deviation. The mean was 34.29, and added to one standard deviation, 7.38, equals 41.68.
- Life satisfaction: Twenty-four respondents, or 15%, said they experienced high life satisfaction, as one measure of subjective wellbeing, as determined by the comparing respondent means to the sample's mean of 5.00 plus half of one standard deviation of 1.18, equaling 6.18. It should be noted that this set of data is not normally distributed.
- Positive affect: Finally, 25 respondents, or 16%, expressed high positive affect, as a measure of subjective wellbeing, reflected by comparing respondent means to the sample's mean (3.69) plus one standard deviation (0.66), equaling 4.35. It should be noted that this set of data is not normally distributed.

### **Multiple Regression Analysis: Manager Autonomy Support, Job Insecurity, and Subjective Wellbeing**

I conducted multiple regression analysis to test my hypotheses and to understand if there were correlations between the dependent and independent variables as well as whether predictor variables (work climate and manager autonomy support, the latter of which was measured by

work climate autonomy and participative decision making) accounted for variance in the dependent variable (subjective wellbeing, as measured by positive affect and life satisfaction). I also completed moderation analysis to understand if manager autonomy support and work climate moderated subjective wellbeing. For both analysis processes, I ran separate tests for each measure of subjective wellbeing (positive affect and life satisfaction).

The first research question was whether manager autonomy support (as measured by participative decision making and work climate autonomy) moderates job insecurity and subjective wellbeing (as measured by positive affect and life satisfaction). The following three hypotheses were written to answer this question:

- Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 3: Manager autonomy support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity on subjective wellbeing.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among life satisfaction, both measures of manager autonomy support (participative decision making and work climate autonomy), and job insecurity are reported in Table 4 and the same information is reported in Table 5 for positive affect, manager autonomy support, and job insecurity. The data listed in both tables supported hypotheses 1 and 2, and thus, the null hypotheses can be rejected. In summary, a significant negative correlation was discovered between job insecurity and the following three variables: life satisfaction, positive affect, and manager autonomy support. A significant positive correlation

was found between the dependent variables, life satisfaction, and positive affect, as well as the independent variable, manager autonomy support.

**Table 4**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Life Satisfaction and Test Variables*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Life Satisfaction	4.99	1.18		.33*	.23*	-.40*
2. Participative Decision Making	3.78	0.68	.33*		.71*	-.56*
3. Work Climate Autonomy	34.16	7.39	.23*	.71*		-.48*
4. Job Insecurity	2.61	0.75	-.40*	-.56*	-.48*	

*Note.*  $n = 159$ .

\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 5**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Positive Affect and Test Variables*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Positive Affect	3.68	0.66		.31*	.16*	-.48*
2. Participative Decision Making	3.79	0.68	.31*		.71*	-.56*
3. Work Climate Autonomy	34.22	7.38	.16*	.71*		-.47*
4. Job Insecurity	2.60	0.75	-.48*	-.56*	-.47*	

*Note.*  $n = 156$ .

\* $p < .001$ .

Hypothesis 3 predicted that manager autonomy support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing, as measured by life satisfaction and positive affect. Eighteen percent of the variability of life satisfaction was accounted for by participative decision making, job security, and work climate autonomy. Twenty-five percent of the variability of positive affect can be accounted for by participative decision making, job security, and work climate autonomy.

The multiple regression analysis outcomes are reflected in Tables 6 and 7. Both measures of manager autonomy support, participative decision making, and work climate autonomy, were predictors of positive affect. Life satisfaction was not shown to be predictive of work climate autonomy nor participative decision making. Also, job insecurity was shown to predict both life satisfaction and positive affect.

**Table 6**

*Multiple Regression Analysis in Predicting Life Satisfaction Through Participative Decision Making and Work Climate Autonomy and Job Insecurity*

Predictor Variables	<i>B</i>	95% CI	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.37	[3.67, 7.07]	0.86		<.001
Participative Decision Making	0.34	[-0.03, 0.72]	0.19	0.19	.079
Work Climate Autonomy	-0.01	[-0.04, 0.02]	0.01	-0.06	.561
Job Insecurity	-0.51	[-0.78, -0.23]	0.14	-0.32	<.001
$R^2$	0.18				
$\Delta R^2$	0.18				

*Note.* CI = confidence interval.

The dependent variable is life satisfaction.

**Table 7**

*Multiple Regression Analysis in Predicting Positive Affect Through Participative Decision Making and Work Climate Autonomy and Job Insecurity*

Predictor Variables	<i>B</i>	95% CI	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.64	[3.71, 5.56]	0.46		<.001
Participative Decision Making	0.19	[-0.01, 0.40]	0.10	0.19	.013
Work Climate Autonomy	-0.01	[-0.03, 0.00]	0.00	-0.20	.047
Job Insecurity	-0.41	[-0.56, -0.26]	0.07	-0.46	<.001
$R^2$	0.25				
$\Delta R^2$	0.25				

*Note.* CI = confidence interval.

The dependent variable is positive affect.

## **Moderation Analysis: Manager Autonomy Support as a Moderator of Job Insecurity on Subjective Wellbeing**

The next analysis completed was moderation analysis. Summarized in Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11, the moderation analysis results considered manager autonomy support as the moderator, job insecurity as the independent variable, and both life satisfaction and positive affect as the dependent variables. The analysis indicated that a strong effect existed between the independent variable and both dependent variables, as reflected in the stated statistical significance. However, a strong effect between the moderator variables and the dependent variables did not exist as it was not statistically significant. Furthermore, the interaction term did not meet any significance threshold; thus, it can be concluded that the moderator variable did not influence the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables. In other words, according to this study, manager autonomy support did not moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. As noted in Tables 12, 13, 14, and 15, the focal predictor, job insecurity, had a significant effect on the dependent variables, and since the interaction, or moderation, was not significant, the effect of the focal predictor did not depend on the value of the moderator, manager autonomy support.

**Table 8**

*Moderation Analysis: Work Climate Autonomy as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life*

*Satisfaction*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>P</i>
Constant	5.78	0.80		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.54	0.13	-0.35	<.001
Work Climate Autonomy	0.01	0.01	0.11	.264
Interaction Effect (JI & WCA)	-0.08	0.10	-0.07	.373

*Note:* The dependent variable is life satisfaction

JI = Job Insecurity; WCA = Work Climate Autonomy

**Table 9**

*Moderation Analysis: Work Climate Autonomy as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive Affect*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.04	0.44		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.44	0.07	-0.50	<.001
Work Climate Autonomy	-0.00	0.00	-0.06	.521
Interaction Effect (JI & WCA)	-0.01	0.05	-0.01	.854

*Note:* The dependent variable is positive affect

JI = Job Insecurity; WCA = Work Climate Autonomy

**Table 10**

*Moderation Analysis: Participative Decision Making as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life Satisfaction*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.33	0.89		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.50	0.16	0.15	<.001
Participative Decision Making	0.26	0.01	0.11	.111
Interaction Effect (JI & PDM)	0.01	0.08	0.01	.833

*Note:* The dependent variable is life satisfaction

JI = Job Insecurity; PDM = Participative Decision Making

**Table 11**

*Moderation Analysis: Participative Decision Making as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive Affect*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.27	0.49		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.37	0.07	-0.42	<.001
Participative Decision Making	0.09	0.09	0.10	.273
Interaction Effect (JI & PDM)	-0.04	0.04	-0.07	.302

*Note:* The dependent variable is positive affect

JI = Job Insecurity; PDM = Participative Decision Making

**Table 12***Conditional Effects: Work Climate Autonomy as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life**Satisfaction*

Work Climate Autonomy	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-7.39	-0.42**	.20	-2.05	[-0.84, -0.01]
0.00	-0.54*	.13	-4.08	[-0.81, -0.28]
7.39	-0.66*	.16	-4.02	[-0.99, -0.33]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

 $n = 161$ .\* $p < .001$ . \*\* $p < .05$ .**Table 13***Conditional Effects: Work Climate Autonomy as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive**Affect*

Work Climate Autonomy	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-7.38	-0.43*	.11	-3.80	[-0.66, -0.20]
0.00	-0.44*	.07	-6.12	[-0.59, -0.30]
7.38	-0.46*	.09	-5.10	[-0.64, -0.28]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

 $n = 158$ .\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 14**

*Conditional Effects: Participative Decision Making as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life Satisfaction*

Work Climate Autonomy	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-0.68	-0.52**	.19	-2.72	[-0.90, -0.14]
0.00	-0.50*	.14	-3.59	[-0.77, -0.22]
0.68	-0.47*	.16	-2.89	[-0.80, -0.15]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

$n = 159$ .

\* $p < .001$ . \*\* $p < .05$ .

**Table 15**

*Conditional Effects: Participative Decision Making as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive Affect*

Work Climate Autonomy	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-0.68	-0.31**	.10	-2.96	[-0.52, -0.10]
0.00	-0.37*	.07	-4.94	[-0.53, -0.22]
0.68	-0.44*	.09	-4.88	[-0.62, -0.26]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

$n = 156$ .

\* $p < .001$ . \*\* $p < .05$ .

### **Multiple Regression Analysis: Work Climate, Job Insecurity, and Subjective Wellbeing**

I conducted multiple regression analysis to test my hypotheses related to work climate, and to understand if there were correlations between the dependent and independent variables as well as whether the predictor variable (work climate) accounted for variance in the dependent variable (subjective wellbeing, as measured by positive affect and life satisfaction). I also

completed moderation analysis to understand if work climate moderated subjective wellbeing. For both analysis processes, I ran separate tests for each measure of subjective wellbeing.

The second research question, does work climate moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing, as measured by positive affect and life satisfaction, considered the following three hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between job insecurity and work climate.
- Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between work climate and subjective wellbeing.
- Hypothesis 6: Work climate will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among life satisfaction, work climate, and job insecurity are reported in Table 16 and the same information is reported in Table 17 for positive affect, work climate, and job insecurity. The data presented in both tables support hypotheses 4 and 5, and thus, the null hypotheses cannot be rejected. In summary, a significant negative correlation was found between job insecurity and the following three variables: life satisfaction, positive affect, and work climate. A significant positive correlation was discovered between the dependent variables, life satisfaction and positive affect, and work climate. Thus, we cannot accept the null hypothesis for hypotheses 4 and 5.

**Table 16**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Life Satisfaction, Work Climate and Job*

*Insecurity*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Life Satisfaction	5.00	1.17		.23*	-.39*
2. Work Climate	85.81	17.51	.23*		-.48*
3. Job Insecurity	2.61	0.75	-.39*	-.48*	

*Note.*  $n = 161$ .

\* $p = <.001$ .

**Table 17**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Positive Affect, Work Climate and Job*

*Insecurity*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Positive Affect	3.69	0.66		.19*	-.47*
2. Work Climate	85.84	17.54	.19*		-.47*
3. Job Insecurity	2.60	0.75	-.47*	-.47*	

*Note.*  $n = 158$ .

\* $p = <.001$ .

Hypothesis 6 predicted that work climate will moderate subjective wellbeing, as measured by life satisfaction and positive affect, when job insecurity is present. Sixteen percent of the variability in life satisfaction was accounted for by job insecurity and work climate and 22% of the variability in positive affect was accounted for by job insecurity and work climate. The multiple regression analysis outcomes are reflected in Tables 18 and 19. Work climate was not shown to be a predictor of positive affect or life satisfaction. However, job insecurity was shown to predict both life satisfaction and positive affect.

**Table 18**

*Multiple Regression Analysis in Predicting Life Satisfaction Through Work Climate and Job*

*Insecurity*

Predictor Variables	<i>B</i>	95% CI	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	6.17	[4.76, 7.58]	0.71		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.57	[-0.83, -0.32]	0.13	-0.36	<.001
Work Climate	0.00	[-0.00, 0.01]	0.00	0.05	.478
R <sup>2</sup>	0.16				
$\Delta R^2$	0.16				

*Note.* CI = confidence interval.

The dependent variable is life satisfaction.

**Table 19**

*Multiple Regression Analysis in Predicting Positive Affect Through Work Climate and Job*

*Insecurity*

Predictor Variables	<i>B</i>	95% CI	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.94	[4.18, 5.71]	0.38		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.43	[-0.57, -0.29]	0.07	-0.49	<.001
Work Climate	0.00	[-0.00, 0.00]	0.00	-0.03	.656
R <sup>2</sup>	0.22				
$\Delta R^2$	0.22				

*Note.* CI = confidence interval.

The dependent variable is positive affect.

### **Moderation Analysis: Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity on Subjective**

#### **Wellbeing**

The final analysis conducted was moderation analysis. Summarized in Tables 20 and 21, the moderation analysis examined work climate (moderator), job insecurity (independent variable), and both life satisfaction and positive affect (dependent variables). The analysis indicated that a strong effect existed between job insecurity and both life satisfaction and positive

affect, as reflected in the stated statistical significance. However, a strong effect between work climate (moderator) and both life satisfaction and positive affect (dependent variables) did not exist, which was reflected in the lack of statistical significance. Furthermore, the interaction term did not meet any significance threshold; thus, it can be concluded that the moderator variable, work climate, did not influence the relationship between the independent variable, job insecurity and the dependent variables. As Tables 22 and 23 demonstrate, the focal predictor, job insecurity, had a significant effect on both variables, and since the interaction, or moderation, was not significant, the effect of the focal predictor did not depend on the value of the moderator, work climate. As a result, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

**Table 20**

*Moderation Analysis: Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life Satisfaction*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.84	0.82		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.55	0.13	-0.35	<.001
Work Climate	0.00	0.00	0.10	.306
Interaction Effect (JI & WC)	-0.07	0.09	-0.06	.417

*Note.* The dependent variable is life satisfaction.

JI = Job Insecurity; WC = Work Climate

**Table 21**

*Moderation Analysis: Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive Affect*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.85	0.44		<.001
Job Insecurity	-0.43	0.07	-0.48	<.001
Work Climate	-0.00	0.00	-0.01	.872
Interaction Effect (JI & WC)	-0.02	0.05	-0.03	.665

*Note.* The dependent variable is positive affect.

JI = Job Insecurity; WC = Work Climate

**Table 22***Conditional Effects: Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Life Satisfaction*

Work Climate	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-17.51	-0.45**	.20	-2.3	[-0.85, -0.05]
.00	-0.55*	.13	-4.17	[-0.82, -0.29]
17.51	-0.66*	.16	-4.00	[-0.98, -0.33]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

$n = 161$ .

\* $p < .001$ . \*\* $p < .05$ .

**Table 23***Conditional Effects: Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Positive Affect*

Work Climate	Effect	se	t	95% CI
-17.54	-0.40*	.11	-3.60	[-0.61, -0.18]
.00	-0.43*	.07	-5.90	[-0.57, -0.28]
17.54	-0.46*	.09	-5.11	[-0.63, -0.28]

Note. CI = confidence interval.

$n = 158$ .

\* $p < .001$ .

## Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the statistical results from examination of the hypotheses in this study. A summary of descriptive statistics was followed by a summary of multiple regression and moderation analyses. Four of the six hypotheses were supported; correlations were found between manager autonomy support, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing and between work climate, job insecurity, and subjective wellbeing. As reflected in the moderation analysis, two hypotheses were not supported: manager autonomy support as a moderator of job insecurity and subjective wellbeing, and work climate as a moderator of job insecurity and subjective

wellbeing. However, both measures of manager autonomy support were predictors of positive affect. Job insecurity was also shown to predict life satisfaction and positive affect.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

This study aimed to understand if manager autonomy support and/or work climate moderated job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. It was hypothesized that both moderating variables, manager autonomy support and work climate, would control the interaction between the independent variable (job insecurity) and the dependent variable (subjective wellbeing). It was also hypothesized that significant correlations would exist between each of the variables. To address these questions, a quantitative survey was conducted, using the following six scales: 1) the SWLS to measure subjective wellbeing, 2) the positive affect items from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) to also measure subjective wellbeing, 3) the Participative Decision Making Items scale to measure manager autonomy support, 4) six autonomy-related items from the WCQ to also measure manager autonomy support, 5) the Hellgren Job Insecurity scale to measure job insecurity, and 6) the WCQ to measure work climate.

The results showed that four of the hypotheses were supported in full. More specifically, the results of this study observed significant correlations between each of the following variables: job insecurity and work climate, job insecurity and subjective wellbeing, work climate and subjective wellbeing, and manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing. While hypothesis 3: Manager autonomy support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing was not supported, an interesting finding from the research was that manager autonomy support was found to be a predictor of positive affect, one of the two measures of subjective wellbeing. Also, job insecurity was shown to predict and cause both low life satisfaction and positive affect, both measures of subjective wellbeing. Pertaining to work climate, this study identified significant correlations between the variables of job insecurity and work climate as well as between subjective wellbeing and work climate. Finally, work climate

did not demonstrate prediction of job insecurity or subjective wellbeing, nor was work climate shown to be a moderator of job insecurity or subjective wellbeing.

This chapter presents and summarizes the study results related to relevant literature and provides study limitations as well as several important contributions that this study makes to the understanding of the research questions. Finally, contributions, limitations, and implications for future research and immediate application are shared.

### **Job Insecurity and Subjective Wellbeing**

Out of a total of 162 respondents to the online survey, 17% ( $n = 27$ ) of respondents indicated that they were experiencing high job insecurity as measured by the Hellgren Job Insecurity scale. This section of the survey asked about both quantitative job insecurity (a sample item: I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to) and qualitative job insecurity (a sample item: My future career opportunities in the organization are favorable). Much research has been completed regarding the phenomenon of job insecurity and its impact, but few studies have measured how frequently high job insecurity is experienced by employees. One study by Too et al. (2021) reported that 47% of their sample reported high levels of job insecurity. Furthermore, Pfeffer (2018) reported that contingent work, along with layoffs, have become normalized and Allvin et al. (2011) agreed by writing that job insecurity has been recognized as a common stressor in the workplace and employees have no choice but to manage the impact of job insecurity. These findings support the proposal that regardless of the approach to the measurement of job insecurity, studying this phenomenon is important to understand the health and wellbeing of employees and organizations more fully.

This study uncovered a significant negative correlation between job insecurity and subjective wellbeing ( $r = -.40$ ;  $p = < .001$  for life satisfaction and  $r = -.48$ ;  $p = < .001$  for

positive affect). This finding likely indicates that when job insecurity rises, wellbeing decreases. These findings are well substantiated in the literature. For example, in DeWitte et al.'s (2016) meta-analysis of 57 longitudinal studies, 89% reflected a negative correlation between job insecurity and psychological health and wellbeing. Researchers reported that a threat of job loss is linked to psychological damage and reduced wellbeing (Klandermans & van Vuuren, 1999; Klandermans et al., 2010) and chronic stress (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). Employees facing insecurity view their current resources as insufficient because job insecurity conveys unpredictability and uncontrollability (De Witte, 1999).

One theory that examines the correlation between job insecurity and decreased health and wellbeing is the extension of appraisal theory by Vander Elst, et al. (2016), which articulated that employees view job insecurity as stressful and threatening because important work roles or tasks may be threatened or taken away. Additionally, Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) proposed that appraisal theory can also explain that employees who are unable to control the fate of their job are likely to withdraw from the organization, resulting in decreased job performance and commitment. The conservation of resources (COR) theory explained that when there is a threat to resources, employees will work to maintain those resources. Employment is viewed as a valuable resource and if threatened, job strain is likely to result, causing less job engagement and productivity. The breaking of the psychological contract, which occurs when organizations conduct large scale layoffs, could also explain the resulting uncertainty employees experience (e.g., Lopez, et al., 2017; Van Hootegem & De Witte, 2019).

In the current study, through multiple regression analysis, job insecurity was shown to predict both life satisfaction ( $B = -0.54, p = <.001$ ) and positive affect ( $B = -0.44, p <.001$ ), two measures of subjective wellbeing. While Burgard et al. (2009) identified that job insecurity is a

predictor of health, other research points only to a correlation. Thus, this finding that job insecurity can directly predict subjective wellbeing is an important finding for organizations to consider when making decisions that will impact employee subjective wellbeing during periods of higher job insecurity.

### **Job Insecurity and Manager Autonomy Support**

Out of a total of 160 respondents, 18% ( $n = 29$ ) indicated that they experienced high participative decision making, a measure of manager autonomy support and 13% ( $n = 21$ ) of 162 respondents said they received autonomy from their manager, as measured by work climate autonomy. Most published research on manager autonomy support has cited the benefits, but rarely reported whether study participants experienced high manager autonomy support. The findings in this indicated low manager autonomy support.

This study discovered a significant negative correlation between job insecurity and manager autonomy support ( $r = -.48, p = <.001$  for work climate autonomy and  $r = -.56, p = <.001$  for participative decision making) which indicates that when job insecurity is high (or increases), manager autonomy support is low (or decreases), or vice versa. Since manager autonomy support is one way to provide job control, it is supported by the literature focused on job control and job insecurity. For example, Schreurs et al. (2010) observed that employees who reported the existence of job control were less negatively impacted by job insecurity. Joelson and Wahlquist (1987) and De Witte (1999) discovered that unpredictability and uncontrollability, two characteristics of job insecurity, reduce the perception of being in control; thus, it is likely that if employees can predict and control their future, they are likely to experience less job insecurity. Furthermore, De Witte et al. (2016) identified that higher mental wellbeing, which could include positive affect, is somewhat correlated with the volume of autonomy provided at

work. Also, Glavin and Schieman (2014) and Schreurs et al. (2010) discovered that employees who believed they had personal control experienced better mental health during times of employment stability. Collectively, the findings from this study and related previous research suggest that personal control at work matters all the time, and especially during job insecurity.

### **Manager Autonomy Support and Subjective Wellbeing**

Of the 162 respondents who answered the life satisfaction questions, 15% (n = 24) reported that they experienced high life satisfaction. Of the 160 responses to the positive affect questions, 16% (n = 25) indicated that they had high positive affect. The literature is inconsistent in reports of the strength of wellbeing so understanding how this study's findings relate to the literature is more difficult to interpret. The inconsistency between the results of this study and previous research may be impacted by the fact that organizations define and measure wellbeing differently, so comparison of unequal measures is not useful. The present study's results show a seemingly low level of wellbeing, and this deserves attention by organizations. The literature supports the statement that indirectly, performance improves when wellbeing is experienced through the attainment of general autonomy, one of the three psychological needs that if met, creates intrinsic motivation (e.g., Ryan et al., 2006; Van den Broeck et al., 2010) and specifically manager autonomy support (e.g., Deci et al., 2017; Güntert, 2015). Thus, if employees with high subjective wellbeing perform at higher levels, it is in an organization's best interest to actively try to improve employee wellbeing since high wellbeing creates both positive organizational outcomes and personal employee outcomes.

One approach an organization can take to improve employee wellbeing is through leverage and encouragement of leadership behaviors related to manager autonomy support. Importantly, another of the study's findings was that a significant positive correlation exists

between manager autonomy support ( $r = .33, p = <.001$  for participative decision making and life satisfaction;  $r = .23, p = <.001$  for autonomy-related work climate and life satisfaction;  $r = .31, p = <.001$  for participative decision making and positive affect;  $r = .16, p = <.001$  for autonomy-related work climate and positive affect). This indicates that if manager autonomy support is high, or increases, it is likely that subjective wellbeing will also be high. Many researchers have uncovered that when autonomy in general increases, job stress decreases, job satisfaction increases, physical and mental health increase and wellbeing increases (e.g., Fallman et al., 2019; Gardner, 2020; Kath et al., 2012).

While the literature contains many examples of manager autonomy support being correlated with greater job satisfaction (e.g., Deci, 2017), job commitment (Chang et al., 2015), prosocial work behaviors, engagement, and proactive behavior, lower turnover intentions (Slemp et al., 2018), work engagement (Gillet et al., 2015) and higher intrinsic motivation (Jungert et al., 2020), minimal research exists regarding manager provided autonomy and the impact on wellbeing and health specifically. Existing research related to the topic includes the study conducted by Rooney et al. (2009) who claimed that managers influence employees' perceptions of job control or work environment and by Lee and Ravichandran (2019) who noted that when managers provide autonomy, employee wellbeing increases.

Finally, the results of this study showed that both measures of manager autonomy support, participative decision making ( $B = 0.19, p < .05$ ) and work climate autonomy ( $B = -0.01, p < .05$ ) were significant predictors of positive affect, but not of life satisfaction. Urbanaviciute, et al. (2018) identified autonomy as a moderator of job insecurity and turnover intentions. Most research findings related to autonomy or manager autonomy support and any aspect of wellbeing are correlational findings and not predictive (e.g., De Witte et al., 2016; Ryan et al., 2008; Van

Doninck et al., 2023). This creates a potential research agenda to understand the frequency of predictive relationships, as well as an HRD practitioner agenda to implement the findings in organizations.

### **Manager Autonomy Support as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Subjective Wellbeing**

This study proposed that manager autonomy support would moderate job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. However, the results showed the moderator variable, manager autonomy support, does not influence the relationship between the independent variable, job insecurity and the dependent variable, subjective wellbeing. The moderation between the two measures of manager autonomy support and the two measures of subjective wellbeing was not significant ( $B = 0.01, p = .264$  for work climate autonomy and life satisfaction;  $B = -0.00, p = .521$  for work climate autonomy and positive affect;  $B = 0.26, p = .111$  for participative decision making and life satisfaction;  $B = 0.09, p = .273$  for participative decision making and positive affect) so the effect of job insecurity does not depend on the amount of manager autonomy support. This means that, irrespective of manager autonomy support available, employees may experience a significant impact on their subjective wellbeing when job insecurity is present. Despite this result, the finding that manager autonomy support predicts job positive affect is an important finding, with both scholarly and practitioner implications.

### **Job Insecurity and Work Climate**

The WCQ, as it has been applied in most research, positions the scaled items as a measure of manager autonomy support (Baard et al, 2004). This study used six items from the full 15-item scale that were most clearly aligned with manager autonomy support as one method to explore perception of manager autonomy support. To assess the work climate, this study included all items from the WCQ as a measure of general manager support. A similar approach

was taken by Wu and Li (2019) who applied the full work WCQ as a measurement of supportive work climate in their study.

The present study uncovered a significant negative correlation between job insecurity and work climate ( $r = -.48, p = <.001$ ), which indicates that if job insecurity is high, work climate is perceived as low, and vice versa. Work climate assesses the degree of support, understanding, care, acceptance, and trust received from one's manager. This result could be partially explained by the Job Demand-Control Model (1979), which stated that as job demands increase, job strain is likely to increase and as job control increases, job strain is likely to decrease; this is because job control is a buffer between job demands and job strain. Job insecurity could be defined as a job demand because of the threat to employment or job qualities.

### **Work Climate and Subjective Wellbeing**

A significant positive correlation was identified between work climate and both measures of subjective wellbeing ( $r = .23, p = <.001$  for life satisfaction and  $r = .19, p = <.001$  for positive affect). If either variable is high, or increases, the other is likely to increase as well. Work climate was not shown to be a predictor of positive affect or life satisfaction. Wu and Li (2019) discovered that a supportive work climate, measured by the WCQ had an indirect effect on life satisfaction via autonomous motivation. This correlation could be explained by SDT, which claims that employees' functioning is influenced by the work environment, which has the potential to either frustrate or satisfy psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Inceoglu et al. (2018) discovered a consistent theme in a review of leadership behavior and employee wellbeing literature; leaders have the power to shape the work environment. Rigby and Ryan (2018) agreed and stated, "Perhaps the most influential factor in engagement and motivation is how one experiences one's direct manager" (p. 140). As noted in the former paragraph, work climate

questions focus on the manager's behaviors as it pertains to interaction with employees in a significant manner.

### **Work Climate as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Subjective Wellbeing**

This study aimed to explore if work climate moderated job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. Work climate does not influence the relationship between the independent variable, job insecurity and the dependent variables ( $B = 0.00$ ,  $p = .306$  for life satisfaction and  $B = -0.00$ ,  $p = .872$  for positive affect); furthermore, nor does the effect of job insecurity depend on the value of the moderator, work climate. Despite the correlations observed between these variables, this study did not support the hypothesis that work climate would be a factor of the work environment that could lessen the impact of job insecurity on subjective wellbeing.

### **Contributions**

This section highlights contributions to the body of literature from this study on the phenomenon of manager autonomy support, job insecurity, work climate, and subjective wellbeing. Studying the relationship between job insecurity, manager autonomy support, and subjective wellbeing provided a new lens on these constructs as the literature does not reflect similar studies. First, regarding job insecurity, the significant negative correlation between job insecurity and both positive affect and life satisfaction, as well as the finding that job insecurity predicted life satisfaction and positive affect, are important contributions to existing knowledge about job insecurity and its consequences. Since this study corroborates earlier research, the idea that job insecurity is bad for employee wellbeing is proving to be an unfortunate and timeless phenomenon. Organizations would benefit from re-thinking decisions that lead to job insecurity because of the negative implications that extend beyond employee health and wellbeing to employee behaviors that negatively influence organizational health, such as decreased work

satisfaction, performance, effort, engagement, commitment, and productivity (e.g., Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 2010).

From my own perspective as a long-time HRD practitioner who has been tasked with delivering change management interventions to help employees and managers cope with change related to events such as layoffs and restructuring, I do not believe the dialogue among leaders sufficiently includes the impact of these organizational decisions. One major contribution from this study is to provide continued and additional supportive rationale for organizations and the managers that make decisions about employee's livelihood. Since Uchitelle (2006) found that job stability increases employee commitment and productivity, two valuable behaviors for organizations, HRD professionals should recognize the importance of their work with organizational leaders to influence decisions related to actions that create insecurity, aiming to maintain job security whenever possible.

Second, this research contributes to what is known about manager autonomy support. Participants reported seemingly low levels of participative decision making (18%) and work climate autonomy (13%) which raises concerns for HRD practitioners and organization management since these measures of manager autonomy support are correlated with wellbeing and organizational behaviors. The significant correlation between manager autonomy support and job insecurity provides exciting potential to motivate managers to provide more autonomy when the organization is undergoing actions like restructuring or layoffs that are known to create job insecurity. Another contribution related to manager autonomy support is that both measures of manager autonomy support, participative decision making and work climate autonomy, were shown to be predictors of positive affect, but not of life satisfaction. The literature related to autonomy or manager autonomy support and any component of wellbeing are primarily

correlational findings and not predictive (e.g., Deci et al., 2017; Mokgata et al., 2022; Slemp et al., 2018). Therefore, the strength of this relationship as found in the current study contributes to the knowledge base and encourages support for additional research and HRD application.

Third, this research contributes to knowledge about the level of subjective wellbeing some people experience in the workplace. In this study sample, only 15% of respondents reported experience of high life satisfaction and 16% experienced high positive affect. The contribution of this finding is simply to further the understanding of current wellbeing as experienced by a group of employees since reports of the strength of wellbeing vary due to different definitions and measurements. Since organizations can influence the subjective wellbeing of employees, as stated above, this is an important finding. Also, a significant correlation was observed between subjective wellbeing and manager autonomy support, adding new knowledge to what is known about the important impact of manager provided autonomy. This finding has potentially significant implications for organizations and employees. Managers have agency in how much autonomy they provide and knowledge of the impact they potentially have on their employees' wellbeing through their actions could motivate managers to start or continue to provide autonomy support. This further emphasizes the criticality to provide managerial training and development that emphasizes the importance of autonomy support, and to enable cultural encouragement for providing such support.

Both measures of manager autonomy support, participative decision making and work climate autonomy, were shown in this study to be predictors of positive affect, but not of life satisfaction. Since most reported research findings related to autonomy or manager autonomy support, and any aspect of wellbeing, are correlational findings only, this study's finding is

significant and creates a potential research agenda to try and uncover more predictive relationships.

Regarding work climate, this study appears to have used the 15-item scale more broadly than past researchers, who tend to have limited use for examination of manager autonomy support. I interpreted the questions, such as whether the respondent's manager fully answers questions and understands emotions, as general manager support. This is another unique contribution; the lens through which the results from the application of the fully WCQ can be interpreted. A significant negative correlation was discovered between work climate and job insecurity, and a positive correlation was discovered between work climate and both measures of subjective wellbeing. Leadership has been considered in the literature to have significant power to shape the environment and employee wellbeing (Inceoglu et al., 2018; Rigby & Ryan, 2018). This somewhat new perspective on the impact of general manager support is an important finding because of the impact it could have on scholarly research and practitioner practice.

Finally, this study contributed something unique since the data was collected post-COVID-19 pandemic, in the spring of 2022. Due to the pandemic, remote working became mandatory for many employees in the sample, while, at the same time, some of the employees in the sample were required to be on-site every day, due to the nature of the jobs. This factor, along with increased work-related strain (Van Doninck et al., 2023) and the threat to psychological wellbeing (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021) that accompanied the pandemic, should be taken into consideration when reviewing this study's results and discussion. Results may have differed if the study had been administered another time. For example, if the data were collected at an earlier stage of the pandemic, maybe the results would have reflected higher manager autonomy support since employees and managers were adjusting to new work locations

and methods of working and new routines had not yet been established. Another outcome that may have been different is the level of reported job insecurity as there was more uncertainty in the world in the early stages of the pandemic (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021; Van Donnick et al., 2023).

### **Limitations**

All research studies have limitations including the present one reported in this dissertation. It is not possible to include every variable, research question, or scale in the research and furthermore, so many questions and opportunities arise following analysis of results and integration with the literature.

First, if this study were to be conducted with any other organization, perhaps one with less recent experience with organizational change, in a different industry, with a larger sample, or with data collected further distanced from the pandemic, I may have uncovered different results and made different conclusions. Another consideration and potential limitation is that the data were collected at my workplace and there is a chance that this factor, and any existing relationships or perceptions, impacted participation rate and possibly, responses. Furthermore, the demographics of the sample could have influenced the results. The study's respondents all worked in the United States so perspectives of employees in other countries were not included in this study. The respondents primarily self-identified as male (84%) which is higher than the company average for men (74%) and not reflective of the United States population at large. Since only 15% of the respondents identified themselves as female and 1% as a gender identity of them, a study limitation is the lack of gender balance. Most respondents (95%) identified as being between the ages of 25-64 so the voice of older and younger employees was not well-represented. The sample reflected an educated population with 67% having earned a bachelor's

or master's degree, 17% having some college and 12% having earned an associate degree. A study limitation is that employees with only a high school education or less were not well represented. This sample represents a seasoned worker, with 69% having spent 15 or more years in the workforce and 15% more having spent between 10-14 years in the workforce. Regarding total years spent in their current role, 23% have spent 15+ years, 27% have spent 3-5 years, and 25% have spent 6-9 years in their current role. The study limitation for the years worked demographic questions is that this study does not reflect deeply less tenured employees. Respondents had three choices for job level: professional, supervisory/managerial, and operational/technical/administrative. The limitation is the final category; perhaps it was too broad. Thirty percent of the respondents identified as operational/technical/administrative so we do not know about the specifics about their job level and as a result, one type of level may be underrepresented in this study. Finally, 68% of respondents said they were not people managers and 32% said they were. Therefore, this study also has an additional limitation in terms of understanding perspectives from mostly non-managerial employees.

Survey methodology could have impacted the results as this was a quantitative survey study that only considered self-reported responses. No observations, manager or peer input, or interviews were conducted to supplement the quantitative data. As an outcome, the results reflect one point of view on each item, which could be considered a limitation.

Another study limitation is regarding the work climate, positive affect, and life satisfaction mean responses. Each data set contained outliers, which I decided to keep since they reflected my sample's perspective, and as a result the data was not normally distributed for these three scales. I experimented with removing outliers, but it did not improve the Shapiro-Wilk test

for normality. The reasons for the presence of outliers cannot be known with confidence and therefore, add a further limitation to generalization of the results.

This study, like all research, selects certain instruments and scales and leaves others out. For subjective wellbeing, this study applied two scales that measured life satisfaction and positive emotions (or affect). For manager autonomy support, this study used participative decision making and six items from the WCQ. There were other choices for scale measurement of both variables, as well as for job insecurity and work climate. Furthermore, as noted earlier in this dissertation, there are many definitions of wellbeing, including workplace wellbeing and happiness. The selection of definitional approaches and measurement are possible limitations. Future research should consider exploration of other types of wellbeing to examine if statistically significant correlations exist with manager autonomy support, work climate, and job insecurity.

This study did not focus on manager responses as this group was combined with the employee-identified sample. A study limitation, as noted in the contributions section, is understanding what managers tend to do if they experience job insecurity themselves as it pertains to providing manager autonomy support. Furthermore, consideration of the manager's perspective, as a sub-group, for all the research questions could be interesting and was not in scope for this study. Finally, this study did not examine demographics to uncover any correlations, causes or predictions of demographic variables, such as gender or workplace tenure, with the study variables. This initiative was also deemed out of scope, but it represents an area of future inquiry.

### **Implications**

Despite this study's results, contribution to knowledge, and limitations, several recommendations for both researcher and practitioner application are made. The suggestions are

intended to further knowledge of the study's topics. The following section presents implications for practitioners and researchers.

### **Practitioner Implications**

HRD practitioners should work with organization leaders to influence decisions that create insecurity, with the goal of maintaining job security, since job insecurity's negative impacts are overwhelmingly clear. The benefits to employees and organizations for efforts to reduce perceived job insecurity are significant. There are alternatives to layoffs, plant closing, etc., such as temporary reduced work hours, suspended hiring, delayed company expenditures, and increased service or product offerings to customers, perhaps at a higher price.

Another implication for HRD practitioners related to job insecurity is, if it is unavoidable, for an organization to provide robust employee support. For example, at my place of employment, training was created and delivered, focusing on identifying and addressing stress, acknowledging what is in a person's control and acknowledging what is not, and building resiliency. Secondly, providing manager training to be empathic, to address concerns, and to be supportive could be a way for managers to empathetically acknowledge that job insecurity is difficult. Lastly, providing practical resources such as interview skill building exercises and resume writing, could prepare employees for finding a new job, where relevant.

The finding of a significant correlation between manager autonomy support and job insecurity, and between work climate and job insecurity, provide the exciting potential to motivate managers to provide more autonomy and general support when organizations are taking actions such as restructuring or layoffs. HRD practitioners can include in leadership development programming awareness and skill-building on how to provide manager autonomy support and general work climate support. A business case can be made for why an investment in these skills

will create value for the organization if they are demonstrated especially since this study found that manager autonomy support is a predictor of positive affect, which, as a component of subjective wellbeing, and is another element of the recommended leadership development programs. Efforts to help leaders see the connection between employee subjective wellbeing and their actions during times of job insecurity could be a powerful motivator for managers to behave in a way that supports wellbeing outcomes. This study also connected manager autonomy support and autonomy and job control in general to positive organizational behaviors. These leadership behaviors create success for both the employee and the organization.

Lastly, pertaining to subjective wellbeing, since reports of high or low wellbeing vary, as do the definitions and scales for measurement, additional work to develop common understandings and measurement of wellbeing would serve the practitioner and scholarly communities. Having a more precise image of the state of employee wellbeing could provide a sense of urgency for organizations to strive to increase wellbeing if it were discovered to be low. This information could be part of the recommended leadership development programming.

### **Scholarly and Research Implications**

Applying the results from this study, researchers have more information about the impact of COVID-19 on subjective wellbeing, job insecurity, manager autonomy support, and work climate. As acknowledged in the limitations section, data collected before the pandemic, or earlier in the pandemic years, may have been different, and the results of this study reflect a point-in-time view of an employee sample from one organization. The other factor of note about the timing of the study and the organization's history is the amount of organizational change that likely led to job insecurity that the employees in the sample had experienced. The change experienced by the sample, compounded by the recency effect of the COVID-19 pandemic may

have defined this sample in a unique way. Furthermore, the findings that job insecurity predicted subjective wellbeing and manager autonomy support positive affect may help scholars understand the pandemic's consequences.

This study employed two scales to measure subjective wellbeing as well as two scales to measure manager autonomy support. The scales asked the questions I wanted to be answered and I believe I, hopefully along with my readers, will have a nuanced and unique understanding of both constructs. Yet, if I were to conduct similar research in the future, I may simplify the selection of scales to create more straightforward analysis and interpretation.

I have identified several areas for future research for scholars to consider. One area relates to the low rate of manager autonomy support received, as reported in my study. Additional research could work to uncover the level of manager autonomy that employees experience. Perhaps this study's sample does not reflect the general population, or maybe it does, for similar types of organizations; alternatively, maybe a larger sample size could provide additional insights. Future investigation could provide more understanding of this finding.

Related to manager autonomy support and job insecurity, scholars could explore new questions such as the following: do managers retain or retract autonomy from their employees when they are personally experiencing job insecurity?, do managers increase the level of autonomy support if they know that their employee is experiencing high job insecurity?, and if an employee reports high subjective wellbeing, will they elicit more manager autonomy support through their actions, or their attitude?

The research, including from this study, indicated that manager autonomy support provides the same benefits that job insecurity reduces, such as wellbeing, psychological needs, job performance, and job satisfaction (Güntert, 2015; Oostlander et al., 2014; Slemp et al., 2018).

There is an opportunity to learn more about the impact on the psychological needs of competence and relatedness when a manager does not provide autonomy, perhaps through a mixed methods or qualitative method that includes interviews. Self Determination Theory provides a plethora of research on psychological needs that is recommended to review and incorporate.

The finding that both measures of manager autonomy support were predictors of positive affect, but not of life satisfaction is a new finding among the literature. It would be interesting to see in what, if any, circumstances these findings were replicated. Since life satisfaction was not predicted by manager autonomy support, additional exploration could help understand a possible reason why only positive affect was predicted by this variable.

Work climate, while not shown to be a predictor of positive affect or life satisfaction, was significantly positively correlated with both subjective wellbeing measures and significantly negatively correlated with job insecurity. Future research could test again the possibility of work climate being a predictor of wellbeing since the one prediction that this study did find used, in part, the work climate scale items. This study identified that manager autonomy predicted positive affect and manager autonomy support was measured, in part, by six of the work climate items; thus, it is logical to assume a prediction between the full work climate scale and at least positive affect. Furthermore, future research around work climate could study more deeply the WCQ from the perspective that the author used (measuring broad manager support) and relationships with job insecurity and subjective wellbeing.

Finally, including additional, or a different balance of, demographic variables, could change the outcome and perhaps the moderation analyses would have shown that manager autonomy support and work climate moderated job insecurity and subjective wellbeing. For

example, the sample included employees who work in the US so studying employees in other countries, and/or, collecting data on respondent's race, ethnicity and cultural background could be an avenue for additional research. Specifically, studying the role of gender in the relationship between job insecurity, manager autonomy support, work climate, and subjective wellbeing is worth investigating. Additionally, future research could study organizations that include, for example, the following: 1) a gender balance that reflects the broader population, 2) more employees on the young and old end of the age range spectrum, 3) a population with a high school education, 4) less tenured employees, 5) more delineated job levels, and 6) a more even manager/non-manager balance.

## **Conclusions**

The discussion section summarized the results of the present study, connected each finding to relevant literature, and highlighted the main contributions of the research. Support for existing knowledge was provided, through the significant correlations found between the following: 1) manager autonomy support and job insecurity, 2) manager autonomy support and subjective wellbeing, 3) job insecurity and subjective wellbeing, 4) work climate and job insecurity, and 5) work climate and subjective wellbeing. Furthermore, manager autonomy support was identified as a predictor of positive affect and job insecurity was shown to predict both life satisfaction and positive affect, the former of which brings new insight to our understanding of these topics. Study limitations were acknowledged, and several scholarly, researcher and practitioner implications were provided. HRD can apply the findings from this study to support organizational development and employee development. In addition, research on manager autonomy support, work climate, job insecurity and subjective wellbeing hopefully continue because, despite all we know about the topics, there is more to discover.

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## Appendix A

## Manager Email to Participants

## U of MN Student Survey



To  
Cc: Sara Swenson



9/7/2022

You forwarded this message on 9/26/2022 8:09 PM.

team,

One of our employees, Sara Swenson, is pursuing a PhD at the University of Minnesota, and to complete the degree, she is conducting research via an online survey about the work environment and wellbeing.

We have approved her sending you an invitation to participate in her research. Your confidential and anonymous responses to the topics included in the survey are important to us and are different from the engagement survey. A summary of results and recommendations will be provided to HR and business leaders.

Your participation is completely optional and there are no consequences of not participating. If you decide to participate, doing so should take no more than 10 minutes to complete the survey.

You will receive this email from Sara Swenson at [swen0341@umn.edu](mailto:swen0341@umn.edu).

Thanks,



## U of MN Student Survey



Sara Swenson  
To: Sara Swenson



9/26/2022

Dear team,

One of our employees, Sara Swenson, is pursuing a PhD at the University of Minnesota, and to complete the degree, she is conducting research via an online survey about the work environment and wellbeing.

I have approved her sending you an invitation to participate in her research. Your confidential and anonymous responses to the topics included in the survey are important to us and are different from the engagement survey. A summary of results and recommendations will be provided to the leadership and HR team.

Your participation is completely optional and there are no consequences of not participating. If you decide to participate, doing so should take no more than 10 minutes to complete the survey.

You will receive an email from Sara Swenson at [swen0341@umn.edu](mailto:swen0341@umn.edu) early next week. Please check your junk folder if it is not in your inbox.

Thanks,



## Appendix B

### Participant Email and Consent Form

Dear COMPANY employee,

You are invited to participate in a University of Minnesota research survey. I am working towards my PhD and this survey is being conducted for my dissertation research. The [COMPANY] has agreed to allow me to conduct this survey and you were selected because you are a US-based employee on this team. The research aims to understand your perception of behaviors your manager may demonstrate, your wellbeing and other factors of the work environment.

Your participation is completely optional and most people will be able to complete the survey in less than 10 minutes. If you do decide to participate, your responses to the questions are confidential and anonymous. You will have an opportunity to provide your email address if you want to see the summary of the results and separately, if you want to be entered into a random drawing for one of (10) \$50 Amazon gift cards. In both cases, your email address will be entered on a separate page of the survey, created using a different link. This enables your survey responses to remain separate from your email address, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. A summary of results and recommendations will be provided to the [COMPAPNY] HR and business leaders.

Please carefully review the attached consent for participation; if you start and complete the survey via the link below, your consent to participate will be assumed. You are free to stop, exit, and not complete the survey at any time without consequence.

Thank you for considering participating!

**You can access the survey [here](#).**

If you have any questions about this survey, please reach out to the researcher, Sara Swenson at [swen0341@umn.edu](mailto:swen0341@umn.edu) or 612.275.8770.

Sara Swenson  
HRD PhD Candidate  
University of Minnesota  
612.275.8770

[attachment: consent form]

### Consent Form

**Title of Research Study:** Manager Autonomy Support as a Moderator of Job Insecurity and Subjective Wellbeing

### **Investigator Team Contact Information: Dr. Kenneth Bartlett**

For questions about research appointments, the research study, research results, or other concerns, call the study team at:

Investigator Name: Dr. Kenneth Bartlett Investigator Departmental Affiliation: University of Minnesota, Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, CEHD Phone Number: 612-624-4935 Email Address: bartlett@umn.edu	Student Investigator Name: Sara Swenson Phone Number: 612.275.8770 Email Address: swen0341@umn.edu
--	--

**Supported By:** This research is supported by the University of Minnesota and the [COMPANY].

### ***Key Information About This Research Study***

The following is a short summary to help you decide whether or not to be a part of this research study. More detailed information is listed later.

#### **What is research?**

The goal of research is to learn new things in order to help people in the future. Investigators learn things by following the same protocol with a number of participants, so they do not usually make changes to the plan for individual research participants. You, as an individual, may or may not be helped by volunteering for a research study.

#### **Why am I being invited to take part in this research study?**

I am asking you to take part in this research study because you are a US-based member of the [COMPANY].

#### **What should I know about a research study?**

- This document explains this research study to you.
- Whether or not you participate is up to you.
- You can choose not to participate.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

#### **Why is this research being done?**

The research aims to understand your perception of behaviors your manager may demonstrate, your wellbeing and other factors of the work environment.

#### **How long will the research last?**

We expect that this online survey will take 8-10 minutes to complete.

#### **What will I need to do to participate?**

You will be asked to answer a series of 43 questions and an additional set of demographic questions.

Participants who manage employees are asked to answer an additional 6 questions.

**Is there any way that being in this study could be bad for me?**

There are no known risks of participating in this survey; however, participants may experience a negative feeling if, when responding to questions about the work environment, their manager, and their wellbeing, any of these areas are not perceived as high as they would like them to be.

**Will participating in this study help me in any way?**

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from you taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include better self-awareness through answering the survey questions that ask you to reflect on your manager's style, the work environment and your personal circumstances regarding mood and life satisfaction.

**Is there compensation provided for participation?**

If you chose to provide your email address, through a link separate from the survey questions, you will be entered in a random drawing to win one of (10) \$50 Amazon gift cards. The probability of any participant winning varies based on the total number of participants.

**What happens if I do not want to be in this research?**

You do not have to participate in this research and can delete this email if you chose not to participate. Choosing not to participate will not result in any consequence to you and will not negatively affect your present or future employment.

***Detailed Information About This Research Study***

The following is more detailed information about this study.

**How many people will be studied?**

It is unknown how many people will participate in the study.

**What happens if I say “Yes, I want to be in this research”?**

If you choose to participate, please click on the survey link in the email and complete the survey. Upon survey completion, you are done. Completing the survey implies your consent to the information provided in this consent document.

**What happens to the information collected for the research?**

Survey data is anonymous and confidential and doesn't include personally identifiable information. The email used to contact you cannot be associated with your survey responses. The data will be analyzed and summarized to look for trends. A summary of findings and a summary of the data, which will have no personally identifying information, will be shared with your company's HR and business leadership team, with the intention to illuminate employee perspectives on the surveyed topics. I may publish the results of this research, which includes a summary of findings, but no personally identifying information, including the company name, will be published.

**What will be done with my data when this study is over?**

I may use and/or share data collected through this survey for future research. The data may be shared with researchers/institutions outside of University of Minnesota and could include for

profit companies. We will not ask for your consent before using or sharing the data. No personal identifiers will be associated with your data, which means that no one who works with the data for future research will know who you are. Therefore, you will not receive any results or financial benefit from future research done with your data.

**Whom do I contact if I have questions, concerns, or feedback about my experience?**

This research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB (Institutional Review Board) within the Human Research Protections Program (HRPP) at the University of Minnesota. To share feedback privately with the HRPP about your research experience, call the Research Participants' Advocate Line at 612-625-1650 (Toll Free: 1-888-224-8636) or go to [z.umn.edu/participants](http://z.umn.edu/participants). You are encouraged to contact the HRPP if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

**Will I have a chance to provide feedback after the study is over?**

Please contact the study team or the Human Research Protections Program (HRPP). See the "Investigator Contact Information" at the top of this form for study team contact information and "Whom do I contact if I have questions, concerns, or feedback about my experience?" directly above this paragraph for HRPP contact information.

Accessing the survey link from the email indicates your consent to take part in this survey research. Your completion of the survey implies you are consenting to participate.

## Appendix C

### Scales and Instructions Provided in Qualtrics Tool

Survey instructions: Please carefully review each of the following questions, which ask about a variety of job-related experiences. There are 43 items and it should take you less than 10 minutes to complete the full survey. There are 3 different scales used throughout the survey so respond according to the scale associated with each set of questions. Please respond honestly. Your responses are confidential and anonymous. Individual responses will not be shared with your company and anonymous responses will be analyzed together with all participants.

The following set of questions contains items that are related to your experience with the manager who is your most immediate supervisor. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree using the scale below.

1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 somewhat disagree	4 neutral	5 somewhat agree	6 agree	7 strongly agree
---------------------------	---------------	---------------------------	--------------	------------------------	------------	------------------------

1. I feel that my manager provides me choices and options.
2. I feel understood by my manager.
3. I am able to be open with my manager at work.
4. My manager conveys confidence in my ability to do well at my job.
5. I feel that my manager accepts me.
6. My manager made sure I really understood the goals of my job and what I need to do.
7. My manager encouraged me to ask questions.
8. I feel a lot of trust in my manager.
9. My manager answers my questions fully and carefully.
10. My manager listens to how I would like to do things.
11. My manager handles people's emotions very well.
12. I feel that my manager cares about me as a person.

13. I don't feel very good about the way my manager talks to me.

14. My manager tries to understand how I see things before suggesting a new way to do things.

15. I feel able to share my feelings with my manager.

Instructions: The following set of questions ask you about decision-making within your organization. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree using the scale below.

1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neither agree or disagree	4 agree	5 strongly agree
---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------------------	------------	------------------------

1. Managers encourage employees to set their own work-related goals.
2. Employees are often given a chance to voice their opinions about work-related issues.
3. Employees are allowed to make many of their own decisions about their work.
4. Managers ask for input in work-related matters.
5. In this company, employees' ideas and comments have an impact on their managers' decision making.
6. Employees are given freedom to decide how to do their job.

Instructions: The following set of questions ask you about job security. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree using the scale below.

1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neither agree or disagree	4 agree	5 strongly agree
---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------------------	------------	------------------------

1. I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to.

2. There is a risk that I will have to leave my present job in the year to come.
3. I feel uneasy about losing my job in the near future.
4. My future career opportunities in [the organization] are favourable.
5. I feel that [the organization] can provide me with a stimulating job content in the near future.
6. I believe that [the organization] will need my competence also in the future.
7. My pay development in this organization is promising.

Instructions: The following set of questions ask you about life satisfaction. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree using the scale below.

1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 Slightly disagree	4 Neither agree nor disagree	5 Slightly agree	6 Agree	7 strongly agree
---------------------------	---------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------	------------	------------------------

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Instructions: The following set of words describe different feelings and emotions. Please indicate to what extent you generally feel each emotion, on average, using the scale below.

1 very slightly or not at all	2 a little	3 moderately	4 quite a bit	5 extremely
-------------------------------------	---------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------

1. Interested
2. Excited

3. Strong
4. Enthusiastic
5. Proud
6. Alert
7. Inspired
8. Determined
9. Attentive
10. Active

*Survey participants were asked to complete the following questions if they were currently managing people.*

Instructions: The following set of questions ask you about your decision-making, as a people manager. Please indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree using the scale below.

1 strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neither agree or disagree	4 agree	5 strongly agree
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1. I encourage my employees to set their own work-related goals.
2. I often give my employees a chance to voice their opinions about work-related issues.
3. My employees are allowed to make many of their own decisions about their work.
4. I ask my employees for input in work-related matters.
5. My employees' ideas and comments have an impact on my decision making.
6. My employees are given freedom to decide how to do their job.