2020-09-25

Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions: Longitudinal Consequences for Employee Fit, Satisfaction, and Turnover

Lukic, Alexandra

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions: Longitudinal Consequences for Employee Fit, Satisfaction, and Turnover

by

Alexandra Lukic

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 2020

Abstract

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) have been associated with significant consequences for both employees and organizations, yet there is a paucity of research on this increasingly prominent corporate restructuring event. Cross-sectional research on specific companies undergoing M&A activity has provided insight on potential reasons why M&A events are more likely to fail, including inadequate Human Resources practices. The present study aimed to fill these gaps by conducting longitudinal, multi-organizational research on the causal mechanisms by which M&A fail. Specifically, this was the first study to our knowledge to analyze employee turnover intentions, person-organization fit, and job satisfaction longitudinally in relation to M&A events that occurred within various companies and industries. Results indicated that employees who experience M&A in their current organization report higher turnover intentions, while person-organization fit and job satisfaction remain stable over time. These findings are discussed within the theoretical framework of the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

Keywords: person-organization fit; job satisfaction; turnover intentions; mergers; acquisitions; longitudinal; organization; workplace.

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, A. Lukic, utilizing secondary data collected by, D. A. Mayers, Ph.D. The basis for this research study stemmed from my passion in Human Resources and improving inadequate organizational practices which negatively impact employees. Upon gaining experience in Human Resources with a company who had undergone a failed merger, I became excited to understand what could have been done differently to avoid the high turnover rate associated with two company cultures that were at odds with one another, and a lack of employee satisfaction and engagement. The current study allowed me to explore this topic in an empirical manner, which I hope to apply to real-world organizations in the near future.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Derek Chapman. I will forever be grateful that he agreed to work with me due to my unprecedented situation. He was flexible with me in choosing a topic that I was still passionate about, while keeping in mind my reduced timeline to complete my degree. His countless hours spent meeting with me and his unwavering support and encouragement will never be forgotten! As well, I would like to thank Derek's former PhD student, Dave Mayers, who allowed me to use his data. Thank you to him, and his three Research Assistants, Jan Banta, James Oblea, and Eunice Mingollo, for their hard work and time spent recruiting participants!

I would also like to thank the members of my thesis committee for their guidance and recommendations which allowed me to learn and grow as a Master's student. I feel beyond lucky to work alongside such intelligent teachers and mentors. As well, I would like to give my sincere thanks to the Graduate Studies team for responding to my countless emails and coming to quick solutions when I ran into roadblocks. Their assistance during my entire degree program is very much appreciated!

Last but not least, I would like to thank my incredible family for supporting me in all of my academic pursuits, especially this thesis. My parents were always available to listen and support me, even with the eight-hour time difference between us. My brothers' help with computer issues I faced while writing saved me hours of headache. But most of all, my family always encouraged me and gave me the strength to persist even in the most stressful times. They are my rocks and the reason I was ever able to do this!

Table of Contents

Introduction

Economic instability, proliferation of technological advances, globalization, and ‘gig economy’ trends have all come at the expense of secure and stable employment (Kalleberg, 2000, 2001; László et al, 2010; Fidalgo & Gouveia, 2012; De Stefano, 2015). To maintain a competitive advantage within such a volatile employment market, an increasing number of organizations around the globe have been implementing reorganization efforts, such as mergers and acquisitions (M&A) (Weber, 1996; Schuler & Jackson, 2001; Taylor, 2001; Fairfield-Sonn, Ogilvie, & DelVecchio, 2002). However, many M&A events do not achieve their objectives and rather, demonstrate a significantly high failure rate at approximately 75% (Weber, 1996; Schuler & Jackson, 2001). As such, organizations often lose considerable value and resources, while also creating significant trauma and tension for employees within each organization. The disturbances caused from M&A have been demonstrated to result in attitudinal and productivity issues (Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1988; Buno & Bowditch; 2003), as well as in increased turnover of vital employees (Walsh, 1988; Iverson & Pullman, 2000). Previous studies have attempted to understand the negative repercussions of these restructuring events, but have failed to explore relationships with key variables within the Industrial-Organizational Psychology field. These employee-focused variables, including job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions have the potential to shed useful light on M&A failure.

Extant research on M&A events has demonstrated that unwelcome and sudden changes within an organization are commonly associated with employees’ perceptions of insecurity, uncertainty, and loss of control, which have all been found to translate to adverse attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). Specifically, job dissatisfaction is a widely-studied affective variable which has been closely related to turnover intentions and behaviors (Barak, Nissly, and Levin, 2001). As well, person-organization fit has predicted both job satisfaction and turnover, based on the employees' level of compatibility with their work environment (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Given that an M&A event creates drastic change and is considered a major shock for those employed in each merging organization (Iverson & Pullman, 2000), it may evidently have an impact on an employees' job satisfaction, perceptions of fit, and turnover intentions.

Theoretical Grounds on M&A Outcomes

Based on the well-known Attraction, Selection, and Attrition (ASA) model (Schneider, 1987), employees select organizations to work for based on factors such as organizational culture. If the culture changes, which it naturally does following M&A, employee attrition can occur. Turnover costs organizations more than a severe financial burden due to replacement and training fees; it also impacts the productivity of the organization by disrupting operations, destabilizing routines, depleting the human intellectual capital, and eroding revenue (Staw, 1980; Mueller & Price, 1989; Dess & Shaw, 2001; Shaw, Gupta, & Delery, 2005; Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007; Kochanski & Sorensen, 2008; Ton & Huckman, 2008; Fidalgo & Gouveia, 2012). Consistent with the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), job satisfaction and person-organization fit can help to explain why employees leave their current organization. This theory suggests that turnover may occur through an accumulation of job dissatisfaction, but also can occur without deliberation following a major shock. Since an M&A is a salient shock, such an event can cause employees to enact leaving their current organization even though they were not dissatisfied and intending to quit beforehand.

Current Study

Based on how M&A events are becoming increasingly prominent and costly within the current work realm, and understanding the significant relationships with important variables, the present study aims to provide novel contributions to the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature by supporting the ASA model (Schneider, 1987) and Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). This will be the first study to our knowledge to test longitudinal changes in job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions for employees who experience an M&A event in their specific company. An advantage of the current study is that it will use secondary data collected on a multi-organizational sample, and given that M&A research has been highly industry and company-specific, our results will be more likely generalizable (Barak et al., 2001). Ultimately, the current study will contribute novelty to the workplace literature and will provide real-world organizations with invaluable empirical findings on M&A.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Mergers and Acquisitions

There are several strategies that companies implement to internally or externally reorganize, but of focus in the current paper is through mergers and acquisitions (M&A). A merger is what happens when two companies come together to form an entirely new company, while an acquisition is when one company buys out another and manages it moving forward (Schuler & Jackson, 2001). Both restructuring events are deployed in order to create more opportunity by broadening the client base, gaining flexibility, leveraging competencies, and sharing resources, which supports the attainment of goals more efficiently and cost-effectively (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). In addition, due to the changing nature of work as a result of technological advances and globalization, M&A is a manner to respond to pressures from a competitive industry while protecting market share value and reputation (Graves, 1981; Jemison & Sitkin, 1986; Marks & Mirvis, 2001). Each justification behind organizational restructuring through M&A can be summarized as a strategic decision to maintain corporate success and growth.

There are different types of M&A events, including horizontal, vertical, product extension, market extension, and unrelated. Horizontal M&A is when both participating organizations produce the same or closely related products, while vertical M&A is when the two companies had a previous buyer-seller relationship. Product extension describes when the products sold by each company do not compete directly with one another, while market extension is when the two organizations sell products in a different market altogether. Each of these categories describe M&A events that are related, but unrelated M&A is when the two firms do not sell the same product or in the same market (Walsh, 1988). Behind each type of M&A lies the expectation that such a change will benefit one or both companies in some fashion, however, the rate of M&A activity has far proceeded the rate of research, and therefore, many evidence-based gaps exist on this topic.

Limited Research

Organizational restructuring through M&A has become a commonplace occurrence for companies around the globe (Barkema & Schijven, 2008), yet despite the high prevalence, empirical research has been severely limited in scope and frequency. Although scholars and practitioners have gained interest in understanding these events, they have lacked empirical and theoretical grounds in their research. A majority of the accounts have been observations of real-world organizations who have undergone such change, and therefore, most research findings are from case studies with anecdotal evidence. These findings restrict the ability to accurately generalize to a wider population of participants, organizations, and industries. In order to explain why it has been difficult to study and collect data on this topic, it is important to recognize that M&A require a multitude of resources as they are time-consuming and tumultuous.

Many M&A contracts are signed in secrecy making it challenging to anticipate when the event will begin and conclude. There is also a lack of clear criteria to determine these dates, meaning that researchers must arbitrarily decide when to collect data for their study. In addition, having employees who remain with the organization throughout the duration of the M&A and are willing to provide their confidential data is difficult, which can explain why the literature is severely lacking on the impacts of employee attitudes and behaviors. It is crucial to consider the employee side of M&A events to understand why they are more likely to fail than succeed (Marks & Mirvis, 2001; Schuler & Jackson, 2001). The extant studies on M&A primarily focus on measures of share value, profitability, and return on investment, and find that M&A fail to achieve their monetary objectives (Jemison & Sitkin, 1986). Irrespective of whether research focuses on financial or employee-focused outcomes of M&A, the general finding is that these restructuring measures continue to be mismanaged and produce unsatisfactory results (Marks & Mirvis, 2001).

M&A Failure

Initially, intentions behind M&A seem optimistic for organizations, yet the execution proves to be more likely to fail than succeed (Shrivastava, 1986; Marks & Mirvis, 2001). Restructuring events have been found to be associated with negative outcomes for either one or both participating organizations, and in order to understand why, researchers have proposed that issues such as lost talent through turnover, culture clashes, and inadequate change management practices can help to explain (Schuler & Jackson, 2001). When organizations begin conducting meetings and negotiating contract requirements, they may promise minimal change during the M&A, however, one organization may begin to feel superior over the other and ultimately force accommodation and alteration of policies, practices, and culture (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). As such, failure can occur if there are broken promises that begin to impact the organization and employees negatively.

Like any major shock or change to the status quo, there is an anxious stage where employees are concerned and apprehensive of the M&A event (Graves, 1981). This can occur due to a lack of trust or control, as well as accounts from other companies which experienced issues due to their previous M&A event. The anxious stage is also commonly accompanied by lack of job security where employees feel unprepared for the changes in responsibility, status, and structure that had become part of their everyday work lives (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). With this, comes a loss of respect and autonomy that was earned over time at the organization, and is now being surrendered to the new organizational situation. As such, employees may decide to turn their perceptions of job insecurity into action by leaving the sinking ship before waiting to see what will happen.

M&A and Job Insecurity

Job insecurity is the discrepancy between the level of job security one experiences and the level of security one prefers. There are varying degrees by which an employee may experience job insecurity, including the perception of job loss as a whole, or loss of valued aspects of their job, such as job tasks, pay, hours, team member cohesion, and company culture (Bartley & Ferrie, 2001). Job insecurity has been found to be the most imperative stressor experienced by the working population, with profound negative consequences on well-being, such as decreased psychological and overall self-rated health, and increased somatic health concerns (Clark, Knabe, & Rätzel, 2010; De Witte, Pienaar, & De Cuyper, 2016; Ferrie et al., 2002, 2005; Hellgren & Sverke, 2003). Employees who are uncertain about the future of their work experience more stress, more counterproductive work behaviors, lower performance and productivity, and less satisfaction with work (Pollard, 2001; Feng, Lu, & Siu, 2008). Given the insecurity experienced following an organizational change, it is more likely that it will precipitate turnover intentions and actual turnover behavior (Koeske & Kirk, 1995; Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010; Amin & Akbar, 2013).

M&A and Turnover

Turbulence during an organization-wide restructuring event, such as an M&A, logically translates to a decrease in cohesion and autonomy for employees (Schaefer & Moos, 1996). Yet, it has been demonstrated that work environments with greater clarity, unity in work teams, and independence in work tasks contribute to greater job satisfaction and intent to stay on the job (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). As such, during M&A events where these factors are compromised, turnover may increase (Schaefer & Moos, 1996). One study found that over half of top management left the acquired organization during a 5-year period following the acquisition (Walsh, 1988). Specifically, the article demonstrated that turnover rates were significantly higher among top managers compared to normal rates, and visible senior executives were more prone to leaving the organization sooner compared to less visible counterparts (Walsh, 1988). Given that managers must gain years of experience prior to attaining their level within the hierarchical structure of an organization, and therefore, tend to be highly valued by their direct reports and clients, it can be costly to lose these individuals to turnover. Not only are replacement and training fees extremely costly for the organization, especially for higher-level positions, turnover can also negatively impact productivity and monetary value through disruptions and set-backs (Dess & Shaw, 2001; Shaw et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2007; Kochanski & Sorensen, 2008; Ton & Huckman, 2008; Fidalgo & Gouveia, 2012; Park & Shaw, 2013). A recent article found that following a major change in an organization, such as an M&A event, turnover tends to occur all at once and affects numerous positions within the company (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013).

M&A and Turnover Intentions

Even prior to actual turnover behavior occurring, employees' turnover intentions can be a major concern. Turnover *intentions* (TI) can be understood as ones' conscious and deliberate willingness to leave their current organization in the near future (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Unlike job insecurity due to *involuntary* turnover, turnover intentions occur when an employee *voluntarily* intends on leaving their current job behind. Given how competitive the employment market has become over the years, researchers have become immersed in understanding why individuals begin experiencing TI to begin with. Two major antecedents of TI found repeatedly in the literature are job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2017). Specifically, when an employee feels dissatisfied and does not feel attached or committed to their current organization, they are more likely to leave. TI are problematic as they perpetuate counterproductive work behavior such as presenteeism and absenteeism, in which employees may disengage from their work tasks and decrease their objective output, ultimately, impacting the bottom-line of an organization (Mirvis & Lawler, 1977; Wheeler et al., 2005; Christian & Ellis, 2014). Turnover intentions have been widely studied in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature given that they are closely related to turnover behavior (Parasuraman, 1982; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Shore & Martin, 1989; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999), but easier to obtain through subjective surveys (Barak et al., 2001). However, limited articles have explored this phenomenon in relation to M&A events. In order to fill this gap, and acknowledging the existing evidence described, we hypothesize that employees will experience increased turnover intentions due to M&A event, such that:

Hypothesis 1a: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report higher levels of turnover intentions compared to those who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

M&A and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction concerns an employees' affective response to their current job and is related to several negative outcomes (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981), which is why job satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied psychological variables in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature to date (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979; Dormann & Zapf, 2001). Researchers have proposed a multitude of theories and models to better understand the impacts of job satisfaction. According to the Investment Model (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981), job satisfaction is primarily a function of the rewards and costs associated with ones' job. As such, employees engage in subjective reward-cost analysis to determine their affect towards their job and whether actions should be taken to increase their rewards, since job satisfaction will be greater to the extent that the job offers high rewards and low costs. Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), suggests that an individuals' behavior can be explained based on the degree to which an action is instrumental for certain outcomes. This theory has been used to predict effort, satisfaction, performance, and retention of employees, and it was demonstrated that employees will be more likely to come to work than be absent if they obtain satisfaction from their job (Mirvis & Lawler, 1977). Research has also linked job satisfaction with turnover intentions as being a key affective mediating factor between ones' cognitions and intentions (Hellgren, Sjoberg, & Sverke, 1997).

With respect to M&A, research has demonstrated that restructuring events can impact job satisfaction and commitment through increased feelings of betrayal and being overworked in new conditions (Zeytinoglu et al., 2007). Scholars have attempted to explain this through insight into the psychological contract literature (Newman & Krzystofiak, 1993; Morrison & Robinson, 1997), such that an M&A event is a sudden change in the implicit contract between employer and employee. Because of the associated turbulence and uncertainty of this event, it makes it difficult for organizations to fulfill the needs of their employees, thereby violating their implicit contract. Put more specifically, restructuring and downsizing influences employees' job satisfaction because it becomes unclear what employees and organizations owe one another, and the traditional assurance of steady rewards from hard work and loyalty, is traded for job insecurity (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). In line with this, researchers have found that several years after M&A union, employees had more negative attitudes towards the organization (Fairfield-Sonn et al., 2002). One research study analyzed job characteristics, satisfaction, and commitment before and after an acquisition and found significant declines in all factors. Specifically, researchers found that employees exhibited increased prevalence of depression, uncertainty, and control loss. Altogether, this translated to declines in job satisfaction after three months following the merger (Newman & Krzystofiak, 1993). Based on these findings, along with our previous empirical evidence on job insecurity following M&A, we argue that:

Hypothesis 1b: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report lower levels of job satisfaction compared to participants who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

M&A and Organizational Culture

Corporate organizations are inherently culture-producing and hold socio-cultural qualities that distinguish them from others, even those within the same industry. These symbolic or cultural dimensions contribute to the effectiveness of the organization, given that the organizations with strong cultures are more likely to be successful long-term by instilling a sense of identity, commitment, and stability for its members (Smircich, 1983). Because of this, culture has been compared to the social or normative glue that holds organizations together through the expression of values, ideals, and beliefs. However, when an M&A event occurs, the cultural glue weakens and the participating organizations must re-affirm the vision for the company moving forward. Many M&A events fail because the cultural differences between the two organizations are dismissed or unattended to (Marks & Mirvis, 2001). This can be explained by insights from theoretical Psychology literature, wherein employees select organizations to work for and stay over time if their own values and beliefs are in congruence with the organizations'. However, if the organization changes to no longer fit, it may result in cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive dissonance occurs when an individual holds contradictory beliefs, ideas, values, actions, or behaviors, which causes psychological distress (Festinger, 1962). If an employee continues to work for an organization that contradicts their own beliefs or values, with time, the stress can become debilitating and their well-being can suffer. In order to preserve ones' psychological functioning, they must either change their own belief or value to be more in line with the organizations', or change their action or behavior by no longer working for that organization. A widely-used term in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature that describes the fit between an employee and the organization, in terms of values, goals, and culture, is person-organization fit (P-O fit).

M&A and P-O Fit

Person-organization fit (P-O fit) is the compatibility between the employee and organization and has been described as a multidimensional construct consisting of three determinants of fit: values, personality, and environment (Westerman & Cyr, 2004). P-O fit has been studied both objectively and subjectively (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006), but for the purposes of the current proposed research study, we will focus on subjective perceptions of ones' own fit within their organization as it was found that subjective measures of fit are more likely to affect an employees' attitudes (Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003). Another important consideration is that P-O fit is a specific type of fit encompassed within a broader definition of person-environment fit (P-E fit). The basic premise of P-E fit, and a cornerstone of Industrial-Organizational Psychology, is that people are differentially compatible to certain work environments (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). This notion can be explained through insights into the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model (Schneider, 1987), which is frequently cited in the P-E fit literature.

Each organization holds values, goals, and their unique culture that attracts certain individuals over others. According to the ASA model (Schneider, 1987), organizations are driven towards homogeneity; job seekers are attracted to certain organizations based on perceived similarity, organizations make selections based on employees who present competencies that are similar to their culture, and employees leave organizations in which they perceive a poor fit. Over time, homogeneity increases within organizations because those who are similar are hired, and those who are not similar, leave the organization. As such, P-O fit is a strong predictor of an employees' attraction to an organization, their intention to pursue and accept a job offer, and likelihood that they will remain within the organization over time (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). However, the values and goals to which an employee subscribes and what made them attracted to a particular organization to begin with may be challenged when reorganization events occur (Siefert, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1991). This change may cause employees to no longer feel as though they fit in with the organization based on the new values and goals, which can cause feelings of hostility and discomfort due to culture shock (Buono & Bowditch, 2003). Based on these research findings on organizational culture and perceptions of fit, we predict:

Hypothesis 1c: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report lower levels of person-organization fit compared to participants who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

Turnover, Job Satisfaction, and Person-Organization Fit

Previous studies have found a strong positive relationship between our variables of study, namely job satisfaction and person-organization fit (Silverthorne, 2004; Farooqui & Nagendra, 2014; Chen, Sparrow, & Cooper, 2016). This relationship was shown to be direct, such that P-O fit is an influential factor affecting an employees' job satisfaction (O'Reilly, Chatman, Caldwell, 1991; Westerman & Cyr, 2004). As such, job satisfaction has been found to mediate the relationship between P-O fit and turnover (Wheeler, Coleman Gallagher, Brouer, & Sablynski, 2007) and is a key mediating factor between work environment and turnover intentions (Lambert, Hogan, & Bartom, 2001; Arthur, Bell, Villado, & Doverspike, 2006). In other words, P-O fit first affects working attitudes of the employee (job satisfaction), which subsequently impacts their turnover intentions (Westerman & Cyr, 2004). Similarly, further studies have also analyzed how these variables are negatively related to turnover intentions (Porter & Mueller, 1981; Hellgren, Sjoberg, & Sverke, 1997; Lyons & O'Brien, 2006; Sang, Ison, & Dainty, 2009; Alniaçik, Alniaçik, Erat, & Akçin, 2013). However, most studies used a cross-sectional design and could not provide empirical evidence on the changes in these three variables over time. Longitudinal research on P-O fit in relation to job satisfaction and turnover is understudied in the literature, and there is a lack of empirical ground to test the variables altogether instead of independently (Wheeler et al., 2007). Therefore, in order to add empirical research on P-O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, we also test the longitudinal relationship of these variables.

Longitudinal Changes

Research has demonstrated that variables associated with employee attitudes are not static, but rather, change over time depending on the employees' situation. For example, job satisfaction is an affective variable, and similar to other states of affect, does not remain constant over time. Rather, it is transitory in nature (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974) and unstable over time (Tett & Meyer, 1993), especially when aspects of the work environment change. Therefore, it is more appropriate to study patterns of affective change in job satisfaction over time (Chen, Ployhart, Thomas, Anderson, & Bliese, 2011). To explain this phenomenon, researchers proposed the honeymoon-hangover effect in which low satisfaction precedes voluntary turnover with an increase in job satisfaction immediately following job change (honeymoon) followed by a decline in job satisfaction over time (hangover). In other words, there is evidence of attitudinal changes in job satisfaction such that attitudes decrease over time and are at their lowest before turnover (Boswell, Boudreau, & Tichy, 2005). Beyond job satisfaction, research has demonstrated that P-O fit also changes over time within individuals' and should therefore be viewed as an ever-changing process (Boon & Biron, 2016). The dynamic nature of our variables of study means that it is important to analyze them longitudinally instead of cross-sectionally as most extant studies have. As such, there has been a renewed call for longitudinal research and the inclusion of time (Lee, Burch, & Mitchell, 2014), especially in relation to M&A events (Haleblian, Devers, McNamara, Carpenter, & Davison, 2009).

To add to the lack of research studies on longitudinal changes of attitudinal variables, the current study also analyzed changes in job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions over two time points for participants who were experiencing M&A. To aid in the development of hypotheses on the long-term effects of M&A, theoretically-based Psychology research can allow us to predict that employees who are undergoing adversity will likely respond in a certain way. Based on Nolen-Hoeksema's Response Styles Theory (1991), depressive rumination occurs when an individual repeatedly and passively ponders a negative occurrence. Instead of problem-solving to determine potential solutions for the issues identified, the individual remains in the cycles of ruminative thinking which exacerbates and prolongs the negative symptoms, including stress, anxiety, dissatisfaction, and depression. Response Styles Theory (1991) can be applied to turnover intentions wherein an employee experiences job dissatisfaction following a shock within their current organization, which causes them to continuously ruminate over this negative event, leading to increased dissatisfaction and stress. Over time, instead of taking an action to resolve the issues, the employee gets stuck in the ruminative cycle of thinking. As their turnover intentions increases, well-being and satisfaction decreases, without any change in behavior, such as leaving the organization. Furthermore, in the decision-making literature, decision makers are proposed to bolster information that is consistent with their initial preferred decision and downplay information that is inconsistent with that initial preference (Mitchell & Beach, 1990). This process is also consistent with the Social Cognitive Theory of Motivated Reasoning (Kunda, 1990). Thus, if the initial preference of an employee is to try to leave their current organization as they perceive lack of fit with the merging organization, the combination of rumination on negative information, motivated reasoning, and bolstering the initial preferred decision to leave, should all lead to increasing intentions to leave the organization, and decreasing satisfaction and fit perceptions. As such, we expect to see an increasing trend of employees' turnover intentions over time and we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2a: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report increasing mean levels of turnover intentions over time compared to participants who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

In terms of job satisfaction and P-O fit, we predict that:

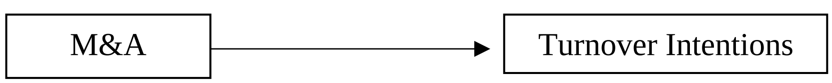
Hypothesis 2b: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report declining mean levels of job satisfaction over time compared to participants who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

Hypothesis 2c: Participants who are experiencing a merger or acquisition will report declining mean levels of person-organization fit over time compared to participants who are not experiencing a merger or acquisition.

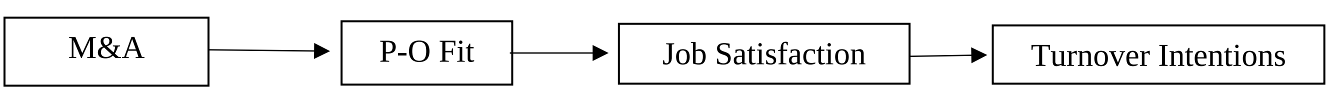
Mechanisms of M&A-Related Turnover

There are different causal mechanisms that can explain how M&A events may lead to turnover. Given that turnover, along with its' antecedents are dynamic in nature, contemporary theories have incorporated the changes in variables over time. One such theory is Lee and Mitchell's Unfolding Model of Turnover (1994) as seen in *Figure 1*, which suggests that there are multiple potential paths that lead to turnover, which include slower cognitive processes, as well as more impulsive turnover behaviors. This model has been cited countless times in research articles that examine mechanisms of voluntary quitting (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). In terms of a direct abrupt path, employees may respond to a "shock" in the work environment that instigates them to think of quitting their jobs. A shock is described as a jarring event that initiates psychological thought about quitting an organization and it involves image violation in which the individual's goals and values do not fit with the event (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). For instance, M&A would be considered a major shock to an employee, causing them to think of quitting due to the violation of fit with the merging organization. Other examples of shocks would be spontaneous job offers, pregnancy, changes in marital status, or receiving a promotion (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). These shocking events experienced by employees may cause a direct path to turnover, and demonstrate that turnover decisions are not always a result of the accumulation of job dissatisfaction over time, but instead, may occur without deliberation in a sudden and impulsive manner. However, this theory also suggests a path to turnover in which employees experience lower levels of job satisfaction over time when they feel that their current job no longer provides desired benefits. Therefore, this path occurs without any shocking event, and instead involves complex cognitive processes that take time to unfold. As such, the components of this model, including shocks, image violation, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions are depicted as occurring dynamically over time. The current article will test the proposed paths of the Unfolding Model of Turnover (1994), in order to see which path fits best with respect to an M&A event:

Potential Path 1: Participants will perceive M&A as a major shock leading directly to increased levels of turnover intentions due to violations of perceptions of fit.



Potential Path 2: Participants will perceive M&A as a hindrance to their person-organization fit, leading to decreased levels of job satisfaction, followed by increased levels of turnover intentions over time.



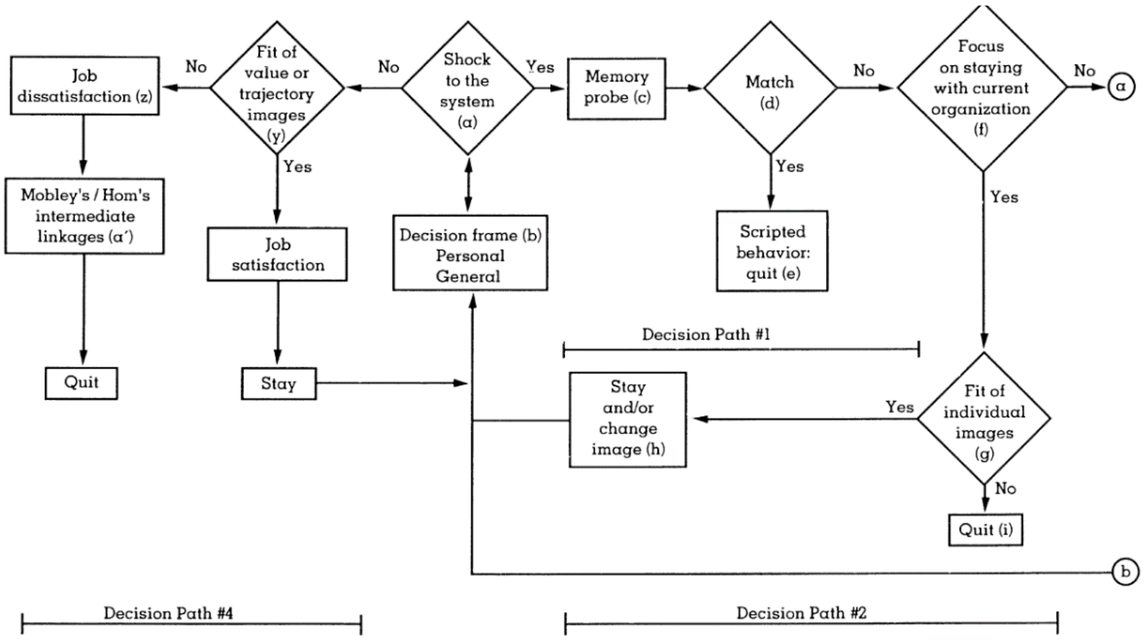


Figure 1. Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994)

Method

Procedure

The current study explored the differences in employee job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions in those who had (past), or were going to (future), experience a merger or acquisition (M&A) in their organization. To do so, we obtained access to secondary data among a heterogenous group of Calgarian employees. Participants were asked about past or future M&A activity in their organization at two time points, while the attitudinal variables were collected at three time points, separated by a three-month time lag between each data collection. Given that a majority of studies conducted on these variables were cross-sectional in nature, the theoretical framework did not provide justifiable information on the exact time frame over which job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions would change most with respect to an M&A event. However, there are studies that have presented evidence that in less than three months, thousands of employees from large corporations either voluntarily left the organization or were laid-off following an M&A (Gutknecht & Keys, 1993) and job satisfaction declined significantly after three months following major organizational change (Newman & Krzystofiak, 1993).

The secondary data utilized for the current study came from a 2017-2018 survey of workers employed in Calgary, Alberta. At Time 1, respondents were invited to participate in the survey through a hard-copy flyer handed to them in-person by four researchers at train platforms in the downtown Calgary area. In doing so, data was collected independently from the respondents' employer, and was a convenience sample. Before the survey began, participants were given information regarding the purpose of the data collection, the importance of discretionary and voluntary participation, and the anonymous nature of the data. At the end of the first survey, respondents were asked to enter their email address if they wanted to be contacted to participate in the two follow-up surveys. As well, participants who were interested in providing their email address would be contacted to determine whether they won the draw of a $50.00 prize (with 1/25 odds of winning) for participating in the study. Upon completion of the data collection in 2018, strict data cleaning procedures were conducted to remove unreliable responses. Although much of the data was already screened prior to the current study, data was cleaned and sorted again by the present researcher. Individuals who were unemployed, employees outside the legal labor force in Canada (employees younger than 18 years), and respondents who did not respond accurately to the attention check cut-offs, were removed from the data set.

Sample

In total, there were 565 participants who responded to the survey at each time point; however, given that the focus of the current study was on M&A events, only participants who responded to the M&A variable at Time 2 or Time 3 were included (n = 169, 29.9% of total data).

Specifically, at Time 1 (n = 169 participants), Time 2 (n = 168 participants), and Time 3 (n = 137 participants). Using IBM SPSS software, data was closely observed by the researcher to detect any incorrect responding based on attention check cut-offs. Four participants (#157, 158, 165, and 166) were detected as failing to enter the correct value for attention checks on two attention check items. However, upon analyzing the remaining responses of these four participants, the researcher determined that the responses did not appear to be distracted or random, and as such, decided to retain the four participants.

The sample distribution was representative of the Calgarian working population regarding demographic characteristics such as age, gender, industry, contract type, and type of work. The mean age of participants was 40.32 (SD = 11.13) ranging from 20 years to 72 years of age. For gender, results indicated 100 female (60%) and 67 male (40%) participants demonstrating a relatively balanced sample. In addition, the majority of employees worked for mining/ oil and gas industry (27.8%), which is expected given the data was collected in Calgary, where the economy is highly driven by the oil industry. The remaining industries with the highest frequency were professional and scientific services (11.8%), finance and insurance (10.1%), healthcare and social assistance (6.5%), educational services (5.95), and government (5.3%). A majority of participants (48.2%) reported working full-time hours (40 hours per week) (M = 39.52, SD = 7.26). The average tenure with their current organization was 73.6 months, or approximately 6 years (SD = 75.66). In order to understand the demographics of the sample further, it should be stressed that the 2018 economics in Calgary, Alberta were highly tumultuous with world oil prices dropping more than 50%, reaching prices that failed to cover the costs of production (Heyes, Leach, & Mason, 2018; Fletcher, 2018), leading to an increase in unemployment rates for those working in the oil and gas industry (Jung & Das, 2018). Accordingly, these statistics can help to inform why all participants remained with their current organization at Time 2 and Time 3, besides three participants who involuntarily left at Time 3.

Measures

The attitudinal variables, namely job satisfaction and person-organization fit, were collected at each of the three time points, while the mergers and acquisitions variable was collected at two time points. In order to rule out potential order effects and distraction, the data was collected using counterbalanced items and attention checks. Reliabilities for all scales are shown in *Table 1*.

Mergers and acquisitions were measured with two items collected at Time 2 and Time 3 only. One item was "Has your organization recently gone through a merger/ acquisition?" (past M&A) and the other item was "Is your organization planning on going through a merger/ acquisition in the near future?" (future M&A). Respondents rated each item on a (1) yes or (2) no scale.

Turnover intentions were measured with a 3-item scale developed by Irving, Coleman, and Cooper (1997), with acceptable internal reliability (Hinkin, 1998) and statistical validity (Irving et al., 1997). An example item was "I do not intend to pursue alternate employment in the foreseeable future". Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree". Two out of three items were reverse-coded, including the example item.

Job satisfaction was measured with an empirically validated 3-item scale developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1983). An example item was "All in all, I am satisfied with my job". Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree". One out of three items were reverse-coded.

Person-organization fit was measured with a 3-item scale developed by Cable and DeRue (2002). An example item was "The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values”. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (5) “strongly agree”.

Demographic variables such as age, gender, work hours, tenure, and industry were collected at Time 1. *Age* was measured in years. *Gender* was coded as (0) male and (1) female. *Work hours* (full-time, part-time) was measured in hours per week. *Tenure* was measured in months. Participants could also select from 21 industries to indicate the primary industry of their current organization.

Analyses

To test hypothesis 1, cross-sectional data was used to run an independent group t-test on IBM SPSS software in order to compare the differences in turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and person-organization fit between the yes M&A and no M&A groups at both Time 2 and Time 3, separately. Hypothesis 2 expanded on the previous analysis by utilizing longitudinal data from both Time 2 and Time 3 with a mixed repeated measures ANOVA, in order to test potential changes over time between the two groups on each study variable. For hypothesis 3, SPSS Amos was used to test and contrast models for each M&A group. The models were created based on the pathways proposed by the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). As an exploratory portion of the current study, a fully cross-lagged panel design was conducted on SPSS Amos in order to gain further insight into the relationships between each study variable at each of the three time points.

Results

Correlational Relationships Among Variables

Relationships among the three main variables, namely turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and person-organization fit were first explored in order to determine whether our data fit previous research findings. To do so, a correlational analysis was run on IBM SPSS, exhibited in *Table 1* which contains means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and inter-correlations for each of these variables. Results indicated a significant negative relationship between turnover intentions and job satisfaction at each time point. At Time 1, turnover intentions were negatively correlated with job satisfaction (r = -.52, p < .001), as well as at Time 2 (r = -.63, p < .001) and Time 3 (r = -.59, p < .001). Similarly, a significant negative relationship between turnover intentions and person-organization fit was also observed at each time point. At Time 1, turnover intentions were negatively correlated with person-organization fit (r = -.45, p < .001), as well as at Time 2 (r = -.54, p < .001) and Time 3 (r = -.48, p < .001). In addition, a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and person-organization fit was found at each time point, where job satisfaction and person-organization fit were positively correlated at Time 1 (r = .68, p < .001), Time 2 (r = .67, p < .001), and Time 3 (r = .70, p < .001).

Time	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	1 Gender													
1	2 Age	40.32	11.13	-.08										
1	3 TI	2.66	1.13	.05	-.17*	(.88)								
1	4 JS	3.82	0.83	-.01	.05	-.52**	(.85)							
1	5 POF	3.48	0.93	-.01	.07	-.45**	.68**	(.93)						
2	6 TI	2.68	1.06	.01	-.11	.73**	-.51**	-.34**	(.86)					
2	7 JS	3.68	0.82	-.04	.01	-.47**	.74**	.54**	-.63**	(.86)				
2	8 POF	3.40	0.96	.03	-.01	-.43**	.61**	.73**	-.54**	.67**	(.91)			
3	9 TI	2.71	1.07	.02	-.24**	.71**	-.40**	-.34**	.71**	-.49**	-.42**	(.87)		
3	10 JS	3.64	0.84	.03	.00	-.47**	.71**	.48**	-.61**	.82**	.62**	-.59**	(.87)	
3	11 POF	3.41	0.90	-.02	-.06	-.37**	.55**	.66**	-.37**	.64**	.76**	-.48**	.70**	(.93)

Table 1. Correlations between variables at each time point (Time 1, 2, 3) N = 169 (Time 1), N = 168 (Time 2), N = 137 (Time 3) TI = turnover intentions, JS = job satisfaction, POF = person-organization fit. Scale reliabilities appear on diagonal. Gender is coded as 0 = male, 1 = female.
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (*p < .05). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (**p < .001)

Comparison of M&A Groups on Study Variables

Although the correlational results provide strong support for bivariate relationships, they do not address the differences between the two groups on whether they had (past) or were going to (future) experience a merger or acquisition (M&A group versus no M&A group). As proposed in Hypothesis 1, the present research provides an opportunity to examine the differences in M&A groups on the three main study variables. Specifically, Hypothesis 1a predicted that participants who experienced or were going to experience an M&A event would report higher levels of turnover intentions compared to those who were not experiencing M&A. To test Hypothesis 1a, an independent samples t-test was run with 37 participants who were experiencing M&A (M = 3.05, SD = 1.09) and 100 participants who were not (M = 2.58, SD = 1.05) at Time 3. In support of Hypothesis 1a, at Time 3 participants who were experiencing M&A reported higher levels of turnover intentions compared to those who were not, $t(135) = 2.32$, $p = .022$, $d = .46$. However, when these results were re-tested with the Time 2 participants (n = 28 yes, n = 87 no), they did not reach significance, $t(113) = 1.28$, $p = .205$, $d = .29$, although the mean scores were higher for the yes M&A group (M = 2.98, SD = 0.89) than the no M&A group (M = 2.69, SD = 1.08). Hypothesis 1b predicted that participants who were experiencing M&A would report lower levels of job satisfaction compared to those who were not experiencing M&A. A separate independent samples t-test was run with 37 participants who were experiencing M&A (M = 3.56, SD = 0.77) and 100 participants who were not (M = 3.67, SD = 0.86) at Time 3, and based on the analysis results, Hypothesis 1b was not supported at Time 3, $t(135) = -0.71$, $p = .478$, $d = -.12$. Results were also not significant for the Time 2 yes M&A group (M = 3.75, SD = 0.49) compared to the no M&A group (M = 3.67, SD = 0.89), $t(113) = 0.44$, $p = .662$, $d = .09$. Lastly, Hypothesis 1c predicted that participants who were experiencing M&A would report lower levels of person-organization fit compared to those who were not experiencing M&A. Based on the independent samples t-test, Hypothesis 1c was also not supported at Time 2 for the yes M&A group (M = 3.28, SD = 1.07) compared to the no M&A group (M = 3.43, SD = 0.99), t(113) = 0.47, p = .510, d = -.15 However, at Time 3, results were marginally significant, t(135) = -1.97, p = .051, d = -.36, for the yes M&A group (M = 3.16, SD = 0.96) compared to the no M&A group (M = 3.50, SD = 0.87).

Changes in Study Variables Over Two Time Points

Hypothesis 2 predicted that employees in the M&A group would report increasing turnover intentions (Hypothesis 2a) and decreasing job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2b) and person-organization fit (Hypothesis 2c) over time compared to those who identified as not being in the M&A group. To test Hypothesis 2, a mixed repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA) in GLM using IBM SPSS was conducted. Recognizing the problems with including all three time points, which will be discussed further in the discussion section of the current paper, repeated measures analysis was run on only two time points (Time 2 and Time 3). The between-subjects factor contrasted the two groups: M&A (n = 40) versus no M&A (n = 96), and the within-subject factors contrasted the groups over the two time points on each study variable. Prior to analyzing the results for the mixed ANOVA, the assumptions were checked.

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices was met for all study variables: turnover intentions, *Box's M* (6.22) = 2.03, p = .107), job satisfaction, *Box's M* (4.48) = 1.46, p = .223, and person-organization fit, *Box's M* (4.36) = 1.42, p = .234. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was met for all study variables, except for turnover intentions at Time 2, F(1,134) = 6.09, p = .015. Turnover intentions at Time 3, F(1,134) = 0.06, p = .809, job satisfaction at Time 2, F(1,134) = 0.15, p = .698, and at Time 3, F(1,134) = 0.94, p = .335, and person-organization fit at Time 2, F(1,134) = 0.25, p = .615, and at Time 3, F(1,134) = 1.14, p = .288, met the assumptions and did not require adjustment of degrees of freedom. Mauchly's Test of Sphericity was not assumed as it requires at least three conditions (Andy, 2009).

Contrary to Hypothesis 2a, the main effect of turnover intentions was not significant, $F(1,134) = 1.82$, $p = 0.179$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$, and there was no significant interaction between turnover intentions and M&A group membership, $F(1,134) = 0.72$, $p = .399$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$. However, results did indicate significant between-subjects differences between the two M&A groups, $F(1,134) = 4.43$, $p = .037$, $\eta_p^2 = .032$ (see *figure 2* for graph depicting between-subjects effects). Contrary to Hypothesis 2b, the main effect of job satisfaction was not significant, $F(1,134) = 1.22$, $p = .270$, $\eta_p^2 = .009$, nor was the interaction of job satisfaction and group membership, $F(1,134) = 2.14$, $p = .145$, $\eta_p^2 = .016$ or the between groups differences, $F(1,134) = 0.85$, $p = .358$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$. Similarly, the main effect of person-organization fit was not significant, $F(1,134) = 2.27$, $p = .135$, $\eta_p^2 = .017$, nor was the interaction of person-organization fit and group membership, $F(1,134) = 0.62$, $p = .432$, $\eta_p^2 = .005$ or the between groups differences, $F(1,134) = 1.36$, $p = .246$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$.

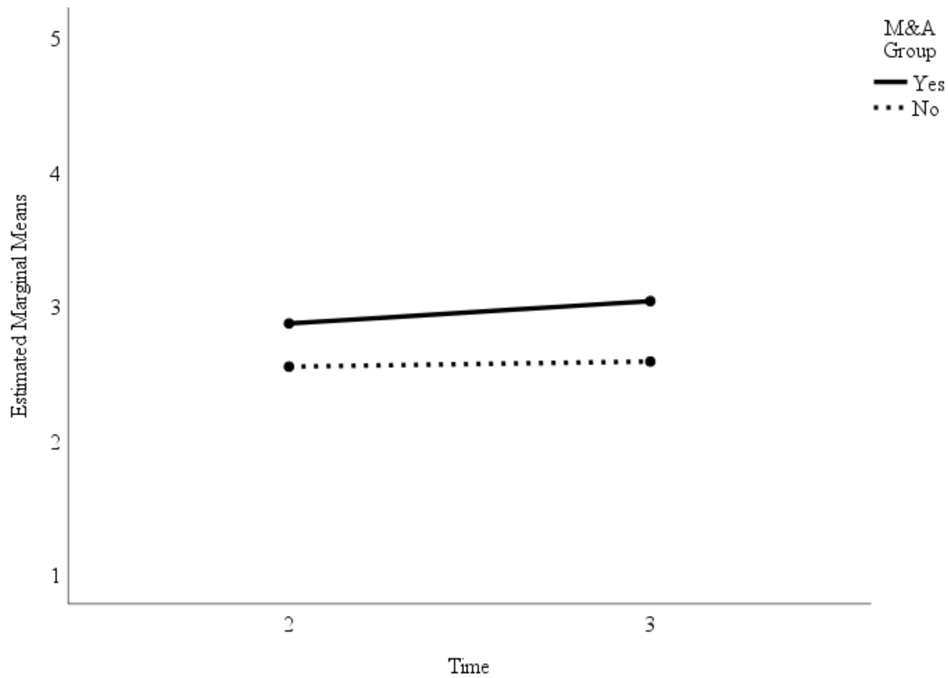


Figure 2. M&A between-group differences on turnover intentions at Time 2 and Time 3.

Longitudinal Models for M&A Groups

A Structural Equation Model was run in SPSS Amos in order to test two potential paths proposed by the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). To test these paths with the current dataset, participants who were in the yes M&A group were compared to participants in the no M&A group in order to observe potential significant differences. The default model *(Figure 3a and Figure 4a*) yielded acceptable fit indices for the Chi square value, $X^2(36) = 50.66$, $p = .053$, as well as for the CFI (.985) and RMSEA (.049). Figure 3a reveals that the relationship between person-organization fit and turnover intentions is not mediated by job satisfaction for participants in the yes M&A group, based on the non-significant relationship between job satisfaction (Time 2) and turnover intentions (Time 3) ($p = .688$), and the significant relationship between person-organization fit (Time 2) and turnover intentions (Time 3) ($p < .001$). For the no M&A group, the results shown in Figure 4a suggest that the relationship between person-organization fit and turnover intentions is fully mediated by job satisfaction, based on the significant relationship between job satisfaction (Time 2) and turnover intentions (Time 3) ($p < .001$), and the non-significant relationship between person-organization fit (Time 1) and turnover intentions (Time 3) ($p = .064$). Overall, person-organization fit and job satisfaction accounted for 54% of the variance in turnover intentions in the M&A group, and 43% in the no M&A group, in the default models. Next, our default models were tested against constrained models for each M&A group. For the yes M&A group, the path (JSTI) from job satisfaction (Time 2) and turnover intentions (Time 3) was constrained to zero, and the results indicated that both models fit the data, $X^2(1) = 0.16$, $p = .692$ (*Figure 3b*). For the no M&A group, the path (POFTI) from person-organization fit (Time 1) and turnover intentions (Time 3) was constrained to zero, and the results also indicated that both models fit the data, $X^2(1) = 2.89$, $p = .089$ (*Figure 4b*).

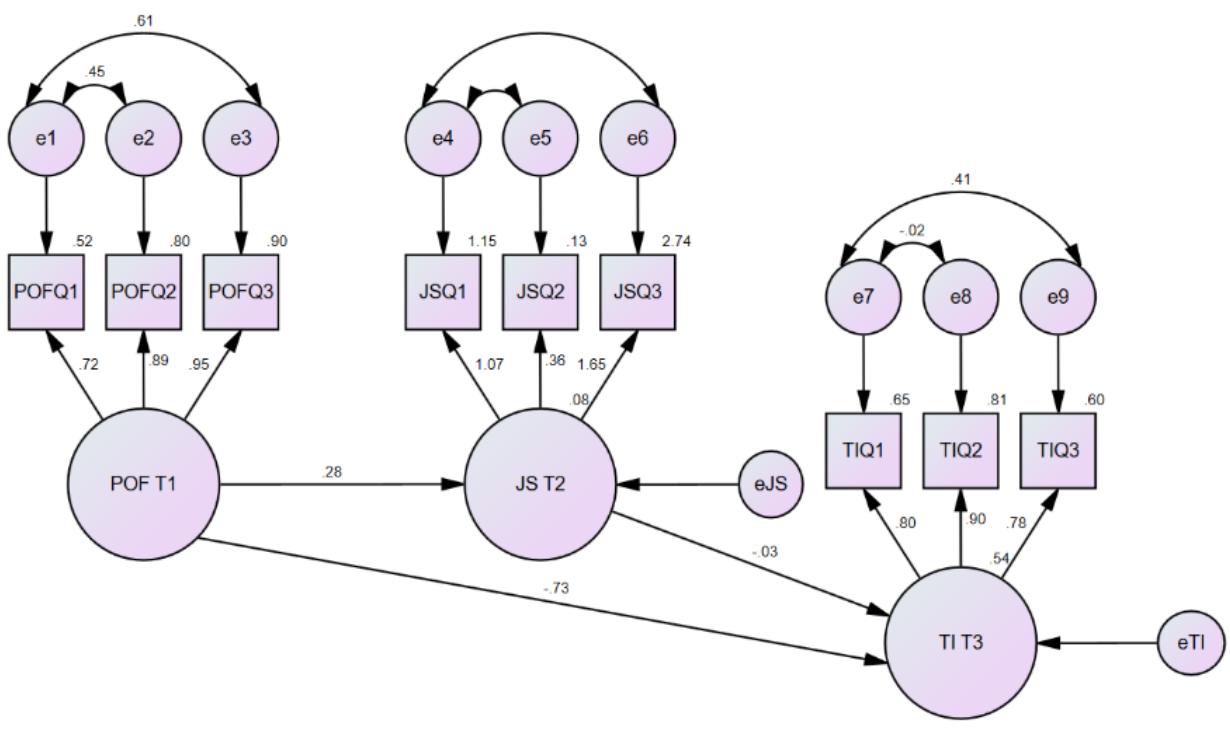


Figure 3a. Default model for yes M&A group

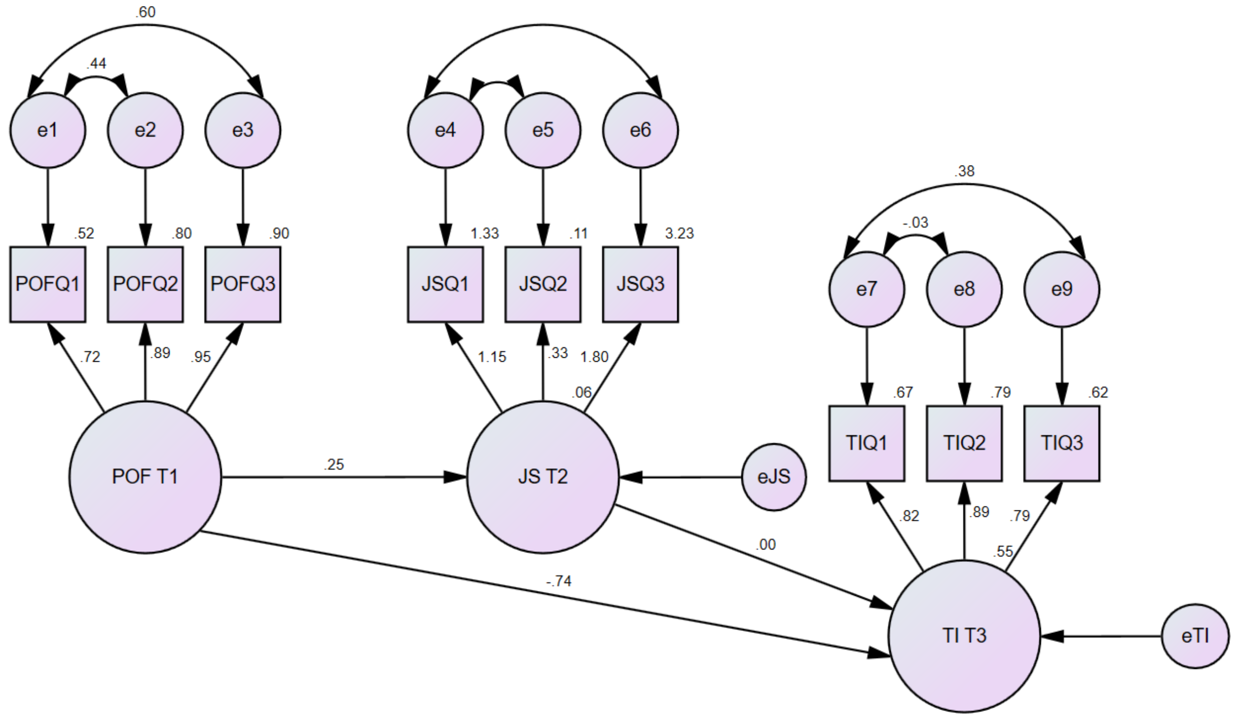


Figure 3b. Constrained model for yes M&A group

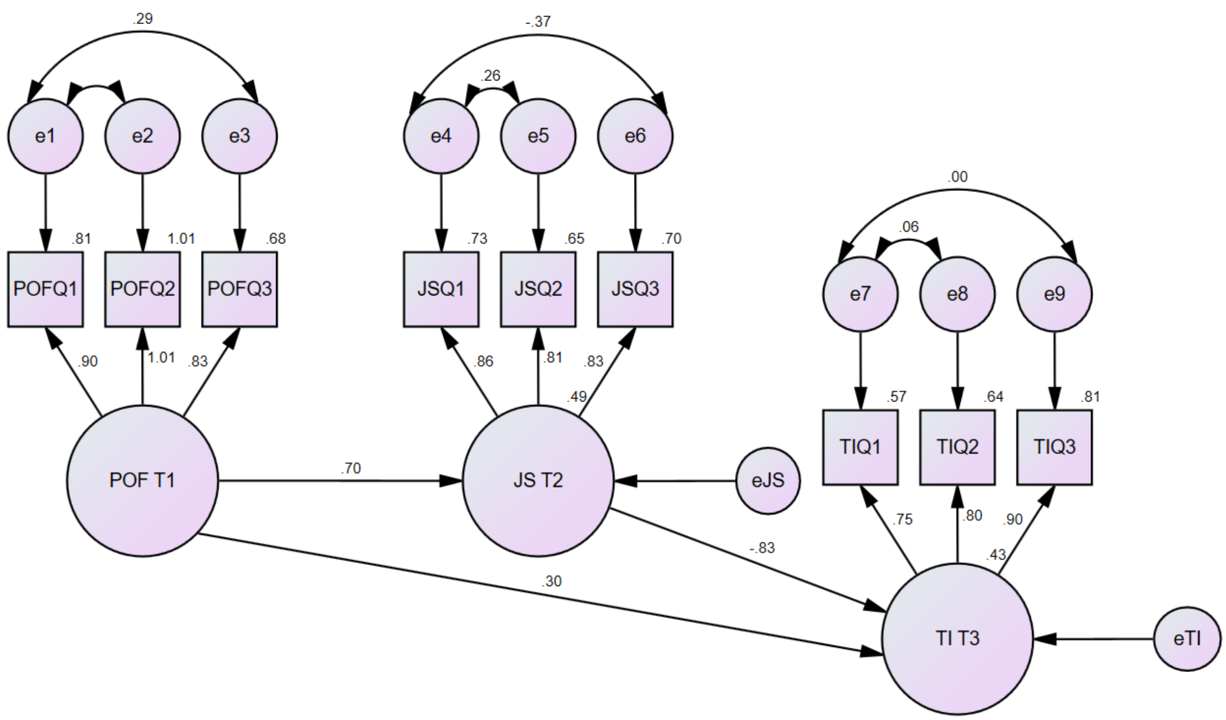


Figure 4a. Default model for no M&A group

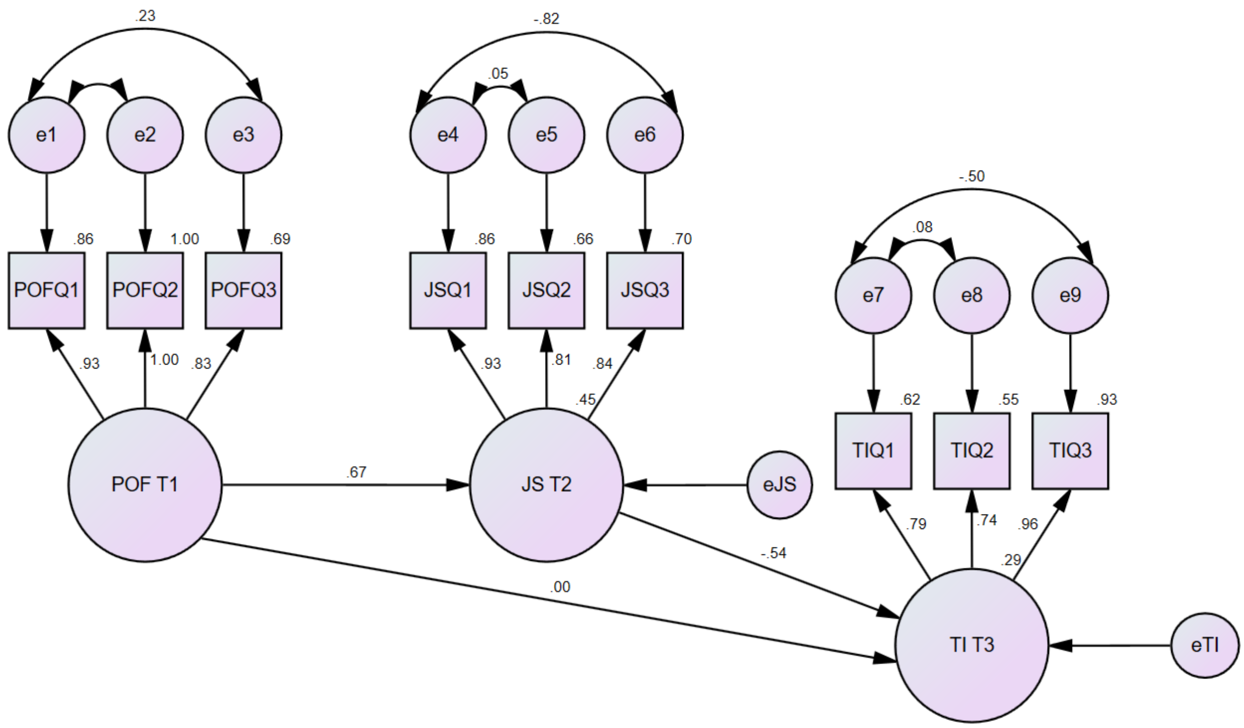


Figure 4b. Constrained model for no M&A group

Cross-Lagged Model of All Study Variables

To test the exploratory research question regarding how the study variables are related to one another at each of the three time points, a fully cross-lagged analysis was run on SPSS Amos (*Figure 5*). All participants were run in the default model, which yielded marginal fit indices for the Chi square value, $X^2(259) = 460.61$, $p < .001$, as well as for the CFI (.949) and RMSEA (.068). The results indicated that 80% of the variance in turnover intentions at Time 3 were accounted for by person-organization fit and job satisfaction over Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3. Each of the relationships between study variables were significant at each time point ($p < .001$), excluding the relationship between turnover intentions (Time 1) and job satisfaction (Time 2) ($p = .576$), and between job satisfaction (Time 2) and person-organization fit (Time 3) ($p = .974$), and turnover intentions (Time 2) and job satisfaction (Time 3) ($p = .234$). When these relationships were removed, the model fit improved for Chi square value, $X^2(259) = 460.61$, $p < .001$, CFI (.95), and RMSEA (.067).

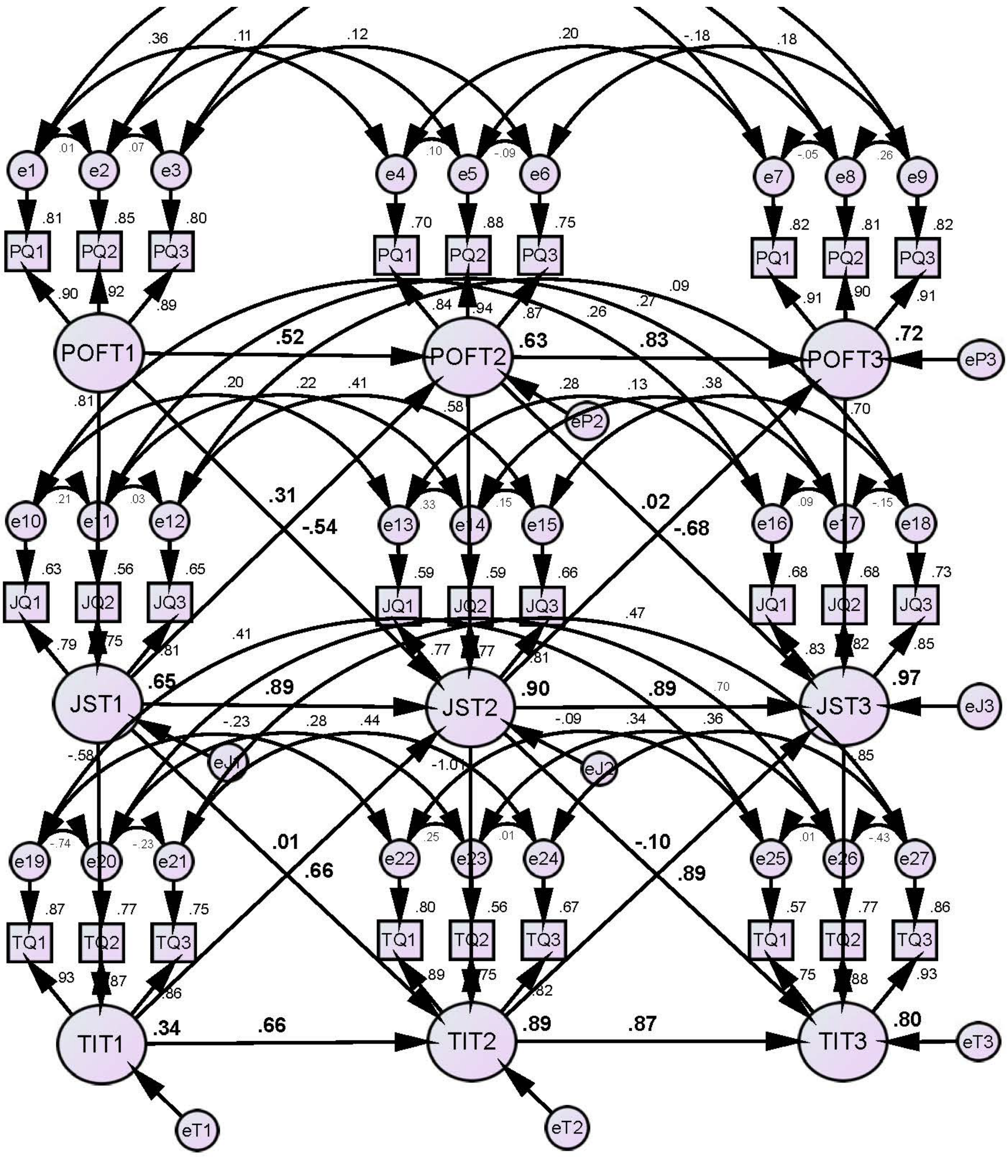


Figure 5. Fully Cross-Lagged Panel Design Model
Note. POF = person-organization fit, JS = job satisfaction, TI = turnover intentions

Discussion

Obtaining data from employees of multiple companies experiencing M&A activity is extremely rare. Doing so longitudinally poses even greater challenges. Accordingly, prior research on M&A is severely limited, which explains the empirical gap in understanding how M&A impacts employee attitudinal outcomes. Using the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), the present study aimed to fill this gap by being the first to the researcher's knowledge to examine the affective differences between employees who experience versus do not experience an M&A event, and how these differences change over time. In summary, the current study found that employees who are in the midst of experiencing an M&A event, whether their company already announced it or the employees have been warned of the upcoming changes, demonstrate significant differences compared to employees who are not. Specifically, employees differ in their stated turnover intentions reporting higher levels than their non-M&A counterparts. In addition, the differences between employees who do or do not experience M&A persist over time, such that lower job satisfaction, lower person-organization fit, and higher turnover intentions remain stable. However, as will be demonstrated below, not all effects anticipated were observed, and potential explanations for this will be discussed.

Understanding How Variables are Related

The relationships among job satisfaction, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions can be found in a number of previous studies (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Barak et al., 2001; Verquer et al., 2003; Lambert et al., 2011). Our results support these findings by demonstrating significant correlations between these variables, as exhibited in *Table 1*. However, the majority of research studies on these variables are cross-sectional in nature. As such, a novel extension of the current study was to explore these relationships over time. Results demonstrated that the correlations between variables remained significant at each time point, and as such, persist over the course of time. As supported by the limited extant longitudinal research, person-organization fit tends to be less transitory over time compared to job satisfaction, however employee attitudes tend to be dynamic in nature (Porter et al., 1974; Boon & Biron, 2016) and should be tracked over time (Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, Ahlburg, 2005) in order to fully capture their interactions.

Key Differences Based on Mergers and Acquisitions

A key addition of the current study was to explore the differences in the aforementioned variables based on the experience of M&A. On the final survey, results indicated that there were significant differences in turnover intentions (higher for those experiencing M&A) and marginally significant differences for person-organization fit (lower for those experiencing M&A). These results support our hypotheses, and are line with findings from limited research studies on M&A which demonstrate that mergers were associated with increased intent to leave (Iverson & Pullman, 2000) due to culture clashes (Schuler & Jackson, 2001) and violation of the psychological contract between employee and organization (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Participants who were experiencing an M&A during the course of our study seemed to have a more salient reason to intend on leaving their organization compared to participants who were not experiencing these changes. Interestingly however, our results indicated no significant differences between each group on job satisfaction, which is commonly associated with employees' turnover intentions. In order to explain this discrepant result, it is important to note that job satisfaction is a more immediate and personal attitudinal variable than others and can fluctuate for many reasons (Moynihan, Boswell, & Boudreau, 2000), beyond the experience of M&A. It could merely be that the participant was experiencing a certain mood at the time of survey completion, which would change the way they responded to the job satisfaction scale. This will be discussed further as a study limitation.

A further contradictory finding was seen in the non-significant results between employees who were experiencing M&A or were not during the second survey. To explain these opposing results, it is important to note that the sample size was lower than expected and despite the data being collected during a volatile time for M&A activity in the region, the overall base rate for M&A activity during a six-month period of time for a given employee is likely to be low. Accordingly, M&A participants were combined on their experience of past (i.e. having experienced a merger or acquisition) and future (i.e. will be experiencing a merger or acquisition) activity. Previous research evidence supports that there is a significant difference for employees who are undergoing transitions from a recent M&A event (Newman & Kryzstofiak, 1993; Iverson & Pullman, 2000), such that employees are more likely to experience uncertainty and job dissatisfaction, which will likely translate to higher levels of turnover intentions. If a sufficient sample size was obtained for the M&A variable, it would have been warranted to distinguish the M&A participants on whether they had or were going to experience an M&A event. Based on this specificity, data would have higher validity which could have allowed significant differences to be expressed at the time points. For example, employees who were days away from experiencing an M&A event may feel more stressed by the ambiguity and confusion, leading to lower job satisfaction compared to those who had already been through it and were dealing with the changes in a positive manner. Likewise, some of the employees who already experienced the M&A event may actually benefit as a result of the changes, such as in gaining stock options, job security, improved office space, etc. This will be discussed further in the later discussion sections.

Changes in Variables Over Time

The longitudinal portion of the study was run for each study variable independently based on a priori hypothesis regarding the changes over time, and differences based on the experience of M&A. The non-significant differences between time points suggests that the variables were stable over time for all participants, as well as for those experiencing M&A. Given that only two time points were analyzed, the three-month time lag between the two surveys could have been inadequate to capture the actual changes experienced. Originally, the researchers were planning to include all three time points, however, M&A data was not captured at the first time point, and therefore, assumptions regarding which participants to include would had to have been made. This would skew the results due to error, but would allow for changes to be observed over a longer period of time. Based on the extant research on M&A, there is evidence to propose that significant declines in attitudinal variables would be observed for those undergoing major organizational changes (Newman & Kryzstofiak, 1993); particularly, if there is a deterioration of conditions over time (Iverson & Pullman, 2000) due to culture clashes, transition management, or incompatibility that is not evident in the first few weeks of the M&A (Schuler & Jackson, 2001). Future research studies should continue to explore M&A longitudinally in order to observe these changes and the expected impact they have on employees.

Nevertheless, significant differences displayed in *Figure 2* were identified, such that participants who were experiencing M&A reported higher turnover intentions overall, compared to those who were not undergoing organizational restructuring. This is a valuable finding as it confirms the previous results from the cross-sectional portion of the study in which the M&A groups were compared and significant differences in turnover intentions were also observed. As well, between-group differences were non-significant for job satisfaction and person-organization fit, which is also in line with the prior cross-sectional findings. As explained above, turnover intentions are expected to be higher for those undergoing a shocking organizational change, especially when it is poorly managed by Human Resources policies and practices (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). In order to gain insight into these causal mechanisms for the differences in turnover intentions between the two groups, SEM was conducted next.

Contrasting Two Potential Pathways

A further novel extension of the current study is the insight into causal mechanisms of turnover intentions for those who experience an M&A event in their organization. According to the Unfolding Model of Turnover (*Figure 1*, Lee & Mitchell, 1994), Path #1g proposes that a major shock will cause direct employee turnover due to a lack of fit, while Path #4z proposes that a lack of fit will lead to decreased job satisfaction over time, followed by intentions to turnover. Given that M&A events have been described as a major shock to employees within each merging organization (Iverson & Pullman, 2000), the current study modelled the two potential paths to gain empirical insight into the causal mechanisms of turnover due to M&A. Based on the model fit statistics observed, it was found that employees who experience an M&A followed a similar path to #1g (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), in which person-organization fit led directly to turnover, without involving decreasing levels of job satisfaction. This would support the premise that an M&A event is a major shock for an employee, and leads to a direct, and fast-paced decision to turnover. Conversely, for those in the current study who identified as not experiencing M&A, their results followed a similar path to #4z (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), wherein participants experienced a lack of fit, followed by job dissatisfaction, and ultimately, turnover. This allows us to draw the conclusion that for those who are not experiencing a shock, their turnover intentions are more likely to be caused indirectly through a more slow and complex cognitive process over time, which involves a number of different factors, including job satisfaction. This is consistent with the literature which has demonstrated that both person-organization fit and job satisfaction are involved in the process of turnover for employees (Lambert et al., 2011), however the current study aimed to shed light on the differences that occur when a shocking M&A event occurs.

Exploration of a Fully Cross-Lagged Model

The variables were analyzed over the three time points in relation to one another using a fully cross-lagged design, which allows us to draw causal claims regarding the mechanisms of turnover intentions. The relationships among the variables at each time point were significant, with three important relationships being an exception. The mediated causal paths from person-organization fit to turnover intentions via job satisfaction were all significant, while the reverse causal path from turnover intention to job satisfaction and person-organization fit were non-significant. This supports the previous models we ran based on the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) because these models fit the data best when they explained that turnover occurs when an employee experiences a lack of fit to their organization leading to job dissatisfaction over time. Therefore, the direct explanation is supported while the reverse explanation, whereby turnover intentions lead to dissatisfaction and a reappraisal of fit, is not. In this way, the lack of fit and job dissatisfaction can be explained as causing turnover intentions to increase in employees. Further, as can be seen *in Figure 5*, the regression weight values across the same variable over the three time points were relatively stable, as most estimates were .70 or higher. The three-month time lag between data collection points may have been too short or too long for the changes in variables to be visible. Because the current study is the first to explore the attitudinal variables longitudinally in relation to M&A events, the time lag was not able to be theoretically supported by previous research.

There is also evidence of possible suppression effects occurring across the model. This is evident in some of the estimates being reversed (i.e. relationship between person-organization fit and job satisfaction appearing negative, when the zero-order relationship is positive). However, when these values are combined to determine the overall effect, it demonstrates that there is a low overall estimate for the changes between variables over time. Again, this supports that the variables are relatively stable across the three time points. As well, there is little remaining variance to be explained in the final time point that was not already accounted for previously. This also supports the lack of change over time in the study variables, such that a significant portion of the Time 3 variables was already accounted from their counterparts at Time 2. However, the cross-lagged model was consistent with previous analyses in that a large portion (80%) of the variance in turnover intentions can be explained by the other unfolding variables. As such, it supports that employees who are intending to turnover are experiencing a cascading effect of a lack of person-organization fit that generates job dissatisfaction over time.

Summary of Findings

In short, we can be confident in the results suggesting that significant differences exist between employees who are experiencing an M&A event compared to those who are not, in regard to their turnover intentions. Specifically, at Time 3, we found that employees who are dealing with M&A report significantly higher turnover intentions compared to participants who are not. In addition, we can be fairly confident that person-organization fit and job satisfaction are directly and negatively related to turnover intentions over a 6-month time period, and that the effect of person-organization fit on job satisfaction and turnover intentions appears to be stronger than the reciprocal effect of turnover intentions on the attitudinal variables. The overall findings described suggest key actions that organizations can adopt in order to retain their employees long-term, and ensure positive attitudes during their tenure with the organization. Although the current study presented valuable findings on the impacts of M&A on employee attitudes which has not yet been explored in the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature, the novelty brings about limitations and warrants further research on this important topic. Thus, the following sections aim to address the practical implications for both real-world organizations and academic researchers, while acknowledging limitations of the current study and future possibilities for this imperative topic.

Study Limitations

Several limitations in our study need to be noted. First, our study utilized secondary data which assessed the mergers and acquisitions variable at only the final two time points, instead of all three. As such, for the longitudinal analyses we conducted, particularly for the models that utilized Time 1 data, participants were included as part of their respective groups based on the Time 2 and Time 3 data, that may or may not have been experiencing an M&A event at Time 1. These participants could have been undergoing the restructuring within their organization for months before the second survey, or they could have been entirely unaware of any M&A news. Although this could have led to noise within our longitudinal analysis, the current study also analyzed M&A activity cross-sectionally at the time points that only involved M&A data. This research is still tremendously valuable given the severe lack of empirical studies on the topic altogether, and given that mergers and acquisitions are becoming more prominent in todays' work realm, future studies should continue this research by conducting longitudinal analysis for M&A events.

In line with this limitation, the repeated-measures of our data using three surveys separated by a 3-month time lag means that participant attrition is to be expected. Although the attrition rate was not extremely high for our sample, the 32 participants who left the survey at the final time point could valuably inform our research. An attrition analysis determined that there were no significant differences between participants who left the survey at Time 3 compared to those who remained, except for a significant difference in person-organization fit at Time 2. This result could support our previous findings that the participants who left the study also left their organization and were exhibiting low person-organization fit, leading to this decision to quit. However, this is only an assumption, as we were unable to test whether they left their organization voluntarily. Therefore, a limitation of the current study surrounds the informative attrition from the 32 participants who stopped responding, but could have provided the additional data points which would support our hypotheses.

A final limitation concerns the self-reported nature of the data, which may give rise to concerns about social desirability (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). Although it has often been suggested to rely on other-rated measures to overcome the issue of social desirability, the concepts under study are idiosyncratic in nature—meaning that they exist in the eye of the beholder. Therefore, we relied on self-reported measurements, but aimed to minimize socially desirable responses by allowing discretionary participation and guaranteeing the confidentiality of participants, through data collection that was spread across multiple companies and industries, rather than being linked to a specific company. As such, the use of self-reported measurements in the current study was likely not a major problem, but should still be a caution of gathering subjective data from participants. In addition, because the survey method utilizes subjective data, it is possible that some participants perceived the M&A event as being a positive shock rather than a negative one, which is the lens that the current study used to investigate this phenomenon. This difference could explain the non-significant changes in job satisfaction over time, which was contrary to our initial hypothesis. However, given that the current study utilized secondary data, we were unable to question the subjective perceptions of our participants in terms of how they viewed the M&A event.

It is important to note that although participants may not have all been experiencing the shock of an M&A event, the economic situation at the time of data collection was already in significant turmoil. Given that the majority of the sample was working for the oil & gas/ mining industry (28%) in Calgary, Alberta during a severe economic downturn (Fletcher, 2018), many of the participants in the study were already in a state of general anxiety, stress, insecurity, and ultimately, dissatisfaction. As such, their mood at the time of survey completion could have been impacted by the general work environment, rather than the M&A event itself. Previous research supports this assumption in that economic instability, rising work demands, and low job security is significantly associated with low job satisfaction (Hom & Kninicki, 2001; Hang-Yue, Foley, & Loi, 2005; Wheeler et al., 2007; Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Eberly, 2008). This economic backdrop may have influenced the results in that there may have been some range restriction in job satisfaction and turnover intentions created by an overall negative sentiment about the major industries that employed a significant number of the participants. Despite this potential history and mood effect on the results, we found evidence that those who were experiencing major change and additional instability from the M&A event could precipitate voluntary turnover intentions.

Future Research Directions

The current study opens up several avenues for future research. First, as mentioned above, future researchers should continue to study mergers and acquisitions longitudinally to gain a better understanding of how this common organizational change affects employee attitudes and behaviors over time. By gathering M&A data at additional time points, it would provide insight as to when the employees begin to experience negative impacts in their current organization, which could provide a valuable timeline for higher-level management to act on. In line with this, and given that the current study used secondary data, it would be valuable for future researchers to gather additional data to improve the power of the analysis. The current study lacked the required sample of participants that would allow for more robust analysis. For instance, rather than computing variables that grouped participants who were already experiencing M&A and who were going to be experiencing the event in the future, using two separate variables would provide additional insight into the M&A process. In line with this, future research should also disseminate the two events (mergers versus acquisitions) to understand whether they would lead to differences in the study variable outcomes.

Second, future research can expand on the current proposed study by analyzing more specific types of fit congruence with organizations, including values congruence, personality congruence, and work environment congruence (Westerman & Cyr, 2004), instead of focusing on perceived person-organization fit. This would allow researchers to investigate which particular fit type is most likely to change due to an M&A event, which could inform real-world organizations where they should focus their attention during change management. Commensurately, researchers can include other types of fit under the umbrella of person-environment fit, such as person-vocational fit, person-job fit, person-group fit, and person-individual fit. All of these types of fit have been moderately related to one another, and each are able to contribute unique prediction to outcome variables (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Similarly, future researchers can expand on the job satisfaction variable by understanding which aspect of the restructuring event is causing the most reductions in satisfaction (i.e. workload, work hours, anxiety about potential job loss, well-being/stress, team restructuring).

Lastly, a key future direction for those studying turnover intentions is to include a measure of alternative job opportunities. Given the fragile economic situation during the time of data collection for the current study, unemployment in Alberta was among the highest in the country (Gallichan-Lowe, 2018), meaning that there were fewer alternative opportunities available for employees to pursue. Research has established that an employee will only experience cognitive withdrawal and act on their intentions to leave an organization when there are attractive alternative opportunities available (Hom, Caranikas-Walker, Prussia, & Griffeth, 1992; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999; Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012). Because of the lack of alternatives in the current sample, participants could have been cognitively justifying their satisfaction and fit levels and ignoring their turnover intentions so as to not cause cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1962). Future studies should include measures to identify whether participants are aware of their alternative job options and how this impacts their turnover intentions and behaviors, while experiencing an M&A event.

Practical Implications

The novel findings of the current study have a number of implications for employees and management within organizations undergoing M&A and other similar restructuring events. First, our research on M&A supports the importance of organizational change management practices to maintain employees' perceptions of fit with the organization. Turnover in M&A groups takes a direct path from perceptions of fit, bypassing job satisfaction altogether. By ensuring that management focuses on the culture, values, and goals of each of the participating organizations, and bridging the gaps to maintain harmony and order, employees may feel less negatively impacted causing less of a need to react (Ashkenas & Francis, 2000). In line with this, by utilizing change management practices that maintain open and transparent communication to all employees regarding the upcoming organizational changes, employees may not experience as strong and sudden of a shock. With support from the Unfolding Model of Turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), this would mean that employees would be more likely to continue to feel a level of fit and satisfaction with their organization that they felt prior to the M&A event, ultimately, controlling levels of voluntary turnover intentions and behaviors. Another recommendation would be that the M&A industry, which currently focuses largely on realizing synergies to reduce costs among the merged entities, should seriously attempt to anticipate the degree of value differences between the organizations as a pre-condition to merging the organizations. A large majority of corporate mergers fail due to unforeseen management challenges with integrating the organizations (Schuler & Jackson, 2001). From an employee turnover perspective, minimizing misfit perceptions or even aborting mergers where a large misfit is likely to occur among employees would be preferable.

In terms of specific change management practices that organizations should adopt, the current research supports prior studies that found implementing a stress reduction training for employees during a major transition to lessen attitudinal declines and reduce undesired turnover (Newman & Krzystofiak, 1993; Schweiger & Weber, 1989). Given that any major change is typically associated with stress and uncertainty, an intervention that focuses on reducing the worries and apprehensions that employees may hold could help ensure stability. Along with this, the current study provides support for better Human Resources practices and managerial interventions aimed at enhancing job satisfaction, through maintaining autonomy and positive relationships with coworkers and managers (Amin & Akbar, 2013). However, it is also important to understand that certain organizations may not agree to invest in additional interventions and change management practices as they may not be particularly worried about turnover levels.

The current study focuses on turnover intentions being a problematic, negative employee attitude. Although there are many challenging attitudes and behaviors associated with turnover intentions, not all turnover is negative for the organization. There are optimal rates in which turnover may be beneficial for the organization, however, in general, lower rates are preferable to higher rates (Huselid, 1995). As such, it is important to understand that there are reasons behind organizational restructuring events that are not always evident. Accordingly, there are certain industries that focus on the attainment of different assets when an M&A event occurs, where employees may not be at the forefront. In this way, having certain employees voluntarily leave the organization may actually be seen as a positive occurrence by the upper management within the company.

Similarly, M&A events are discussed as an exclusively negative event in the current study. However, the changes that follow M&A restructuring may bring about certain benefits for some of the employees in each organization. For instance, if a smaller company merges with a large, global organization, the employees may begin reaping many advantages, such as an improved workspace, valuable time-off policies, attractive stock options, and even security in ones' job growth prospects. Therefore, it is important to recognize that not all M&A events negatively impact every individual involved, and some may even demonstrate a significant increase in their job satisfaction or fit perceptions. Nonetheless, research has demonstrated that M&A events are more likely to fail than succeed regardless of these caveats, and it is therefore, important that organizations conduct best practices that will improve their odds of restructuring for the better.

Conclusion

To our knowledge, the current study was the first multi-organizational and longitudinal investigation of the impact of mergers and acquisitions on employee attitudes, including their perceptions of person-organization fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Based on the findings, there is evidence that M&A can lead to unsatisfactory results for organizations because of how employees respond to these events. Particularly, turnover intentions are significantly higher for those experiencing restructuring events in their organization, and this can lead to adverse outcomes for employees and organizations. It is imperative to continue employee-focused research on M&A events due to the 75% failure rate most commonly attributed to neglected Human Resources practices. Ultimately, the benefit of the current study and future research on this topic will provide invaluable evidence to the multitude of organizations who will undergo restructuring and downsizing, especially given the increasingly precarious nature of the current work realm.

References

Alniacik, E., Alniaçik, Ü., Erat, S., & Akçin, K. (2013). Does person-organization fit moderate the effects of affective commitment and job satisfaction on turnover intentions? *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 99,* 274-281.

Amin, Z., & Akbar, K. P. (2013). Analysis of psychological well-being and turnover intentions of hotel employees: An empirical study. *International Journal of Innovation and Applied Studies, 3*(3), 662-671.

Arthur Jr, W., Bell, S. T., Villado, A. J., & Doverspike, D. (2006). The use of person-organization fit in employment decision making: an assessment of its criterion-related validity. *Journal of applied psychology*, *91*(4), 786.

Ashkenas, R. N., & Francis, S. C. (2000). Integration managers: Special leaders for special times. *Harvard Business Review*, *78*(6), 108-116.

Barak, M. E., Nissly, J. A and Levin, A, "Antecedents to retention and turnover among child welfare, social work, and other human service employees: what can we learn from past research? A review and meta-analysis". The Social Service Review, vol.75, no.4, pp. 625-661, 2001.

Barkema, H. G., & Schijven, M. 2008b. Toward unlocking the full potential of acquisitions: The role of organizational restructuring. Academy of Management Journal, 51: 696-722.

Bartley, M., & Ferrie, J. (2001). Glossary: unemployment, job insecurity, and health. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, *55*(11), 776-781.

Boon, C., & Biron, M. (2016). Temporal issues in person–organization fit, person–job fit and turnover: The role of leader–member exchange. *Human relations*, *69*(12), 2177-2200.

Boswell, W. R., Boudreau, J. W., & Tichy, J. (2005). The relationship between employee job change and job satisfaction: the honeymoon-hangover effect. *Journal of applied psychology*, *90*(5), 882.

Buono, A. F., & Bowditch, J. L. (2003). *The human side of mergers and acquisitions: Managing collisions between people, cultures, and organizations*. Beard Books.

Cable, D. M., & DeRue, D. S. (2002). The convergent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions. *Journal of applied psychology*, *87*(5), 875.

Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, G. D., & Klesh, J. (1983). Michigan organizational assessment questionnaire In: Seashore SE, Lawler EE, Mirvis PH, Cammann C, editors. Assessing organizational change: a guide to methods, measures, and practices.

Chen, G., Ployhart, R. E., Thomas, H. C., Anderson, N., & Bliese, P. D. (2011). The power of momentum: A new model of dynamic relationships between job satisfaction change and turnover intentions. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(1), 159-181.

Chen, P., Sparrow, P., & Cooper, C. (2016). The relationship between person-organization fit and job satisfaction. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.

Christian, J. S., & Ellis, A. P. (2014). The crucial role of turnover intentions in transforming moral disengagement into deviant behavior at work. *Journal of business ethics*, *119*(2), 193-208.

Clark, A., Knabe, A., & Rätzel, S. (2010). Boon or bane? Others' unemployment, well-being and job insecurity. *Labour Economics*, *17*(1), 52-61.

Cotton, J. L., & Tuttle, J. M. (1986). Employee turnover: A meta-analysis and review with implications for research. *Academy of management Review*, *11*(1), 55-70.

De Stefano, V. (2015). The rise of the just-in-time workforce: On-demand work, crowdwork, and labor protection in the gig-economy. *Comp. Lab. L. & Pol'y J.*, *37*, 471.

De Witte, H., Pienaar, J., & De Cuyper, N. (2016). Review of 30 years of longitudinal studies on the association between job insecurity and health and well-being: Is there causal evidence?. *Australian Psychologist*, *51*(1), 18-31.

Dess, G. G., & Shaw, J. D. (2001). Voluntary turnover, social capital, and organizational performance. *Academy of management review*, *26*(3), 446-456.

Dormann, C., & Zapf, D. (2001). Job satisfaction: A meta-analysis of stabilities. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *22*(5), 483-504.

Du Plooy, J., & Roodt, G. (2010). Work engagement, burnout and related constructs as predictors of turnover intentions. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *36*(1), 1-13.

Fairfield-Sonn, J. W., Ogilvie, J. R., & DelVecchio, G. A. (2002). Mergers, acquisitions and long-term employee attitudes. *The Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, *8*(2), 1.

Farooqui, M. S., & Nagendra, A. (2014). The impact of person organization fit on job satisfaction and performance of the employees. *Procedia economics and Finance*, *11*(2014), 122-129.

Farrell, D., & Rusbult, C. E. (1981). Exchange variables as predictors of job satisfaction, job commitment, and turnover: The impact of rewards, costs, alternatives, and investments. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, *28*(1), 78-95.

Feng, D. D., Lu, C. Q., & Siu, O. L. (2008). Job insecurity, well-being, and job performance: The role of general self-efficacy. *Acta Psychologica Sinica*.

Ferrie, J. E., Shipley, M. J., Stansfeld, S. A., & Marmot, M. G. (2002). Effects of chronic job insecurity and change in job security on self reported health, minor psychiatric morbidity, physiological measures, and health related behaviours in British civil servants: the Whitehall II study. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, *56*(6), 450-454.

Ferrie, J. E., Shipley, M. J., Newman, K., Stansfeld, S. A., & Marmot, M. (2005). Self-reported job insecurity and health in the Whitehall II study: potential explanations of the relationship. *Social science & medicine*, *60*(7), 1593-1602.

Festinger, L. (1962). Cognitive dissonance. *Scientific American*, *207*(4), 93-106.

Fidalgo, F., & Gouveia, L. B. (2012). Employee turnover impact in organizational knowledge management: the Portuguese real estate case. *Journal of knowledge management, economics and information technology*, *2*(2), 1-16.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). Belief, attitude. *Intention and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research*.

Fletcher, R. (2018, December). See how Alberta's economic recovery has been sputtering in a few simple charts. CBC News.

Gallichan-Lowe, S. (2018, September). Alberta unemployment steady at 6.7 % in August; Calgary has second highest unemployment rate in Canada. Global News.

Graves, D. (1981). Individual reactions to a merger of two small firms of brokers in the re-insurance industry: A total population survey. *Journal of Management Studies*, *18*(1), 89-113.

Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of management*, *26*(3), 463-488.

Gutknecht, J. E., & Keys, J. B. (1993). Mergers, acquisitions and takeovers: Maintaining morale of survivors and protecting employees. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *7*(3), 26-36.

Haleblian, J., Devers, C. E., McNamara, G., Carpenter, M. A., & Davison, R. B. (2009). Taking stock of what we know about mergers and acquisitions: A review and research agenda. *Journal of management*, *35*(3), 469-502.

Hang-Yue, N., Foley, S., & Loi, R. (2005). Work role stressors and turnover intentions: A study of professional clergy in Hong Kong. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *16*(11), 2133-2146.

Hausknecht, J. P., & Holwerda, J. A. (2013). When does employee turnover matter? Dynamic member configurations, productive capacity, and collective performance. *Organization Science*, *24*(1), 210-225.

Hellgren, J., Sjoberg, A., & Sverke, M. (1997). 57. Intention to quit: effects of job satisfaction and job perceptions.

Hellgren, J., & Sverke, M. (2003). Does job insecurity lead to impaired well-being or vice versa? Estimation of cross-lagged effects using latent variable modelling. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *24*(2), 215-236.

Heyes, A., Leach, A., & Mason, C. F. (2018). The economics of Canadian oil sands. *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, *12*(2), 242-263.

Hinkin, T. R. (1998). A brief tutorial on the development of measures for use in survey questionnaires. *Organizational research methods*, *1*(1), 104-121.

Hoffman, B. J., & Woehr, D. J. (2006). A quantitative review of the relationship between person–organization fit and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of vocational behavior*, *68*(3), 389-399.

Holtom, B. C., Mitchell, T. R., Lee, T. W., & Eberly, M. B. (2008). 5 turnover and retention research: a glance at the past, a closer review of the present, and a venture into the future. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *2*(1), 231-274.

Hom, P. W., Caranikas-Walker, F., Prussia, G. E., & Griffeth, R. W. (1992). A meta-analytical structural equations analysis of a model of employee turnover. *Journal of applied psychology*, *77*(6), 890.

Hom, P. W., & Kinicki, A. J. (2001). Toward a greater understanding of how dissatisfaction drives employee turnover. *Academy of Management journal*, *44*(5), 975-987.

Hom, P. W., Lee, T. W., Shaw, J. D., & Hausknecht, J. P. (2017). One hundred years of employee turnover theory and research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *102*(3), 530.

Hom, P. W., Mitchell, T. R., Lee, T. W., & Griffeth, R. W. (2012). Reviewing employee turnover: focusing on proximal withdrawal states and an expanded criterion. *Psychological bulletin*, *138*(5), 831.

Huselid, M. A. (1995). The impact of human resource management practices on turnover, productivity, and corporate financial performance. *Academy of management journal*, *38*(3), 635-672.

Irving, P. G., Coleman, D. F., & Cooper, C. L. (1997). Further assessments of a three-component model of occupational commitment: Generalizability and differences across occupations. *Journal of applied psychology*, *82*(3), 444.

Iverson, R. D., & Pullman, J. A. (2000). Determinants of voluntary turnover and layoffs in an environment of repeated downsizing following a merger: An event history analysis. *Journal of management*, *26*(5), 977-1003.

Jemison, D. B., & Sitkin, S. B. (1986). Corporate acquisitions: A process perspective. *Academy of management review*, *11*(1), 145-163.

Jung, Y. C., & Das, A. (2018). Asymmetric effects of the WTI crude oil price on unemployment rates: a comparative study of Canadian provinces and the United States. *OPEC Energy Review*, *42*(2), 123-150.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2000). Nonstandard employment relations: Part-time, temporary and contract work. *Annual review of sociology*, *26*(1), 341-365.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2001). Organizing flexibility: the flexible firm in a new century. *British journal of industrial relations*, *39*(4), 479-504.

Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., Wanberg, C. R., Glomb, T. M., & Ahlburg, D. (2005). The role of temporal shifts in turnover processes: it's about time. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *90*(4), 644.

Kochanski, J., & Sorensen, A. (2008). Turning round employee turnover: recognizing that employee turnover directly impacts financial results, companies are searching for strategies to confront the problem. Two consultants discuss turnover's costs, causes and cures. *Financial Executive*, *24*(5), 28-32.

Koeske, G. F., & Kirk, S. A. (1995). The effect of characteristics of human service workers on subsequent morale and turnover. *Administration in Social Work*, *19*(1), 15-31.

Kristof-Brown, A., & Guay, R. P. (2011). Person–environment fit. In *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology, Vol 3: Maintaining, expanding, and contracting the organization.* (pp. 3-50). American Psychological Association.

Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel psychology*, *58*(2), 281-342.

Kunda, Z. (1990). The case for motivated reasoning. *Psychological bulletin*, *108*(3), 480.

Lambert, E. G., Hogan, N. L., & Barton, S. M. (2001). The impact of job satisfaction on turnover intent: a test of a structural measurement model using a national sample of workers. *The Social Science Journal*, *38*(2), 233-250.

László, K. D., Pikhart, H., Kopp, M. S., Bobak, M., Pajak, A., Malyutina, S., ... & Marmot, M. (2010). Job insecurity and health: a study of 16 European countries. *Social science & medicine*, *70*(6), 867-874.

Lee, W. T., Burch, T. C., & Mitchell, T. R. (2014). The story of why we stay: A review of job embeddedness. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, *1*(1), 199-216.

Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (1994). An alternative approach: The unfolding model of voluntary employee turnover. *Academy of management review*, *19*(1), 51-89.

Lyons, H. Z., & O'Brien, K. M. (2006). The role of person-environment fit in the job satisfaction and tenure intentions of African American employees. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *53*(4), 387.

Maertz Jr, C. P., & Griffeth, R. W. (2004). Eight motivational forces and voluntary turnover: A theoretical synthesis with implications for research. *Journal of management*, *30*(5), 667-683.

Marks, M. L., & Mirvis, P. H. (2001). Making mergers and acquisitions work: Strategic and psychological preparation. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *15*(2), 80-92.

Maynard, D. C., Joseph, T. A., & Maynard, A. M. (2006). Underemployment, job attitudes, and turnover intentions. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *27*(4), 509-536.

Mirvis, P. H., & Lawler, E. E. (1977). Measuring the financial impact of employee attitudes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *62*(1), 1.

Mitchell, T. R., & Beach, L. R. (1990). "… Do I love thee? Let me count…" Toward an understanding of intuitive and automatic decision making. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *47*(1), 1-20.

Mobley, W. H. (1982). *Employee turnover, causes, consequences, and control*. Addison-Wesley.

Mobley, W. H., Griffeth, R. W., Hand, H. H., & Meglino, B. M. (1979). Review and conceptual analysis of the employee turnover process. *Psychological bulletin*, *86*(3), 493.

Morrison, E. W., & Robinson, S. L. (1997). When employees feel betrayed: A model of how psychological contract violation develops. *Academy of management Review*, *22*(1), 226-256.

Moynihan, L. M., Boswell, W. R., & Boudreau, J. W. (2000). The influence of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on executive withdrawal and performance.

Mueller, C. W., & Price, J. L. (1989). Some consequences of turnover: A work unit analysis. *Human Relations*, *42*(5), 389-402.

Nahavandi, A., & Malekzadeh, A. R. (1988). Acculturation in mergers and acquisitions. *Academy of management review*, *13*(1), 79-90.

Newman, J. M., & Krzystofiak, F. J. (1993). Changes in employee attitudes after an acquisition: A longitudinal analysis. *Group & Organization Management*, *18*(4), 390-410.

Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (1991). Responses to depression and their effects on the duration of depressive episodes. *Journal of abnormal psychology*, *100*(4), 569.

O'Reilly, C. A., Chatman, J., & Caldwell, D. F. (1991). People and organizational culture: A profile comparison approach to assessing person-organization fit. *Academy of management journal*, *34*(3), 487-516.

Parasuraman, S. (1982). Predicting turnover intentions and turnover behavior: A multivariate analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *21*(1), 111-121.

Park, T. Y., & Shaw, J. D. (2013). Turnover rates and organizational performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of applied psychology*, *98*(2), 268.

Podsakoff, N. P., LePine, J. A., & LePine, M. A. (2007). Differential challenge stressor-hindrance stressor relationships with job attitudes, turnover intentions, turnover, and withdrawal behavior: a meta-analysis. *Journal of applied psychology*, *92*(2), 438.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual review of psychology*, *63*, 539-569.

Pollard, T. M. (2001). Changes in mental well-being, blood pressure and total cholesterol levels during workplace reorganization: The impact of uncertainty. *Work & stress*, *15*(1), 14-28.

Porter, L. W., Steers, R. M., Mowday, R. T., & Boulian, P. V. (1974). Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians. *Journal of applied psychology*, *59*(5), 603.

Price, J. L., & Mueller, C. W. (1981). A causal model of turnover for nurses. *Academy of management journal*, *24*(3), 543-565.

Rafferty, A. E., & Griffin, M. A. (2006). Perceptions of organizational change: A stress and coping perspective. *Journal of applied psychology*, *91*(5), 1154.

Sang, K. J., Ison, S. G., & Dainty, A. R. (2009). The job satisfaction of UK architects and relationships with work-life balance and turnover intentions. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, *16*(3), 288-300.

Schaefer, J. A., & Moos, R. H. (1996). Effects of work stressors and work climate on long-term care staff's job morale and functioning. *Research in nursing & health*, *19*(1), 63-73.

Schneider, B. (1987). The people make the place. *Personnel psychology*, *40*(3), 437-453.

Schuler, R., & Jackson, S. (2001). HR issues and activities in mergers and acquisitions. *European management journal*, *19*(3), 239-253.

Schweiger, D. M., & Weber, Y. (1989). Strategies for managing human resources during mergers and. *People and Strategy*, *12*(2), 69.

Shaw, J. D., Gupta, N., & Delery, J. E. (2005). Alternative conceptualizations of the relationship between voluntary turnover and organizational performance. *Academy of management journal*, *48*(1), 50-68.

Shore, L. M., & Martin, H. J. (1989). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment in relation to work performance and turnover intentions. *Human relations*, *42*(7), 625-638.

Shrivastava, P. (1986). Postmerger integration. *The Journal of Business Strategy*, *7*(1), 65.

Siefert, K., Jayaratne, S., & Chess, W. A. (1991). Job satisfaction, burnout, and turnover in health care social workers. *Health & Social Work*, *16*(3), 193-202.

Silverthorne, C. (2004). The impact of organizational culture and person-organization fit on organizational commitment and job satisfaction in Taiwan. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

Smircich, L. (1983). Concepts of culture and organizational analysis. *Administrative science quarterly*, 339-358.

Staw, B. M. (1980). The consequences of turnover. *Journal of occupational Behaviour*, 253-273.

Steel, R. P., & Ovalle, N. K. (1984). A review and meta-analysis of research on the relationship between behavioral intentions and employee turnover. *Journal of applied psychology*, *69*(4), 673.

Taylor, A. (2001). The great mergers wave breaks. *The Economist*, 59-60.

Tett, R. P., & Meyer, J. P. (1993). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: path analyses based on meta-analytic findings. *Personnel psychology*, *46*(2), 259-293.

Ton, Z., & Huckman, R. S. (2008). Managing the impact of employee turnover on performance: The role of process conformance. *Organization Science*, *19*(1), 56-68.

Vandenberg, R. J., & Nelson, J. B. (1999). Disaggregating the motives underlying turnover intentions: When do intentions predict turnover behavior?. *Human relations*, *52*(10), 1313-1336.

Verquer, M. L., Beehr, T. A., & Wagner, S. H. (2003). A meta-analysis of relations between person–organization fit and work attitudes. *Journal of vocational behavior*, *63*(3), 473-489.

Vroom, V. (1964). Motivation and work.

Walsh, J. P. (1988). Top management turnover following mergers and acquisitions. *Strategic Management Journal*, *9*(2), 173-183.

Wanberg, C. R., & Banas, J. T. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of openness to changes in a reorganizing workplace. *Journal of applied psychology*, *85*(1), 132.

Weber, Y. (1996). Corporate cultural fit and performance in mergers and acquisitions. *Human relations*, *49*(9), 1181-1202.

Westerman, J. W., & Cyr, L. A. (2004). An integrative analysis of person–organization fit theories. *International Journal of selection and assessment*, *12*(3), 252-261.

Wheeler, A. R., Buckley, M. R., Halbesleben, J. R., Brouer, B., & Ferris, G. R. (2005). 'The elusive criterion of fit. *revisited: toward an integrative theory of multidimensional fit. Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, *24*, 265-304.

Wheeler, A. R., Coleman Gallagher, V., Brouer, R. L., & Sablynski, C. J. (2007). When person-organization (mis) fit and (dis) satisfaction lead to turnover: The moderating role of perceived job mobility. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *22*(2), 203-219.

Zeytinoglu, I. U., Denton, M., Davies, S., Baumann, A., Blythe, J., & Boos, L. (2007). Deteriorated external work environment, heavy workload and nurses' job satisfaction and turnover intention. *Canadian Public Policy*, *33*(Supplement 1), S31-S47.