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The Moderating Effect of Self-efficacy on the Relationship between Telecommuting and Turnover Intentions

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THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SELF-EFFICACY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TELECOMMUTING INTENSITY AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

THE MODERATING EFFECT OF SELF-EFFICACY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TELECOMMUTING INTENSITY AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS

by Samantha Scoppettone

In recent years, telecommuting has become a popular working arrangement. While many studies have examined various outcomes of telecommuting such as turnover intentions, there is limited literature around potential moderators of the relationship of telecommuting and turnover intentions. The present study examined the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions and explored occupational self-efficacy as a potential moderator. It was hypothesized that occupational self-efficacy would moderate the positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, meaning that the relationship would be stronger for those with lower levels of occupational self-efficacy than those with higher levels of occupational self-efficacy. A total of 160 survey responses were analyzed to test this hypothesis. Results showed that occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions. Results also showed that there was no significant relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions but there was a significant negative relationship between occupational self-efficacy and turnover intentions. This suggests that organizations should work on building occupational self-efficacy levels in their employees through trainings to reap the benefits of positive organizational outcomes. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions along with potential moderators that impact this relationship.

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Introduction

Telecommuting is an increasingly common trend in the workplace. Since 2005, the number of people who work from home has grown 173% (Global Workforce Analytics, 2018). The demand for telecommuting among employees is growing rapidly, as 80% of the workforce now states that they have a desire to work from home at least some of the time (Owl Labs, 2019). As a result, an increasing number of employers have been offering telecommuting options in order to attract top talent. Currently, over 5 million employees within the United States work at home at least half of the time (Global Workplace Analytics, 2018).

More recently, telecommuting has become increasingly prevalent due to COVID-19, which has caused over 40% of the American workforce to telecommute (Bloom, 2020). Even after COVID-19, it is predicted that many employees will continue to telecommute as large companies including Facebook, Twitter, Square, Shopify, and Slack have announced plans to continue telecommuting permanently (Cao, 2020). In fact, Global Workplace Analytics (2020) predicts that 25 to 30% of the workforce will be working from home multiple days a week by the end of 2021.

Studies have shown that both employees and companies benefit from telecommuting. For example, telecommuting has been shown to be positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Casey & Grzywacz, 2008; Tavares, 2017), as well as productivity (Gajedran & Harrison, 2007). Although the relationship between telecommuting and these organizational outcomes have been found to be positive, the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions has been inconsistent. For

example, one study found that those who telecommuted had less work exhaustion and as a result had lower turnover intentions compared to those who did not (Golden, 2006). However, another study showed that employees who telecommuted were no more or less likely to have turnover intentions than those who did not telecommute (Kossek et al., 2006). Additionally, Caillier (2016) found that telecommuting actually increased employees' turnover intentions.

These inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions might be due to a relative lack of attention to moderator variables. Sardeshmukh et al. (2012) stated that while job-related characteristics such as job autonomy, role ambiguity, and social support have been examined as moderators of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, individual characteristics have not been studied as potential moderators of such relationships. Therefore, this study examined an individual characteristic as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. Specifically, I argued that self-efficacy acts as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions to try to address the inconsistent relationship that past studies have found.

The sections below offer a definition of telecommuting, review research on the outcomes of telecommuting, and examine the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, and look at moderators that have been studied for the relationship. Additionally, self-efficacy is introduced, along with its hypothesized moderating effect on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Telecommuting: Definition and Types

Allen et al. (2005) defined telecommuting as "a work practice that involves members of an organization substituting a portion of their typical work hours (ranging from a few hours per week to nearly full-time) to work away from a central workplace - typically from home - using technology to interact with others as needed to conduct work tasks" (p. 44). There are two common types of telecommuting: remote work and flexible working arrangements. Remote work is often defined as employees residing and working outside of the local commuting area of their organization's worksite; this term generally encompasses full-time teleworkers who never report into the office (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2013). Remote work has been defined in past studies as working away from a supervisor such that there is limited or no in-person supervision but instead there is technology-mediated communication (Barsness et al., 2005; Kurland & Bailey, 1999).

Flexible working arrangements have commonly been defined as formal or informal policies and practices that permit employees to vary when and where their work is carried out (Maxwell et al., 2007). There are two main types of flexible working arrangements: flexplace and flextime (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). Flexplace is when employees perform tasks normally done in a central workplace elsewhere (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). An example of flexplace could be when an employee works on a presentation for work at their home instead of at their worksite office. Flextime is when employees have flexibility in the days and hours they work. An example of flextime is when an employee leaves work at 3PM to pick up their children from school and works in the evening to

complete the rest of their hours. With flextime, there are usually standard hours when the employee must be at the worksite that are agreed upon with their supervisor. The remaining hours of an employee's time can be completed at their home on their own time.

Almost all forms of telecommuting involve using technology to complete work away from the traditional office setting, most frequently within employees' homes. In my study, telecommuters will be defined as those who do not report to a centralized workplace but instead accomplish work tasks by utilizing technology such as laptops, tablets, and phones. Rather than having a dichotomy between telecommuters and non-telecommuters, I will measure the intensity that an individual telecommutes by the number of hours a week spent telecommuting.

Outcomes of Telecommuting

As telecommuting continues to increase in popularity, there have been a large number of studies examining its outcomes. Companies are seeing benefits such as increased productivity and positive job attitudes. However, there are mixed findings regarding the effect of telecommuting on work-family balance and turnover intentions.

Productivity.

Employee productivity is key to organizational success and companies are always looking for ways to maximize it. Several studies have looked at the effects of telecommuting on employee productivity and have found a positive relationship (e.g., McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003; Pinsonneault & Boisvert, 2001). For example, Bloom et al. (2014) found that call center workers who were selected to telecommute over a period of nine and a half months completed 13.5% more calls than call center workers who worked

in the office, equating to almost a day more a week of work. The study found that productivity increased because employees worked more minutes per shift and had a quieter work environment that allowed them to focus.

With increased employee productivity as one of the major known benefits of telecommuting, there have been additional studies that have looked at what causes this increased productivity (Apgar, 1998; Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Tavares, 2017). One proposed reason is that telecommuting employees can choose their work environment, usually in their homes, which means they have fewer interruptions and distractions compared to those who work in the office (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Telecommuters also work longer hours since they save time not commuting to the office (Apgar, 1998). Another reason for increased productivity is that telecommuting employees have flexibility when planning their work schedules, hence they can choose to work during the times they are most productive (Tavares, 2017). For example, someone who is most productive in the morning can log on as soon as they wake up and utilize mornings to get a majority of their work done.

Job Attitudes.

The most frequently examined job attitudes as outcomes of telecommuting are job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). A meta-analysis of 46 studies showed that employees who telecommute had higher levels of job satisfaction compared to non-telecommuting employees (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Telecommuters reported decreased stress

levels which allowed them to meet family-related responsibilities, thus contributing to increased job satisfaction (Guimaraes & Dallow, 1999; Riley & McClosky, 1997). That is, employees who are less stressed with their jobs are less likely to experience burnout and ultimately have a more positive outlook about their job. Additionally, employees who are able to fulfill their family demands without work interfering are more likely to appreciate their jobs (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Telecommuting has also been shown to be positively related to an employee's organizational commitment, which has been defined as "the relative strength of an individual's involvement in a particular organization" (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). Organizational commitment is based on three factors: the acceptance of the organization's goals and values, the willingness to invest effort on behalf of the organization, and the importance attached to keeping up membership in the organization (Bogler & Somech, 2004). A meta-analysis of 32 studies found that telecommuting increased employee's feelings of organizational commitment, such that the more an employee telecommuted, the higher the level of organizational commitment they felt to the organization (Martin & MacDonnell, 2012).

Work Family Balance.

Telecommuting has gained attention as a way to increase work-family balance for employees by allowing them to have flexible working arrangements. While there are many studies that have looked at the relationship between telecommuting and work-family balance, very few have actually defined the concept of work-family balance. However, a common understanding of work-family balance among researchers is that it

consists of an equal amount of time, psychological involvement, and satisfaction with family and work roles (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

While flexible working arrangements have been touted by companies as increasing work-family balance, studies have shown conflicting results on whether this is actually the case. Flexible working hours seem to increase work-family balance as employees can schedule working hours around family demands (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). However, because a flexible working place is usually the employee's home, this increases the number of hours worked such that those who telecommute work more hours than those who do not (Madden & Jones, 2008). This expansion of work hours might cause feelings of intensified work demands among telecommuters that reduce feelings of a healthy work-family balance (Noonan & Glass, 2012).

Turnover intentions.

There are many studies that have examined the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, in part because turnover intentions are the strongest predictor of actual turnover (Lambert et al., 2012). Turnover intentions are defined as the conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). There have been inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. For example, Gajendran and Harrison (2007) conceptualized telecommuting as work that occurs outside the central workplace, typically the employee's home. They studied employees who worked away from the office one day or more per week and found a negative relationship between telecommuting and turnover

intentions. These findings suggested that employees who telecommute more were less likely to have turnover intentions compared to employees who did not telecommute.

Another study also found telecommuting was negatively associated with turnover intentions (Golden, 2006). Similar to Gajendran and Harrison (2007), Golden measured telecommuting on a continuum such that participants were asked what percentage of the work week they spent telecommuting. Results showed that the more employees telecommuted, the less likely they were to have turnover intentions. Results also showed that work exhaustion mediated the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. Work exhaustion was conceptualized as the expenditure of both mental and emotional energy that is needed to meet job demands. According to Golden, telecommuting alters both the location and nature of the work conditions and eliminates employee commutes, which is likely to reduce organizational conditions that cause work exhaustion, including freedom from interruptions, which leads to lower turnover intentions.

However, telecommuters may not always experience lower levels of turnover intentions. For example, although Kossek et al. (2006) predicted there would be a negative relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, they found no relationship. They suggested that formal utilization of telecommuting might only lead to more positive outcomes for specific groups. For example, in their study only women with children who telecommuted had lower rates of depression and turnover intentions, whereas the rest of the sample did not.

Caillier (2016) even found a positive relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions among U.S. federal agency employees, suggesting that telecommuters were more likely to have turnover intentions than non-telecommuters. According to Caillier, the increased turnover intentions among employees who telecommuted could be attributed to a lack of separation between work and family roles, such that home responsibilities made it more difficult for telecommuters to complete their work-related tasks, and vice-versa. They also attributed higher turnover intentions amongst telecommuters to increased isolation between telecommuters and their coworkers as well as the organization. It is worth noting that this study measured telecommuting on a continuum, such that employees were asked to specify how frequently they telecommuted.

The literature examining the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions has inconsistent findings in that no relationship, a positive relationship and a negative relationship have all been reported. The relative lack of consistent findings between telecommuting and turnover intentions might suggest the presence of a moderator. The section below reviews studies that examined moderators of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Moderators of the Relationship Between Telecommuting and Turnover Intentions

In order to better understand what might affect the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, past studies have looked at moderators of this relationship. Examining moderators of the relationship between telecommuting and

turnover intentions allows for a more holistic view of variables that contribute to this relationship.

Leadership style.

Leadership style has been examined as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. For example, one study looked at how transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles affected telecommuters' intent to leave an organization (Overbey, 2013). Overbey (2013) defined transactional leadership style as focusing on the exchanges between a leader and the follower such that workers are expected to achieve goals defined by the leader while in return the workers receive compensation, bonuses and recognition for reaching these goals. Transformational leadership style is seen as focusing a group on achieving a common goal or vision through inspirational motivation and leading by example to achieve progress (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2007). Laissez-faire leadership style emphasizes that the leader be passive and let workers have sole responsibility for the decisions they make about their work (Eagly et al., 2003).

Overbey (2013) found that transformational leadership increased turnover intentions, transactional leadership did not significantly affect turnover intentions, and laissez-faire leadership decreased the relationship between telecommuters and turnover intentions. This means that leaders who are less involved with the supervision of subordinates are more likely to have telecommuters with reduced turnover intentions. Overall, leadership style acted as a moderator such the more transformational leadership style a supervisor had the stronger the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions while

the more a supervisor displayed laissez-faire leadership style the weaker the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Communication-enhancing technology.

Another moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intention is communication-enhancing technology. Communication-enhancing technology includes access to high-speed internet, audio conferencing, a dedicated telephone line for work, and video conferencing with whiteboard enabled collaborative software (Golden et al., 2008). One of the biggest concerns among high frequency telecommuters is professional isolation, defined as a feeling that one is out of touch with their coworkers (Diekema, 1992).

Since those with high telecommuting frequency are more often likely to feel professionally isolated than those who work in the office, Golden et al. (2008) conducted a study on telecommuters who felt professionally isolated to examine the moderating effect of communication-enhancing technology on turnover intentions. The authors hypothesized that communication-enhancing technology would moderate the relationship between professional isolation and turnover intentions such that the more access a telecommuter had to communication-enhancing technology they would have reduced feelings of professional isolation and as a result lower levels of turnover intentions. They argued that communication-enhancing technology would reduce feelings of professional isolation because it allows for virtual face-to-face interaction with colleagues.

Access to communication-enhancing technology was found to be a significant moderator, but contrary to the researchers' hypothesis, telecommuters who felt more

professionally isolated were less likely to have turnover intentions. Since communication-enhancing technology lessens telecommuters' feelings of professional isolation, telecommuters who had more access to communication-enhancing technology in the study had significantly higher turnover intentions, while telecommuters who had less access to communication-enhancing technology had significantly lower levels of turnover intentions. The authors explained that this might be because higher feelings of professional isolation due to a lack of communication-enhancing technology may reduce employee's faith in their skills and their ability to successfully find alternative employment.

While there have been a few moderators that have looked at the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, individual characteristics have not yet been studied as moderators (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012). While job-related characteristics and situational characteristics have been shown to moderate the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions, it is likely that individual characteristics also have a moderating effect. Individuals' intentions are largely influenced by their individual characteristics (Forrester et al., 2016) . While two people can have identical jobs, they may have varying thoughts and feelings about the job due to their individual characteristics. This study proposes that self-efficacy may be an individual characteristic that acts as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. The section below defines self-efficacy, the effect self-efficacy has on telecommuters, and its predicted effect on the telecommuting and turnover intentions relationship.

Self-efficacy

Lunenburg (2011) defines self-efficacy as a person's belief that he or she is capable of performing a specific task correctly. Lunenburg also highlights that self-efficacy is developed from four main sources. Past performance is one of the sources as employees who have succeeded on job tasks in the past have more confidence to complete similar tasks in the future compared to those who have been unsuccessful. The second source of self-efficacy is vicarious experience; in the workplace, watching a coworker succeed at a particular task increases an employee's belief they can perform the same task. Vicarious experience is most effective when people see themselves as similar to the person they are modeling.

Verbal persuasion is the third source of self-efficacy. Successful leaders in workplaces utilize the Pygmalion effect, which is using verbal persuasion in the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy such that believing something is true can make it true. This verbal persuasion helps convince people they have the ability to succeed at a task. The final source of self-efficacy is emotional state. For example, before engaging in a task, employees may experience low self-confidence, feel anxiety, and become stressed about whether they can perform the task, which can in turn cause poor performance. In contrast, those who do not have these feelings of stress and anxiety may approach the task feeling more confident in their abilities. These four sources of self-efficacy contribute to employees' confidence levels in themselves at work and greatly affect what they can accomplish as well as their perceptions of how successful they will be at completing tasks.

The self-efficacy theory's basic underlying premise is that expectations of personal mastery, efficacy, and success, which are all considered outcome expectations, determine whether an individual will engage in a particular behavior (Bandura, 1995). An efficacy expectation concerns the amount of confidence an individual has in their ability to produce the behavior. An outcome expectation is a person's belief about the outcomes of a behavior that can involve physical, social, and self-evaluative effects (Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002). In the workplace, self-efficacy affects an employee's level of persistence on difficult tasks, the tasks they engage in, and the goals they set for themselves (Lunenburg, 2011). Self-efficacy theory highlights that self-efficacy is not a personality trait but a characteristic that is situation-and task-related. Hence, this study focuses on self-efficacy related to job tasks, which is called occupational self-efficacy. Someone with high self-efficacy in the workplace believes they can perform their job duties well and views more challenging tasks as something they can accomplish and master. In contrast, someone with low occupational self-efficacy believes work tasks are harder than they actually are, which causes them to feel more stress and results in poorer planning to accomplish these tasks.

Many studies have looked at the relationship between self-efficacy and job performance. Studies have found a positive relationship between them, such that the greater amount of self-efficacy employees have, the higher their levels job performance (Carter et al., 2016; Judge & Bono, 2001). Due to the well-established relationship between self-efficacy and job performance, one study looked at whether job-crafting helps explain this relationship (Tims et al., 2013). The researchers found that job crafting

behaviors, which were defined as individuals' initiative to change or modify aspects of their job to fit with their own characteristics, partially explained the relationship between self-efficacy and job performance. These results indicate that self-efficacious employees are more likely to engage in job crafting, which then leads to better performance. Results also showed that on the days employees felt the most self-efficacious, they engaged in the most job crafting behaviors.

Job crafting is likely even more important for employees who telecommute, as telecommuters have more direct control over their working environment and therefore, have a greater ability to job craft. When telecommuters craft their jobs, they change their work tasks and interactions with others, and as a result change their work environment more dramatically compared to non-telecommuters, who have relatively little control over their office environment. Tims et al. (2013) found that individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy engaged in more job crafting behaviors and individuals who had the most job crafting behaviors had higher levels of job performance. This highlights that those telecommuters with high levels of self-efficacy benefit the most from job crafting by experiencing positive outcomes.

While there have been a large number of studies examining the importance of self-efficacy, there have not been many studies that have looked at how self-efficacy impacts telecommuters. One of the few studies that examined this relationship found that self-efficacy was positively related to telecommuter adjustment. Individuals who had higher levels of telecommuter adjustment in turn had higher levels of work performance (Raghuram et al., 2003). Telecommuter adjustment was defined as an employee's ability

to cope with their work environment and perform well. The results of this study also showed that telecommuting frequency acted as a moderator such that the more frequently an individual telecommuted, the stronger the positive relationship between self-efficacy and telecommuter adjustment. The resources received by employees who telecommute, such as communication-enhancing technology and support from their managers, play a role in both telecommuter adjustment and organizational outcomes.

One study showed that self-efficacy played a moderating role on the relationship between emotional dissonance and counterproductive work behaviors (Cretu & Burcas, 2013). Emotional dissonance was defined as feelings of emotional uneasiness occurring when there is a discrepancy between required and felt emotions. For example, if a customer service representative feels disrespected by a customer's comments but has to act happy and concerned, this would be an example of emotional dissonance because the customer service representative's feeling of disrespect is not aligned with their required emotions of acting happy and concerned while working. Employees who have frequent feelings of emotional dissonance have been shown to have higher counterproductive work behaviors. The findings from Cretu and Burcas (2013) showed that self-efficacy moderated the relationship between emotional dissonance and counterproductive work behaviors, such that the higher level of self-efficacy an individual had, the less likely the individual would be to engage in counterproductive work behaviors when they had feelings of emotional dissonance. Self-efficacy in this study may have acted as a moderator because even with the uncomfortable feelings that come with emotional dissonance, employees with high levels of self-efficacy were confident in their abilities

on the job and did not feel threatened. However, employees with lower levels of self-efficacy felt threatened and experienced emotional dissonance and as a result felt the need to engage in counterproductive work behaviors.

Shardeshmukh et al. (2012) stated that currently there is a gap in the literature such that while job-related factors have been studied as mediators and moderators of the relationship between teleworking and organizational outcomes, individual variables such as self-efficacy have not. Based on self-efficacy theory, individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to persist and succeed when they confront challenges (Bandura, 1995). This suggests that those with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to adapt to telecommuting and as a result feel less likely to have turnover intentions.

Individuals with higher self-efficacy have already been shown to adapt to telecommuting more easily and this easier adjustment affected both levels of work enjoyment and work performance (Raghuram et al., 2003). Based on Cretu and Burcas (2013), self-efficacy can give employees the security to continue persisting at their job without having to engage in negative work behaviors. Ultimately, higher levels of self-efficacy will allow telecommuters to persist when faced with adversity, keep their motivation level high, and have the confidence to persist when faced with challenging job tasks.

With telecommuting increasing in popularity, there are unique challenges telecommuters face, including the inability to quickly and succinctly communicate with coworkers and develop an end-to-end plan for projects and tasks. For example, when

faced with less interaction with teammates for help on work tasks, individuals with lower levels of self-efficacy may become more discouraged about their ability to succeed in their job compared to an individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy, who are likely to attempt to solve the task on their own more persistently. Self-efficacy may affect how telecommuters respond to challenges they will face on the job. This is why I hypothesize that workers with higher self-efficacy to be more successful while in an isolated environment.

> *Hypothesis:* Occupational self-efficacy will moderate the positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, such that the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions will be more positive when telecommuters have low occupational self-efficacy than when they have high occupational self-efficacy.

The Present Study

With the increasing number of employees who are telecommuting, it is important to examine the impact it has on these employees. Telecommuting has been linked to many important organizational outcomes, including turnover intentions. However, to date the findings regarding the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions are inconsistent as studies have found a positive, negative or no relationship between them. This may be in part due to a lack of attention given to moderator variables. As Shardeshmukh et al. (2012) stated, job-related factors rather than individual characteristics have been looked at as moderators of this relationship and it is important to look at individual characteristics to better understand the relationship between

telecommuting and turnover intentions. This study seeks to bridge that gap by examining the effects that occupational self-efficacy has on this relationship.

Method

Participants

Participants were obtained through my personal and professional networks, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. In order to be included in the study, participants had to be 18 years or older and currently employed. Unemployed individuals were excluded from the study because they would not be able to respond to any of the questions regarding occupational self-efficacy, telecommuting intensity, or turnover intentions. Participants who had a significant number of missing responses were also excluded from analyses. The final sample consisted of 160 participants.

The demographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1. A majority of the sample was female (72.5%). Participants' ages ranged widely with 25 to 34 years old (30.0%), 18-24 (20%), 45-54 (17.5%) and 55-64 (17.5%). Most of the participants were employed full-time (76.3%). The tenure of the participants ranged from less than one year to more than 20 years with 52.5% of participants reporting they had worked in their current job for two years or less. The majority of participants identified as White (53.1%), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander (25.6%), Hispanic or Latino (11.3%), and two or more races (6.9%).

When asked whether participants telecommuted or not, 69.4% reported that they telecommuted at least part-time. The number of days participants telecommuted per week ranged from 0 to 7; the most frequent number of days participants telecommuted was five (42.5%) followed by zero (30.6%). Among those who telecommuted, the most frequent telecommuting location was participants' home office (100%). The second most common

location participants telecommuted from was on the road including trains, buses and cars (9.1%), followed by shops (3.6%) and satellite office (3.6%). It should be noted that some participants reported multiple locations.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	*n*	%
Gender		
Female	116	72.5%
Male	44	27.5%
Age		
18-24	32	20.0%
25-34	48	30.0%
35-44	22	13.8%
45-54	28	17.5%
55-64	28	17.5%
65 years or older	2	1.3%
Employment status		
Full-time	122	76.3%
Part-time	38	23.8%
Tenure		
Less than 1 year	37	23.1%
1-2 years	47	29.4%
3-5 years	25	15.6%
6-10 years	14	8.8%
11-15 years	15	9.4%
15-20 years	4	2.5%
20+ years	18	11.3%
Ethnicity		
White	85	53.1%
Hispanic or Latino	18	11.3%
Black or African American	4	2.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	41	25.6%
Two or more races	11	6.9%
Other	1	.6%

Variable	*n*	%
Telecommute		
Yes	111	69.4%
No	49	30.6%
Days a week telecommuting		
0	49	30.6%
1	11	6.9%
2	9	5.6%
3	8	5.0%
4	9	5.6%
5	68	42.5%
6	1	.6%
7	5	3.2%
Telecommuting Locations		
Home office	111	100.0%
Satellite Office	4	3.6%
Parks	1	.9%
Libraries	1	.9%
Hotels	1	.9%
On the road (trains, car, bus, etc.)	10	9.1%
Shops (coffee shops, books, restaurants, etc.)	4	3.6%
Other	3	2.7%

Note: Percentages for telecommuting locations were calculated based on the total number of participants who indicated they telecommuted (N = 111)

Measures

Telecommuting Intensity. Telecommuting intensity was operationalized as the percentage of time participant telecommuted for their job. A total of two items were asked to calculate telecommuting intensity. Participants were asked to indicate the total number of hours a week worked and the total number of hours a week spent telecommuting. Then a percentage was calculated by dividing the total number of hours a week telecommuting by the total number of hours a week a participant worked then multiplying by 100. This percentage indicates the percentage of time participants spent telecommuting. For example, if a person worked 32 hours a week and telecommuted for 16 of those hours, they would have a telecommuting intensity percentage of 50%. The larger the percentage, the more time participants spent telecommuting.

Occupational Self-efficacy. Occupational self-efficacy, defined as the degree of competence a person feels concerning the ability to successfully fulfill the tasks involved with their job, was measured with Rigotti et al.'s (2008) Occupational Self-Efficacy scale. All six items from the scale were utilized in the survey. Example items included "I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities," "When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions," and "My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future." Responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly agree*). Responses were averaged to create an overall occupational self-efficacy score. Higher scores indicate higher occupational self-efficacy. Cronbach's alpha was .80 indicating high reliability.

Turnover Intentions. Turnover intentions were defined as the conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization and were measured with Bothma and Roodt's (2013) Turnover Intentions scale (TIS-6). This scale contains six items. An example item was "How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you," which is measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Very unlikely*) to 5 (*Very likely*). Another example item, "How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs," was measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Very dissatisfying*) to 5 (*Very satisfying*). The remaining 4 items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Never*) to 5 (*Always*) and included items such as "How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals." Responses were averaged to create an overall score of turnover intentions. Higher scores indicate more likelihood of turnover intentions. A Cronbach's alpha was .78, which indicates a high level of reliability.

Demographic Information. Participants responded to five items regarding their demographic information. The items included employment status, job tenure, age, gender, and ethnicity.

Two additional items were related to telecommuting; however, they were not utilized in the calculation of telecommuting intensity. The first item asked participants how many days a week they telecommuted. This was to gain more insight into the intensity that participants telecommuted, but, this was not factored into the telecommuting percentage calculation. The second item asked telecommuting participants to select which places

they telecommuted from on a regular basis. This was to gain a contextual understanding of where participants most frequently telecommuted from.

Procedures

The online survey was administered through Qualtrics. Participants were invited to participate in the study through three social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram) as well as through email. The emails and social media posts gave a brief background on the research study, informed participants that participation was voluntary and anonymous, the estimated duration of time to complete the survey, and included an anonymous link to the survey.

Participants who clicked the link to participate in the study were directed to the consent notice. The consent notice also gave information regarding the purpose of the study, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality, and participants' rights to withdraw at any time, appropriate contact information if the participant had any questions or concerns. It also informed participants that no incentives were being provided for completing the survey.

Once participants clicked "I agree to participate in the research study," they were directed to the survey, which contained a total of 20 items regarding telecommuting, occupational self-efficacy, turnover intentions, and demographic information. Once a participant started the survey, they could start and stop whenever they wanted or end the survey at any time. After participants had completed the survey, they were thanked for their time and debriefed about the purpose of the study.

If participants clicked “I do not agree to participate in the research study,” they were directed to close the window so that they could exit the survey. All responses were logged anonymously into Qualtrics. After data collection was complete, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) was used for statistical analysis.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 displays the means and standard deviations for the measured variables. Telecommuting intensity ranged from 0% to 100%, with the mean of 57.29 (*SD* = 43.38). This shows that the sample had a mixture of participants who did not telecommute at all as well as participants who telecommuted full-time.

Participants reported that they had relatively low turnover intentions for their current job (*M*= 2.49, *SD* = .63); this means that overall participants did not frequently think about leaving their organization. Participants reported moderately high levels of occupational self-efficacy (*M* = 5.65, *SD* = 1.05), indicating they felt relatively confident that they were capable of performing their work tasks.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations Among Variables

	M	*SD*	1	2	3
1.Telecommuting intensity	57.29	43.38	--		
2. Turnover intentions	2.49	.63	-.07	--	
3. Occupational self-efficacy	5.65	1.05	-.02	-.33**	--

Note: Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) are in parentheses along the diagonal.
** $p < .01$, $N = 160$

Pearson Correlations

Pearson correlations were calculated in order to measure the extent to which the variables were related to each other. The Pearson correlations are presented in Table 2.

Telecommuting intensity did not have a significant relationship with turnover intentions $r(158) = -.07$, $p > .05$, indicating that the percentage of telecommuting had no relation to one's intentions to leave his or her job. Telecommuting intensity also did not have a significant relationship with occupational self-efficacy $r(158) = -.02$, $p > .05$. This means that regardless of the percentage of telecommuting, it was not related to beliefs in one's abilities to have successful work performance.

The only significant correlation was found between turnover intentions and occupational self-efficacy $r(158) = -.33$, $p < .01$. This indicates that participants with lower levels of occupational self-efficacy were more likely to have higher turnover intentions compared to those with higher levels of occupational self-efficacy.

Test of the Hypothesis

The study's hypothesis stated that the positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions would be moderated by occupational self-efficacy, such that the positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions would be stronger when occupational self-efficacy is low than when it is high. To test this hypothesis, a hierarchical multiple regression (MRC) analysis was conducted, using three steps.

Telecommuting intensity was entered into the first step to see if it had a significant relationship with turnover intentions. In the second step, the moderating variable of occupational self-efficacy was entered. In the third step, the cross-product of telecommuting intensity and occupational self-efficacy was entered to test for a moderating effect. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Telecommuting Intensity and Occupational Self-Efficacy Predicting Turnover Intentions

	Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	Telecommuting intensity	.004	.004	-.07
Step 2	Occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.11***	-.33***
Step 3	Telecommuting intensity x occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.00	.43

Note: $N = 160$, *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

The first step of the analysis showed that telecommuting intensity did not significantly account for any of the variance in turnover intentions, $R^2 = .004$, R^2adj = .004, $F(1, 158) = .66$, $p > .05$. This means that telecommuting intensity did not significantly contribute to the prediction of participants' turnover intentions.

In the second step, occupational self-efficacy was shown to account for an additional 11% of the variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the effect of telecommuting intensity $\Delta R^2 = .11$,$F(1, 157) = 19.82$, $p < .001$. This result means that occupational self-efficacy contributed to predict turnover intentions above and beyond telecommuting intensity.

Results of the third step showed that the added effect of the interaction between telecommuting intensity and occupational self-efficacy was not significant. The interaction effect explained no additional variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the effects of telecommuting intensity and occupational self-efficacy $\Delta R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 156) = 1.00$, $p > .05$. These results did not show support for the hypothesis that self-

efficacy would moderate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions. Overall, the results did not show support for the hypothesis but showed that occupational self-efficacy significantly predicted turnover intentions.

Additional Analyses

Because occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, another hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using telecommuting as a predictor variable. In this analysis, participants were divided into those who telecommuted to any extent and those who never telecommuted. Those who telecommuted to any extent made up 69.4% of the sample and those who did not telecommute at all made up 30.6% of the sample.

Telecommuting was entered into the first step to see if it had a significant relationship with turnover intentions. In the second step, the moderating variable of occupational self-efficacy was entered. In the third step of the analysis, the cross product of telecommuting and occupational self-efficacy was entered so that the moderating effect of occupational self-efficacy on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions could be assessed. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Telecommuting and Occupational Self-Efficacy Predicting Turnover Intentions

	Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	Telecommuting	.01	.01	-.08
Step 2	Occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.11***	-.33***
Step 3	Telecommuting x occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.00	.25

Note: $N = 160$, *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

The results in the first step of the analysis showed that telecommuting did not account significantly for the variance in turnover intentions $R^2 = .01$, $R^2\text{adj} = .01$, $F(1, 158) = 1.06$, $p > .05$. This means that telecommuting or not telecommuting did not significantly contribute to the prediction of participants' turnover intentions.

In the second step of the analysis, occupational self-efficacy accounted for an additional 11% of the variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the effect of telecommuting $\Delta R^2 = .11$, $F(1, 157) = 10.30$, $p < .001$. This indicates that occupational self-efficacy predicted turnover intentions even after telecommuting had already been accounted for.

The third step of the analysis did not show a significant interaction between telecommuting and occupational self-efficacy, $\Delta R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 156) = 6.93$, $p > .05$. This means that the interaction effect did not significantly account for any additional variance beyond the direct effects of telecommuting and self-efficacy Overall, occupational self-

efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Another hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using the number of days spent telecommuting as a predictor variable. This analysis was conducted because I wanted to determine if days spent telecommuting had a significant impact on turnover intentions, since telecommuting intensity did not. The number of days participants telecommuted was entered into the first step to determine if it had a significant relationship with turnover intentions. In the second step, the moderating variable of occupational self-efficacy was entered. In the third step, the cross-product of the number of days spent telecommuting and occupational self-efficacy was entered in order to evaluate the moderating effect of occupational self-efficacy on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Telecommuting Number of Days and Occupational Self-Efficacy Predicting Turnover Intentions

	Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	Days telecommuting	.003	.003	-.05
Step 2	Occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.11***	-.34***
Step 3	Days telecommuting x occupational self-efficacy	.12***	.00	.24

Note: $N = 160$, *$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

The results in the first step of the analysis showed that the number of days participants telecommuted did not significantly account for the variance in turnover intentions, $R^2 = .003$, $R^2\text{adj} = .003$, $F(1, 158) = .40$, $p > .05$. This means that number of days spent telecommuting per week did not significantly contribute to the prediction of participants' turnover intentions.

Results from the second step of the analysis showed that an additional 11% of the variance was accounted for by occupational self-efficacy after number of days a week participants telecommuted was taken into account, $\Delta R^2 = .11$, $F(1, 157) = 20.58$, $p < .001$. This means that self-efficacy predicted turnover intentions after days a week spent telecommuting was accounted for.

In the third step of the multiple regression analysis, the results showed that the interaction between number of days a week participants telecommuted and occupational self-efficacy did not significantly account for any additional variance in turnover intentions above and beyond the direct effects of number of days a week telecommuting and occupational self-efficacy, $\Delta R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 156) = .33$, $p > .05$. The results showed that only occupational self-efficacy significantly predicted turnover intentions. These results showed that occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between the number of days telecommuted and turnover intentions. Overall, results of the two additional analyses showed that occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting and the number of days a week telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Discussion

Telecommuting is an increasing common trend in the workplace. With COVID-19, telecommuting has become even more prevalent. Although the potential consequences of telecommuting such as role stress, performance, and job satisfaction have been studied, the literature regarding the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions is inconsistent. Some studies found a negative relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Golden, 2006), whereas another study found a positive relationship between them (Caillier, 2016). Still, another study found no relationship between them (Kossek et al., 2006).

Past research has examined job-related characteristics as moderators of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. I proposed that a personal characteristic, more specifically occupational self-efficacy, might act as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. Furthermore, this study conceptualized telecommuting as telecommuting intensity because I wanted to see if amount of time spent telecommuting impacted turnover intentions. Therefore, the major purpose of this study was to examine if occupational self-efficacy would moderate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions.

Summary of Findings

The hypothesis stated that occupational self-efficacy would moderate the predicted positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, such that the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions would be more positive when telecommuters have lower levels of occupational self-efficacy compared to

when they have higher levels of occupational self-efficacy. The hypothesis was not supported as there was no significant interaction between telecommuting intensity and occupational self-efficacy on turnover intentions.

Because occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, I conducted additional analyses to examine if occupational self-efficacy moderated the relationship between telecommuting (yes vs. no) and turnover intentions and the relationship between the number of days telecommuted a week and turnover intentions. Regardless of how telecommuting was operationalized, the results of the present study showed that occupational self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Results also showed that telecommuting was not related to turnover intentions. These results indicate that telecommuting, when measured in terms of percentage of telecommuting, the use of telecommuting, and the number of days a week telecommuted did not predict ones' turnover intentions. However, occupational self-efficacy was negatively related to turnover intentions. The results suggest that those with higher occupational self-efficacy were less likely to leave their organizations.

The lack of support for the hypothesis suggests that telecommuting availability at work may not be a prominent factor in employees' decision to leave an organization. Furthermore, for employees who telecommute, their occupational self-efficacy levels are no more important than they are for employees who do not telecommute, since occupational self-efficacy was found to be negatively related to turnover intentions, regardless of telecommuting intensity.

Lack of statistically significant findings on the moderating effect of occupational self-efficacy may be because data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. The high rates of layoffs in the country might have impacted employees' turnover intentions at this time (Guina, 2020). The pandemic created many uncertainties such as when to be back to the office or the future of the economy. Job uncertainty might have been one of them as many employees feared they might lose their jobs because of the uncertainty of the economy (Ruffolo et al., 2021). As a result, telecommuting intensity may not have affected employees' intentions to leave their organization during this time nor occupational self-efficacy might have moderated such a relationship.

Theoretical Implications

The finding that telecommuting intensity did not have a significant relationship with turnover intentions is consistent with that of Kossek et al. (2006) who found that telecommuting did not significantly impact employees' turnover intentions. According to Kossek et al. (2006), telecommuting only affected the turnover intentions of groups such as women with children, and they speculated that this was because flexibility is a top priority in working mothers' working arrangements, whereas in other populations it may not be as much of a priority. In the current study, turnover intentions may not have been significantly affected by telecommuting arrangements because in the midst of the pandemic, many participants might have taken a wait-and-see attitude regarding any job changes, and for the short-term did not intend to turnover until after the pandemic.

However, the findings of the present study are not consistent with both Gajendran and Harrison (2007) and Golden (2006), who found telecommuting was negatively associated

with turnover intentions, suggesting that employees who telecommute are less likely to leave their organization compared to employees who do not telecommute. The findings in the present study may differ from those of Gajendran and Harrison (2007) because in their study, perceived autonomy was found to mediate the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. They discussed that telecommuting increased perceived autonomy where telecommuters were able to control their work arrangements, which in turn, reduced turnover intentions.

Because this study took place during COVID-19, many participants who telecommuted did so out of necessity rather than choice and as a result may not have felt the same levels of autonomy as participants in Gajendran and Harrison's (2007) study. This might have been due to a variety of factors such as online schooling and spouses also working from home at the same time. Participants, especially those with children, may have felt less autonomy than those who were going into work. As a result of reduced autonomy, it was likely not a mediator in this study like it was in the Gajendran and Harrison study, thus contributing to the lack of a significant relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. However, because I did not measure perceived autonomy in the present study, this interpretation is speculative.

The findings of this study also conflict with Golden's (2006) finding that telecommuting was negatively associated with turnover intentions. Golden found that work exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. The researcher argued that those who telecommuted had reduced work exhaustion because the altered work context allowed them for emotional and mental

intensity of interactions to be controlled more by them and also that, because telecommuters did not have to commute to their office and had more flexibility in their schedule, telecommuting reduced their work exhaustion. Because telecommuters were less likely to experience work exhaustion, this led to lower turnover intentions.

However, the present study took place when a large percentage of the workforce was working from home due to the pandemic. Since working from home is the new normal for over 40% of Americans, some of the benefits previously associated with telecommuting, like reduced work exhaustion, may no longer be the case (Bloom, 2020). Now that many employees are telecommuting full-time, they actually report working longer hours than they did when in the office, and working longer hours has been positively associated with increased work exhaustion (Parker et al., 2020; Reynolds, 2020).

Additionally, in the Golden study telecommuters reported less work exhaustion due to their ability to control the emotional and mental intensity of their day-to-day interactions. However, during COVID-19, workers have reported spending significantly more time in meetings (Kost, 2020). An increase in meetings per day has caused increased work exhaustion in many employees (Beheshti, 2020). This means that participants in the present study may not have had the same level of control in their interactions as those in the Golden study and as a result did not have the positive effects of controlling the intensity of their day-to-day interactions.

The findings in this study also conflicted with Caillier (2016) who found that employees who telecommuted had higher turnover intentions than those who did not

telecommute. This finding is the opposite of the findings of Golden (2006) and Gajendran and Harrison (2007). Caillier attributed the positive relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions to teleworking interfering with work-life balance. More specifically, personal obligations can interfere more heavily with job demands when employees telecommute and teleworkers can feel more isolated from coworkers and their organization compared to those who go into the office.

The lack of consistent results on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions may be because of differences in the samples of participants. For example, in the Caillier (2016) study, only federal employees were included. In the Gajendran and Harrison (2007) study, participants from a wider variety of industries were included as they conducted a meta-analysis of 46 studies, while in the Golden (2006) study, a group of teleworkers from a technology corporation made up the sample. In contrast, the present study included participants from a wide array of backgrounds. Telecommuting may have different effects on employees with different job types in regard to organizational outcomes including turnover intentions. Future research regarding a telecommuting and turnover intentions relationship should take into account how occupation may affect the relationship.

Because there had not been any prior literature on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions that examined occupational self-efficacy as a moderator of the relationship, the present study was conducted. There are studies that have examined job-related characteristics such as leadership style and access to communication-enhancing technology as moderators of the relationship between

telecommuting and turnover intentions (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012). However, this was the first study to look at an individual characteristic as a moderator of the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions.

Recent research has shown that an individual's self-efficacy has a significant impact on organizational outcomes including turnover intentions. For example, Raghuram et al. (2003) showed that self-efficacy was positively related to telecommuter adjustment. Since higher levels of telecommuter adjustment meant that employees were able to adapt to their remote work environment more effectively, in this study it was hypothesized that higher levels of self-efficacy for employees who telecommute more frequently might be less likely to have turnover intentions. Although self-efficacy had a direct effect on telecommuter adjustment, it did not moderate the relationship involving telecommuting intensity. It is possible that although self-efficacy can allow for higher levels of telecommuter adjustment, perhaps after a few months of adapting to job demands while working remotely a majority of telecommuters may be able to effectively execute their daily job functions. As a result, occupational self-efficacy may not be as important once a telecommuter has adjusted to their daily job demands.

Additionally, turnover intentions, while related to work performance, are separate organizational outcomes and thus may have different predictor variables. Work performance is directly impacted by an individual's beliefs that they are able to perform a specific task correctly, while turnover intentions may have different predictors such as work engagement and burnout (Plooy & Roodt, 2010). The present study showed that occupational self-efficacy did not act as a significant moderator of the relationship

between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions. As mentioned before, this could be because once telecommuters have adjusted to their work environment, self-efficacy levels may not be as important in predicting turnover intentions. That being said, the finding that occupational self-efficacy was negatively related to turnover intentions means that while occupational self-efficacy levels may not be more important to those who telecommute more frequently it is still a predictor of turnover intentions.

Practical Implications

Even though the results of the study did not support the hypothesis that occupational self-efficacy would moderate the positive relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, the study's findings do have practical implications. The finding that occupational self-efficacy had a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions suggests that organizations might consider assessing self-efficacy of job applicants in the hiring process so that they can be more successful in their jobs. When evaluating applicants' self-efficacy in the hiring process, organizations may check if applicants' qualifications match the job requirements to increase chances that they will feel capable of performing their tasks correctly.

In addition to the hiring process, it may benefit organizations to embed practices that have been shown to increase an individual's self-efficacy. For example, Pekkan (2018) found that employees whose managers had gone through coaching training had higher levels of self-efficacy compared to those employees whose managers had not participated in coaching training. Investing in coaching training may benefit the organization as it may increase employees' levels of self-efficacy. Pekkan (2018) also found that

individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy set clearer goals, manage stress levels better, and took on more responsibilities.

Because this study did not find a moderation effect for occupational self-efficacy on the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, this implies that organizations may not need to emphasize hiring or developing occupational self-efficacy in those who telecommute more frequently or those who minimally telecommute. When examining how telecommuting intensity affects employees' turnover intentions, occupational self-efficacy may not need to be one of the organization's priorities. Instead, organizations can take into account employees' preferences on how frequently they would like to telecommute, assuming the job requirements allow for telecommuting. Additionally, organizations should ensure that employees who telecommute frequently have opportunities to connect with colleagues as telecommuters are more susceptible to feeling isolated (Schawbel, 2018). Organizations should make sure that both those who telecommute and those who do not feel engaged and connected to the organization.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

One strength of the present study is that it was the first to examine the moderating effect of occupational self-efficacy on the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions. Although the results of the study did not support that occupational self-efficacy had a moderating effect, future studies should seek to examine individual characteristics on the relationship between telecommuting and turnover

intentions as there is currently a gap in the literature regarding these types of studies (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012).

Another strength of this study is that participants were from a wide range of industries. Since participants in many industries were included, the results may be generalizable across industries rather than being limited to a particular profession.

Despite the several strengths of the study, this study also has several limitations. First, over 50% of participants in the study had worked at their job for less than 3 years. This means that findings may not be generalizable to employees who have worked at their job for more years. Furthermore, 72.5% of the sample was female. The lack of gender diversity in the sample may mean that the results may not be generalized across genders. Future studies should seek to have a more diverse sample in terms of both tenure and gender.

An additional weakness of this study is that it utilized a cross-sectional design. The relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions along with occupational self-efficacy's moderating effect were measured at one point in time. Utilizing a cross-sectional design also means that a causal statement cannot be made. For example, based on the results of the current study, it cannot be said that lower occupational self-efficacy levels in individuals lead to higher turnover intentions. As a result, these variables could have been affected by something that recently occurred at an employee's organization such as a promotion, manager change, or a policy decision that would affect their opinion towards the company in the short term. In the future, studies that are able to measure telecommuting intensity, turnover intentions, and self-efficacy

levels longitudinally would allow for more support regarding their relationships. For example, utilizing a longitudinal study would prevent single events like a promotion decision from greatly impacting the study as multiple responses overtime would be accumulated from each participant.

Another notable weakness of this study is that data collection occurred during COVID-19. Participants who may not be allowed to telecommute during normal times due to company policies may have been telecommuting during this time for safety purposes. This means that those who telecommuted a majority of the time when the survey was administered may not actually telecommute under normal circumstances. This could have contributed to the non-significant relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions, because employees who are currently telecommuting due to the pandemic but plan on going back into the office after may feel differently than those who plan on telecommuting long term. A future study could evaluate the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions with the moderating effect of self-efficacy once businesses reopen.

Conclusion

The goal of the current study was to evaluate the relationship between telecommuting intensity and turnover intentions. This study was also conducted to evaluate occupational self-efficacy as a moderator of the relationship. Even though occupational self-efficacy was not found to have a moderating effect, this study still contributes to the literature as it showed that occupational self-efficacy was negatively associated with turnover intentions. Additional research still needs to be done in order to

examine the relationship between how individual characteristics affect the relationship between telecommuting and turnover intentions. More follow-up studies should also be conducted in order to better understand the inconsistent results regarding telecommuting and turnover intentions relationship. As telecommuting continues to increase in popularity, more research is needed to understand the impact it has on organizational outcomes.

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Appendix

Demographic Items

What is your age?

What is your current employment status?

How long have you worked in your current position?

What is your gender?

How would you best describe yourself?

Scale Items

Telecommuting

How many days a week do you telecommute?

In a typical week how many hours do you work?

In a typical week how many hours do you telecommute?

If you telecommute, please select which places you telecommute in on a regular basis. (Select all that apply).

Occupational Self-Efficacy

I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.

When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions.

Whatever comes my way in my job I can handle it.

My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.

I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.

I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job.

Turnover Intentions

How often have you considered leaving your job?

How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?

How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?

How often do you look forward to another day at work? *

How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs? *

How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?

* Indicates that an item was reverse-coded