University of Strathclyde

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Investigating the experience of well-being in the context of low paid service work in the hospitality and social care sectors

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration of Authenticity and Author's Rights

This thesis is the result of the author’s original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the experiences and well-being of low paid workers in the hospitality and social care sectors. The study explores how the nature of jobs in these sectors impacts the well-being of employees; the spillover processes that occur between work and home life; and, how the use of HRM practices shape well-being. By conducting case studies of four organisations from these sectors, multiple perspectives were captured through qualitative interviews with senior management and HR practitioners, line managers, and frontline employees. The main contribution is a unique conceptual framework which enabled an exploration of the well-being of low paid workers across the work-family interface. This framework also allowed for the identification and role of underlying management philosophies and HR practices on these experiences to be examined. The analysis demonstrates how employer strategies, in the form of job demands and resources, both directly and indirectly shaped employees' experiences of work and their well-being.

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Having wrestled with how to put this, I am compelled to acknowledge the role that faith has played in the journey that has been a PhD. I would not have had the insight or experience required to identify this research topic without my faith, and I certainly would have given up on the task long ago without the strength provided by a higher power. It is on completion of this PhD that I find myself even more convicted of what I believe to be the truth, in spite of the philosophical challenge such statements pose.

And finally, to David, who gave me the resolve to finish when I needed it most.

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List of Acronyms

BAME - Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic

CB - Collective Bargaining

CSR - Corporate and Social Responsibility

EVP - Employee Value Proposition

H1 - Hospitality Organisation 1

H2 - Hospitality Organisation 2

L&D - Learning and Development

LMS - Learning Management System

LW - Living Wage

HPWS - High Performance Work Systems

HRM - Human Resource Management

ILO - International Labour Organization

JD-R - Job Demands-Resources

NLW - National Living Wage

NMW - National Minimum Wage

NPM - New Public Management

ONS - Office for National Statistics

RI - Relationship Intensity

SC1 - Social Care Organisation 1

SC2 - Social Care Organisation 2

SfCD - Skills for Care and Development

SIHRM - Socially Irresponsible Human Resource Management

SSSC - Scottish Social Service Council

SRHRM - Socially Responsible Human Resource Management

UK WTR 1998 - UK Working Time Regulation 1998

W-HR - Work-Home Resources

ZHC - Zero Hour Contract

1. Introduction

This thesis investigates the experiences and well-being of low paid workers within the UK hospitality and social care sectors. The employee well-being agenda has gained increasing traction over the last two decades in workplaces, academic circles, and government bodies, with an explosion of research in this area. Equally, issues of low pay have been examined extensively within the literature, particularly with regards to measuring the extent to which it features in the labour market, the problematic nature of the jobs, and the characteristics of workers. However, as this thesis will show, gaps in the literature still remain, and the conceptual models commonly used to research well-being present limitations. The low pay literature highlights a variety of significant outcomes for workers at the point of the work-home interface, such as poverty and the 'low pay, no pay' cycle, which have clear consequences for the long-term well-being of workers. Yet, the employee well-being agenda in the low pay context is often overlooked in mainstream research; so too is the voice and perspective of the worker. The JD-R model has been used extensively to research well-being, but the model is limited in that it often does not consider how contextual factors, such as HRM strategy or the work-home interface, influence the demands and resources that employees experience. The WH-R model arguably overcomes some of these limitations, by putting forward a resource perspective of the work-home interface, but it still does not address how HR practices shape worker's experiences, particularly in the context of low paid work. Additionally, as the methods most commonly applied to these models are quantitative in nature, this leaves little scope for the voice of the worker to be heard.

This thesis is able to bring together the long-standing issues of low pay and well-being and shed new light on these areas by using different analytical resources to address these gaps in the research. A unique conceptual framework is developed, which extends the WH-R model to show how demands and resources are shaped by employer HRM strategies used in low paid work. By examining these issues across the work-home interface, this thesis goes further than previous research in these areas, by making the linkages between HRM strategies and employee outcomes such as poverty more explicit through the conceptual framework. The qualitative approach used allows for the voice of the low paid worker to be heard. In doing so, several theoretical contributions are made to the low pay, HRM, psychology and work-family literatures.

1.1 The Research Rationale

Increased focus from employers and policy makers has likely been motivated by an increased awareness of the costs of poor employee health. An estimated 141 million working days were lost to sickness absence in 2018 (ONS, 2019b), which comes with a huge associated cost to both business and the wider economy. Improving well-being has been hailed as the path to organisational success and high performance, owing to the mounting research which links employee well-being with various benefits such as higher levels engagement and productivity, as well as increased personal and organisational performance (CIPD, 2014). However, while more organisations report having an increased focus on well-being, few will have a formal well-being strategy; the majority will simply enact this focus informally by responding to individual employee needs for flexibility, or through the use of well-being 'initiatives' and benefits to improve individual health, such as gym memberships (Sinclair, 2016).

During the same period that interest in well-being has grown, the labour market has exhibited a distinct trend towards low paid employment. Over twenty years since the introduction of the NMW in 1997, low paid work still remains a distinct feature of the UK labour market. In April 2017, 4.9 million people earned less than two-thirds of the median hourly wage. The hotel and social care sectors belong to the two of the largest low paying industries in the UK; 19% of all low paid work is located in the 'Hotel and Restaurant' industry, and 13% within the 'Health and Social Work' industry (D'Arcy, 2018). Employers within the hospitality and social care sectors are well known for their use of poor employment practices. Low paid work is typically associated with hard HRM where labour is treated as a cost to be minimised, and the more extreme low road HRM strategies where employers purposefully breach employment regulations as part of their business model (Osterman, 2018). Increasing preference for numerical flexibility has led to a growth in the use of non-standard working arrangements such as agency work, temporary contracts and zero hours contracts, increasing the precarity and insecurity of low paid work (Kalleberg, 2009). Use of contingent labour directly exploits the position of those most vulnerable in the labour market, such as women, young people, migrants, ethnic minorities and the disabled, by treating labour as disposable and dispensing with the costs of hiring permanent employees (Burgess, Connell and Winterton, 2013). More recently, such strategies used by employers have been conceptualised as socially irresponsible HRM, due to the unethical management philosophies underpinning these strategies and the associated consequences of poor HR practice on employee outcomes (Richards and Sang, 2019a).

Policy initiatives such as the ILO Decent Work Agenda have brought to the fore the various issues surrounding low wage and poor-quality work, and recent attempts to reduce the incidence of low wage work have arguably made some headway. Combating low pay has been on the election manifestos of recent governments, with commitments made by both main political parties to increase the NMW (Cominetti, Henehan and Clarke, 2019). Consequently, the minimum wage has seen the largest percentage rise over the last five years than ever before, with the introduction of the NLW in 2016. Data from the ONS (2019a) indicates that following the increases to the NMW and NLW, the proportion of low wage work in the UK (measured as pay below two-thirds of median hourly earnings) has fallen from 21.3% in 2014 to 16.2% in 2019, which is the lowest level since recording began in 1997. However, despite these improvements, the proportion of the workforce that is affected by low pay is arguably larger than ONS data initially suggests. When based on weekly pay, the proportion of jobs that were low paid was higher, at 26.6% in 2019, due to a fall in the number of hours worked per week among the low paid (ONS, 2019a). Additionally, in 2018, approximately 24% of workers in the UK were in a job that paid less than the hourly Living Wage rate, which is considered to be the income level required for a basic standard of living (Cominetti, Henehan and Clarke, 2019). So, while increases to the NMW and NLW may have served to reduce the more extreme end of low pay, close to a quarter of the UK workforce are paid below the level of a sustainable wage.

Low wage work can pose significant challenges for the well-being of workers that extend beyond the workplace; it is not just simply the level of pay that makes low wage work problematic for workers, but the poor quality of the work. Job quality and employment conditions in low paid work are very poor, with limited opportunity for workers to progress into better paying work (Holman, 2013). Low pay and poor working conditions are associated with poorer physical and mental health, and poor health can also make it more difficult for workers to progress into better paying work (Cottini, 2012). Workers can find themselves trapped in low paid work for extended periods of time, with a recent study of low paid workers in the UK over a ten year period finding that 25% of these employees were low paid in every single year, with employees in the hospitality sector among the least likely to progress (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017). Additionally, low pay makes it difficult to sustain the costs of being in work, such as childcare, transport, food, clothing, and social aspects, all of which can act as structural barriers to escaping low wage work (Goulden, 2010). The poor quality of low paid work can

lead to recurrent poverty, due to workers becoming trapped in the 'low pay, no pay' cycle' (Shildrick et al., 2012). In-work poverty in the UK has risen from 2.8 million in 2004/05, to 3.8 million in 2014/15, and there are now more working households that are in poverty than workless households (Tinson et al., 2016). Employees who are low paid are at a much higher risk of experiencing poverty, particularly when they are the sole earner in the household (Maitre, Nolan and Whelan, 2012). Low wage work can increase the risk of financial hardship and poverty for workers, not simply because of low pay levels, but due to the low quality and insecurity of the work, and other associated negative consequences (McKnight *et al.*, 2016). Poor households are likely to experience a 'poverty premium' whereby they pay more for essential utilities, goods and services as their low income restricts their access to the best deals available in the market (Davies et al., 2016).

1.2 Gaps in the Literature and the Contribution

Despite an increased interest in employee well-being from academics, studies have tended to focus on well-paid and professional occupations, with limited attention paid to the context of low paid work. While there is a clear intersection between the effects of low paid work and the work-family interface, the work-family literature is lacking in research that considers this context. There is limited literature which explores the role of low pay in shaping employee experiences of work and well-being. Additionally, very few studies have taken an in-depth view of well-being in the context of sectors with a high proportion of low paid jobs, such as hospitality and social care sectors; even fewer studies have made comparisons of these sectors.

Furthermore, research in both low pay and particularly employee well-being are often highly quantitative in nature, due to the heavily influence of the field of psychology and associated paradigms. The dominant focus within both well-being and low pay research is with the measurement of the constructs, with limited attention paid to the experiences of workers. It is argued that the quality of employees' experiences at work significantly impacts their well-being and that this experience is affect by HR practices (Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013). However, limited research focuses on the experience of well-being in low paid context from the perspective of the worker. Research into employee well-being has been criticised for weak theoretical development, with it suggested that a diversification of methods is required to move theory development forward (Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven,

2012). While there is more qualitative research in the area of low pay, the literature still tends to generally favour large scale quantitative studies that focus on measuring the extent of low pay or arguing about how low pay should be measured. It is argued that a better understanding of low pay, underemployment and poverty requires researchers to listen to the voices of those with lived experience of these highly complex and multi-dimensional issues, rather than treating these workers as statistics to be analysed (Lister, 2015; McBride, Smith and Mbala, 2017).

The main contribution of this thesis is the development of a conceptual framework, which allowed for a unique perspective to be taken on the long-standing issues of low pay and well-being. This framework shaped the development of the research questions of this study. The empirical findings also allowed for further theoretical contributions to be made to the literatures on low pay, well-being, SIHRM, the HRM-well-being debate and the work-family literature. This research also diverged from the paradigms commonly associated with these literatures by utilising Pragmatism as the philosophical underpinning, and this different perspective enabled these various contributions to be made. Finally, use of a qualitative method which was employee centred, moving away from the highly preferenced organisation perspective, also allowed for a unique contribution to be made.

1.3 Thesis Structure

This thesis is comprised of eight chapters. This introductory chapter has outlined the rationale and context for the research, the gaps in the literature, and the key contribution of this thesis. Chapter two will move on to outline how low pay is defined and measured. Low pay is usually defined in relative terms, as pay which falls below two thirds of the medium hourly rate of pay; however, this chapter will argue that an absolute measure of low pay based on the cost of living is a more appropriate measure when considering employee well-being. The characteristics associated with low paying jobs are discussed, including issues such as insecurity and job quality. The chapter will examine the low wage worker in more depth and will discuss the demographic characteristics that make certain workers more vulnerable to low pay, before giving an overview of employment within the hospitality and social care sectors. The chapter then moves on to discuss some of the negative implications of low pay for employees in terms of their labour market position and poverty, and the intersection of work and home is also

considered. It is here that a gap is identified within the literature concerning the employee experience of work and well-being.

Chapter three will discuss some of the main contextual factors that have contributed to the growth of low wage work within the UK. First, the various social, political and economic contextual causes of low paid will be discussed. The chapter will then move on to outline the role that employers themselves played in the growth of low paid work, enacted through hard HRM strategies. HRM within the hospitality and social care sectors is considered, where powerful market forces such as financialisation and marketisation have had consequences for employment conditions. This chapter will argue that despite these powerful forces which constrain employers in these sectors, the underlying philosophies of management play a key role in the HRM choices made and the outcomes for workers. Therefore, examining the experiences of employees more fully requires an understanding of the management philosophies and HR practices found in low paid work.

The aim of chapter four is to present a conceptual framework which will guide the primary research, and to provide the theoretical underpinning for how well-being is understood in this study. The case is made for a resource-based view of well-being, utilising Hobfoll's (1989, 2002) Conservation of Resources theory. The relationship between well-being and HRM is discussed. It is then argued that an understanding how well-being operates across the work-home interface is required, and as such, ten Brummelhuis and Bakker's (2012) W-HR model is identified as a conceptual basis. However, it is argued that this model needs to be extended for this study to include role of the employer in shaping individual well-being. This chapter concludes by outlining four research question for this study:

1. What management philosophies underpin the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work, and how do these philosophies and practices compare?
2. What is the experience of low paid employees of managing job demands and resources across the work-home interface?
3. How do HR practices influence the employee experience of well-being across the work-home interface in low wage work?
4. How do these experiences compare across hospitality and social care sectors?

Chapter five details the methodology for the study. This chapter explains the choice of Pragmatism as the philosophical paradigm and the assumptions which have underpinned this research. A rationale is given for a qualitative approach to the data collection and for a case study research design. The chapter will discuss the selection of cases, which included two organisations from both the hospitality and social care sectors. The approach to the data analysis is discussed and the limitations of the research design are considered.

Chapters six and seven provide the results of the data analysis. Chapter six provides the data pertaining to the management perspective and the HR strategies used. This chapter details the underpinning management philosophies which guided decision making within each sector, which have shaped the formation of low wage work. Chapter seven presents the analysis of the frontline employee data, and using the conceptual framework, details how resources, demands and outcomes were experienced across the work-home interface. This chapter connects the management strategies discussed in chapter seven, with the outcomes and consequences for well-being. In both chapters, the data from the hospitality sector is presented first, followed by the data from the social care sector.

Finally, chapter eight provides the discussion and conclusions of the study. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the key contributions of this thesis, and the findings of chapters six and seven are discussed in the context of the literature. It will be argued that the conceptual framework is the main theoretical contribution, and that in answering the research questions of this study, several other theoretical contributions are made to the low pay, well-being, SIHRM, the HRM-well-being debate and the work-family literatures. Throughout this chapter, a comparison of the findings of each sector will also be made. The role that Pragmatism played as a philosophical underpinning for this study is also considered. Finally, the chapter identifies some areas for further research.

2. The Extent of the Problem of Low Pay

The aim of this chapter is to outline the scale and extent of low paid work. The chapter beings by examining the various methods and measures used to define the low pay threshold. The features associated with low wage work are also discussed, including insecurity and job quality. The chapter then looks at who in the labour market is most vulnerable to low pay, before moving on to discuss the composition of the workforce in the hospitality and social care sectors more specifically. Finally, the chapter then discusses the implications of low pay for workers, including in-work poverty. The chapter closes by identifying several gaps in the literature connect with our understanding of the experience of low paid work.

2.1 Measures of Low Pay

Defining the point at which pay is considered low is a matter of some debate, and different methods of defining and measuring low pay are currently in use. It would be near impossible to agree a set monetary value for low pay which could be used internationally, given the variations between different countries in terms of economies, currency values, purchasing power, social security and the cost of living (Grimshaw, 2011). In the mainstream, low pay is generally understood as a relative concept, as what is considered low pay will be dependent on societal norms. One school of thought is that low pay should be defined in relation to the pay levels of other workers; alternatively, another school of thought argues that low pay should be defined relative to the living standards of other workers (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Even still, both of these approaches create problems when trying to define and measure low pay, and so answering the question of how low pay should be defined and measured involves an exploration of the different rationales for deciding at what point pay should be considered low and for measuring how many people are low paid. Grimshaw (2011) identifies three methods of measuring low pay which will each be discussed in turn: the relative measure, the fixed proportion measure, and the absolute measure.

The most commonly used definition of low pay within research and policy reports is the relative measure. The relative measure defines pay as low when it falls below a certain percentage of the national median or average salary; therefore, this measure defines low pay in in relation to the earnings of other workers (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). The relative measure is also used

as a means for comparing levels of low pay across different countries, by using a common percentage of average pay as the threshold for low pay. It is argued that this method "…captures a sense of the degree of social and economic inclusion among a country's workforce that is sensitive to societal notions of relative deprivation or relative disadvantage" (ILO, 2010, p. 31). OECD (2017) considers the threshold for low pay to be less than two thirds of gross median income, and given the far reaching influence of OECD, this benchmark has become the commonly adopted standard for measuring low pay by most organisations that report on low pay (Grimshaw, 2011). This measure has been adopted by various agencies, such as ILO, Eurostat, and the Low Pay Commission.

Using the relative measure to make cross-national comparisons of pay levels demonstrates that low pay is not just a problem found in the UK and is a feature of other advanced economies. Furthermore, it uncovers that there is quite a variation between different countries as to the number of people who are low paid. Beginning with OECD (2017) data on low pay, table one shows the percentage of the workforce that was low paid in 2014 in 26 countries, showing that the UK has one of the highest instances of low pay in Europe. The percentage of low wage employees within a country is largely influenced by the level of wage regulation that exists. In the Anglo-Saxon countries such as the UK, Ireland and the US where regulation of the labour market is typically much lower than in Europe, higher instances of low pay are found. However, one of the flaws of using OECD data to compare wage levels is that these figures only measure the wages of full-time employees. This is a significant flaw, as part time workers are more likely to low be paid and therefore the data is likely not to reflect the full extent of low pay in each country. However, this data does still highlight that low pay remains a problem for full-time workers as well as part-time workers.

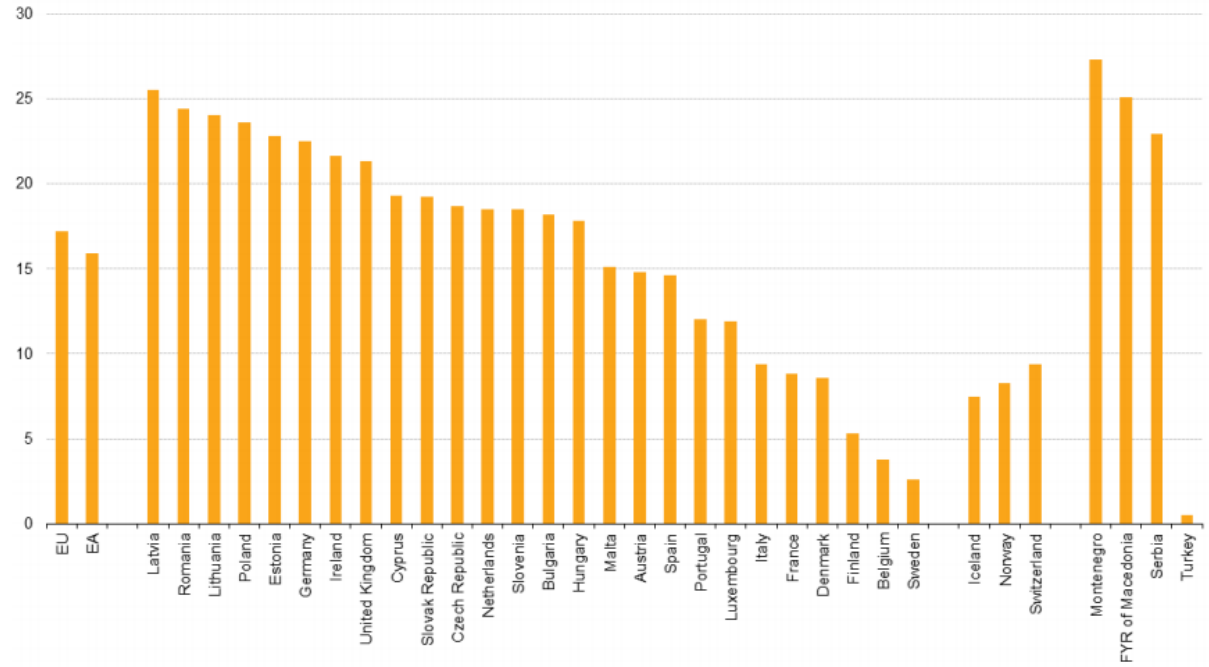
Table One: Low Pay in OECD Countries, 2014

Country	Percentage of workforce that are low paid
Belgium	3.4
Italy	7.6
Denmark	8.4
Finland	8.4
Switzerland	10.1
New Zealand	13.9
Japan	13.9
Mexico	14.8
Costa Rica	15.4
Iceland	15.7
Austria	15.9
Australia	16.6
Greece	17.9
Germany	18.4
Hungary	18.6
Slovak Republic	20.0
Czech Republic	20.3
Portugal	20.3
United Kingdom	**20.4**
Lithuania	21.3
Canada	22.5
Poland	22.6
Korea	23.7
United States	24.9
Ireland	25.1
Colombia	26.1

Source: OECD (2017)

A further source of information on earnings and low pay within the EU is published by Eurostat every four years in the Structure of Earnings Survey. Details of employee earnings are collected from companies with ten or more employees and are based on all gross earnings of part time and full time employees, giving a more accurate picture as to the extent of low pay across the EU. Within the EU, low pay remains a problem and there is quite a bit of variation between countries. As figure one shows, the highest proportions of low paid work within the EU were found in the UK, Ireland, Germany, Estonia, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and Latvia, ranging from 21.3% to 25.5% of workers respectively (Eurostat, 2016). The lowest incidences of low pay work were found in Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Denmark, France, and Italy, ranging from 2.6% to 9.4% of workers respectively (Eurostat, 2016).

Figure One: Low Pay in Europe, 2016



Source: (Eurostat, 2016)

While the relative measure has become the norm, Lee and Sobeck (2012) highlight that there are some difficulties with this measurement, given the differences in the value of purchasing power of wages and the variation in non-wage benefits. Across different countries there are different levels of non-wage benefits, such as social security and access to health care, some of which is dependent on pay and some which is not. This is particularly pronounced in industrialised countries. One clear example of this would be access to healthcare when comparing low paid employees in the UK and the US. A low paid employee in the UK would have the same access to the NHS as any other employee; however, in the US, healthcare is paid for privately, and so a low paid employee would not have comparable benefits. Bosch (2009) described these non-wage benefits as a "social wages". All low paid workers in the EU have the right to sick pay, holiday pay and unemployment benefits. As these benefits tend to be based on citizenship rather than employment status, low paid workers receive these non-wage benefits regardless of their status and benefit from a higher social wage, in contrast to American employees where these non-wage benefits tend to be related to employment status (Bosch, 2009). If social wages were taken into account in the calculation of low pay, there would be a much higher incidence in America in comparison to Europe than what figures using the relative

measure would suggest (Lee and Sobeck, 2012). However, despite these challenges, the relative method is still generally considered to be the most reliable method for international comparison, as they generally reflect societal notions of standards of living, without the complexities that would be involved in using absolute measures of low pay (ILO, 2010; Grimshaw, 2011).

A further method for measuring low pay is the fixed proportion measure. This measure sets the threshold for low pay as less than what a certain percentage of the lowest paid end of the labour market earn, such as the bottom decile (Grimshaw, 2011). This measurement of low pay is also be helpful when making cross-national comparisons and offers an alternative to the relative method. The argument is that every country will have a proportion of low-skilled work, and so this measure allows for comparison of pay levels at the bottom of the labour market within a fixed proportion of jobs (Grimshaw, 2011). Where this method can be particularly helpful is in examining inequality in wages. For example, ILO (2010) compared the difference in the distance in earnings between the bottom 10% and top 10% of earners in 30 countries between 1995/2000 and 2007/09, finding that the gap had widened in 17 of these countries. This was due not only to rapid increases in the top levels of pay, but also due to the 'collapsing bottom' in the wage distribution, with a widening in the distance between low paid and median paid workers (ILO, 2010, p. 31). Some studies have used a combination of the relative measure and the fixed proportion measure when making cross-national comparisons. For example, Clark and Kanellopoulos (2013) in their study of low pay persistence within Europe classed workers as low paid if they earned less than two thirds of median income (the relative measure), or if it fell within the lowest three deciles of the pay distribution of each country (the fixed proportion measure). Their rational for doing so was that there was a lack of consensus as to the exact definition of low pay, and that using a combination of measures increased the reliability of the study. However, like the relative measure, the fixed proportion method measures low pay based on an arbitrary proportion of the labour market paid under a certain threshold, rather than in relation to living standards.

While the relative and fixed proportion measures have clear benefits, an absolute measure[1] of low pay is at times more appropriate, as it addresses some of the limitations of the relative and fixed approaches. Absolute measures of low pay are calculated based on the minimum income required to move a household above the poverty threshold (Grimshaw, 2011). This is calculated by calculating the basic cost of living required to avoid poverty within a specified country, and converting this cost into a wage level, with allowances for variation in household size. The absolute measure is considered to be more appropriate than the relative measure when researching the relationship between low pay and poverty within a specific country, as it allows researchers to compare wage levels to the basic cost of living (Grimshaw, 2011). One example of an absolute measure which has emerged within the UK has been the voluntary LW. A recent policy report by the Resolution Foundation argued that an individual in the UK could be considered low paid if they receive less the than the voluntary UK LW (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). The LW in the UK is calculated using the Minimum Income Standard, which was developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and represents the level of income required to enjoy a basic quality of life (Davis *et al.*, 2016). The MIS is determined by surveying the public to find out what goods and services are considered to be essential, and considering basic costs of living, such as housing and utilities. These costs are then used to calculate the annual income needed in order to achieve this quality of life, and from this an hourly rate of pay is calculated which forms the basis for the calculation of the LW. Clark and D'Arcy (2016) argue that anyone who is paid as less than the LW is unlikely to be able to afford what is considered to be a basic quality of life within the UK, and therefore should be considered low paid; using this measure, the number of low paid employees in the UK rises from 5.7 million to 6.3 million, representing 23% of the UK workforce. Using the absolute measure reveals that far more people in the UK are paid an unsustainable wage than indicated by the relative measure.

The absolute measure does bring with it several complexities. Standards of living are not just dependant on the individual worker, but on the household and personal circumstances of the worker; larger households will require greater incomes in order to achieve comparable living standards, which raises the question as to the number of hours is it reasonable to expect people to work to achieve a sufficient wage. Many low-income households will survive by working long hours or multiple jobs (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Additionally, the complexities

[1] This method is also referred to as the needs-based measure (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016)

involved in calculating this measure of low pay, such as currency conversions and relative living standards, render the absolute measure impractical for making cross-national comparisons of low pay (Grimshaw, 2011).

Each of these measures for calculating the extent of low pay bring with them advantages and disadvantages. The relative measure is the most commonly used and internationally accepted; however, as demonstrated by the absolute measure, it may hide the true extent of low pay in relation to living standards. Therefore, the aims of study must be considered when selecting the most appropriate measure.

2.2 Who is Vulnerable to Low Pay?

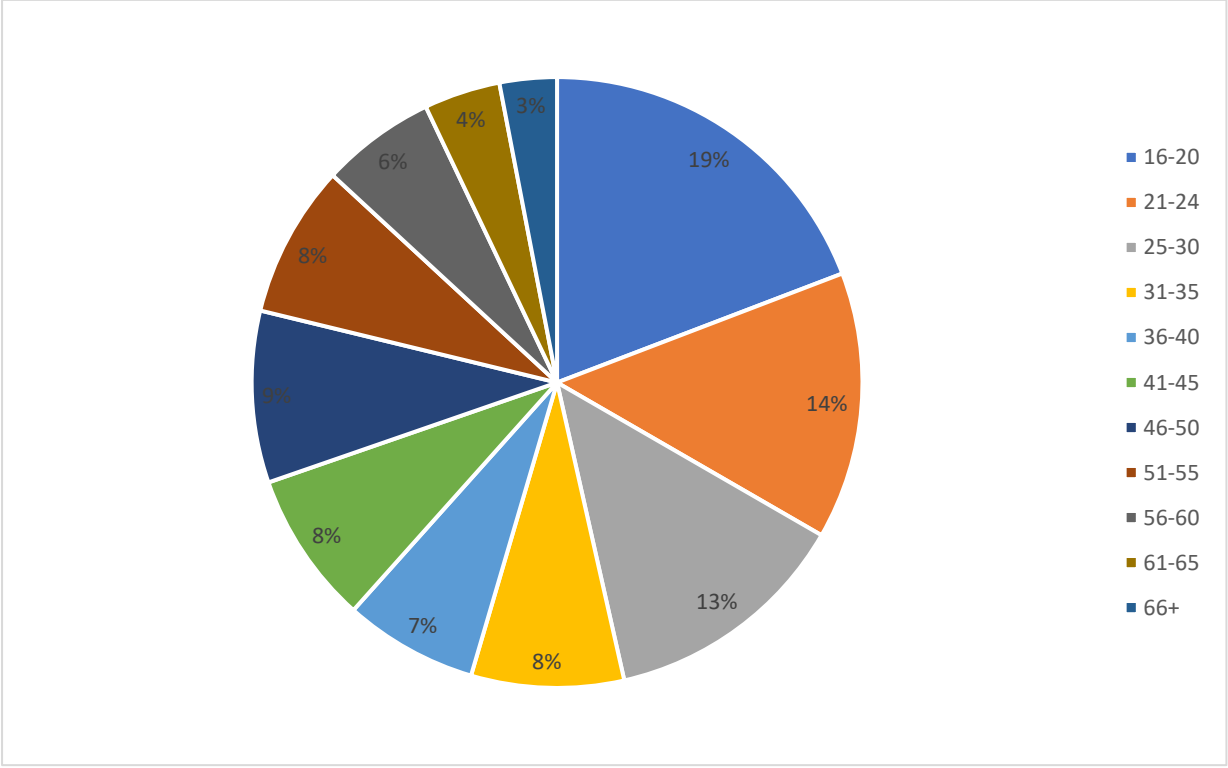
Certain workers in the labour market are more vulnerable to low pay than others. Burgess et al. (2013) argues that workers with certain characteristics or those working in deregulated markets have greater vulnerability in the labour market, and that this vulnerability surfaces in various ways often associated with precarious work, such as unemployment, short-term contracts, low pay, and a lack of progression. Workers who are vulnerable in the labour market are often marginalised, having to accept poorer terms and conditions that benefit employers rather than employees (Piasna *et al.*, 2013). The groups of workers who are most likely to be low paid within the EU are women, young workers, workers from ethnic minorities, disabled workers and workers with a low level of skill or education (Grimshaw, 2011; McKnight *et al.*, 2016; McNabb and Whitfield, 2000). Several studies have identified that these characteristics are inter-related, and people who have a combination of these characteristics are most vulnerable to low pay (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008; Hašková and Dudová, 2016)

There is considerable evidence that women are more vulnerable to low pay than men; across the globe there is a disproportionate number of women in such occupations (Grimshaw, 2011). Within the UK, 61% of all low paid employees are women (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). In a recent study of full time workers across the EU, young workers and women were the most likely to be low paid (Maitre, Nolan and Whelan, 2012). Furthermore, according to OECD (2016) not only are women more likely to be low paid, they are also more likely to be in less secure jobs. Alongside gender, those who are working part-time are particularly vulnerable.

Out of all low paid workers in the UK, 40% are women working part time, 17% are men working part time, 20% are women working full time and 23% are men working full time (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). So, it would appear that in the UK, women who work part-time rather than full-time are more likely to be low paid.

Alongside female and part-time workers, young workers are amongst those most vulnerable to low pay (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008). In the UK, there is a greater concentration of low pay among young workers. As can be seen in figure two, employees aged 16-30 represent 46% of all low paid workers. Among the total number employees who are aged 16-20, 77% are low paid (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). This can partly be explained by rising numbers of young people in full time education, who are working part time while studying. It is also often thought that young people entering the labour market may do so in a low paying entry level job, before progressing to better paying work; however, there is increasing evidence that people become stuck in low wage work.

Figure Two: Percentage of Low Paid Workers by Age Category



Source: (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016)

Workers with low levels of education are particularly vulnerable in the labour market. Burgess et al. (2013) argue that this issue particularly affects young and migrant workers, because these groups often lack the human capital required to secure employment (particularly in knowledge-based economies), such as skills, qualifications, and work experience. In particular, migrant workers with low educational attainment are at a distinct disadvantage in the labour market (Kalleberg, 2011). In the hospitality sector, employers have exploited the wide availability of migrant labour to fill undesirable jobs at very low wages (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008). These issues are exacerbated by the decline in union presence and the deregulation of the labour market (Kalleberg, 2009) and the difficulties that unions have had in organising migrant and ethnic minority labour in fragmented sectors that are prone to low pay, such as social care (Bach, 2012; Wright, 2013).

There is also evidence that belonging to an ethnic minority group can make workers more vulnerable to low pay. In the UK, workers who are of Black African, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Other Asian ethnic origin are overrepresented in low wage labour markets (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008). Ethnic minority groups can face particular barriers in the workplace which prevent them from progressing to better paying work, such as poor language skills, low levels of self-confidence, a lack of role models in senior positions and a lack of understanding of organisational cultures (Hudson *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, there is evidence that use of informal workplace practices and cultures within organisations (such as informal recruitment) can be discriminatory towards ethnic minority workers and can prevent ethnic minority workers from progressing (Hudson *et al.*, 2013).

Those who are ill or disabled are also particularly vulnerable to low pay. Being employed in a low paid and poor quality jobs can also have a negative impact on an individual's health, increasing the likelihood that they will become unemployed and low paid in future (McKnight *et al.*, 2016). Cottini's (2012) analysis of the European Working Conditions Survey indicated that low pay and poor working conditions are associated with poorer physical and mental health outcomes at work. Working age adults with a disability are at a higher risk of being low paid than non-disabled adults, and this risk increases where disabled adults hold lesser qualifications. There is also evidence that disabled people face unfair discrimination in the labour market. For example, MacInnes et al. (2015) found that 13% of disabled adults with a

level four qualification were low paid, compared with just 3% of non-disabled adults; additionally, 30% of disabled adults with a level three qualification and 44% with a lower or no qualification were low paid, compared to 21% and 25% among non-disabled adults respectively. Disabled workers often perceive low wage work as the only option available to them due to their health, with Ussher (2016) finding that 19% of low paid retail workers felt this way. Ill and disabled workers also face a range of barriers and discriminatory practices in the workplace, which stem from tightly held notions of the able-bodied as the unencumbered ideal worker (Foster, 2018; Richards and Sang, 2019b).

As already demonstrated in the other characteristics, workers with lower levels of skills and formal qualifications are more likely to be low paid. Furthermore, workers with low levels of qualifications are less likely to progress into better paying work (Grimshaw, 2011). The risk of being low paid decreases with increasing levels of qualification. Tinson et al. (2016) reported that in 2015/16, the percentage of people of were low paid depending of qualification was: 50% of people with no qualifications; 39% of those with GCSEs up to grade C; 34% for those with A Levels, 19% for those with a higher education qualification, and 11% for those with a degree or above. The number of working age adults with no or low levels of qualifications is falling (D'Arcy, 2017) and educational attainment across the workforce has increased (CIPD, 2013). However, an underpinning problem remains in the supply of jobs in the labour market; the numbers of jobs that do not require qualifications is growing, with a lack of better jobs that would allow low paid workers to progress (Lloyd and Mayhew, 2010).

2.3 Problematic Nature of Low Paid Work

The various vulnerabilities identified in the previous section are often used to fuel the rhetoric that the problems associated with low paid work are an issue with the supply of labour. However, many of the problems associated with low paid work stem from the demand side, due to the poor quality of low paid jobs. De-industrialisation and the rapid growth of the service sector has created a vast number of low-skilled 'McJobs', built on Tayloristic principles with highly repetitive non complex tasks which require only very minimal training (Lindsay, 2005; Gould, 2010). Consequently, low-skilled jobs will often be of a very poor quality, characteristics of which can include: heavy workloads, inflexible and nonstandard working hours, low pay, job insecurity, poor terms and conditions, limited progression, and no or weak

employee representation (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012; Holman, 2013). Often these types of jobs offer little by way of employee training or development, with limited opportunity for progression into better paying or more highly skilled roles, leaving workers trapped in a low-skilled, low paid job where they lack a sense of 'belonging' to an occupation (Shildrick et al. 2012). The lack of unionisation in low paid and precarious jobs has contributed to the degradation of job quality. The absence of unionisation amongst low paid workers has meant that vulnerable workers who experience problems at work or who are denied their employment rights have limited recourse and are unable to resolve disputes, particularly in workplaces where there are no systems of collective representation (Pollert and Charlwood, 2009). There is evidence to suggest that job quality can be improved for vulnerable workers by increasing access to employee participation practices (Piasna *et al.*, 2013).

A further issue is the insecurity that is often associated with this kind of work. The increasing desire for flexibility in the workforce has given rise to a host of non-standard employment practices and contracts, increasing the precarity of work (Kalleberg, 2011). Job insecurity and nonstandard employment have taken on various forms, such as temporary work, agency work, zero hours or short hours contacts, and arguably self-employment as well (Wright, 2013). Using non-standard contracts allows employers to effectively transfer the financial risks involved in employing someone onto the worker, as using these types of contracts allow employers to dispense with costs related to reducing working hours or redundancy (Burgess, Connell and Winterton, 2013). Precarious work is defined as "employment that is uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker" (Kalleberg, 2009, p. 2). It is typically characterised by low pay, job insecurity and limited employment protection (Johnson, 2015). Work that is precarious tends to be of a more temporary nature and is expected not to last (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012; Burgess, Connell and Winterton, 2013).

Despite all of these problems, low paid workers remain committed to remaining in employment (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Wilson and Hadler (2017) found that individuals with weaker positions in the labour market (i.e. poor workers, women, and young people) are even willing to accept lower pay and greater job insecurity to avoid unemployment, a phenomenon which they have described as 'downward flexibility'. From the evidence presented above it is clear that the issues discussed in the labour market are not just simply a matter of low pay.

Employees are also subjected to poor working conditions, insecurity and non-standard contractual arrangements, poor job quality and lack of representation. So, it is not simply a matter of low pay or improving pay, but rather the full employment experience. Here the emphasis of the problem lies in the job rather than with the worker; all too often the blame for the persistence of low pay in the economy is placed on the employee or job seeker, with a strong emphasis on the need for upskilling and training, when on the supply side, the jobs that are actually available in the labour market require little or no training or qualifications (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012).

2.4 Employment in the Hospitality and Social Care Sectors

Having discussed low paid work more widely, the next section will focus more specifically on the hospitality and social care sectors within the UK. A brief overview will be given of the size and composition of the workforce, some key characteristics of the workforce, and some of the main issues surrounding employment in the sector.

2.4.1 The Hospitality Sector

Within the hospitality sector, a main focus of empirical investigation in this thesis is more specifically the hotel sector. However it is worth noting from the outset that this sector is deeply embedded in the wider hospitality and tourism industry, which is highly diverse in nature; Nickson (2013) outlines 14 sub sectors, which include hotels, restaurants, food service providers and travel services to name a few. The boundaries between the sub sectors of the industry are quite blurred, and as such, there is often some variation as to the exact size and composition of the workforce, depending on the dataset used and where the lines between the sub sectors are drawn. The workforce in the hospitality and tourism industry accounts for 8.4% of employment in the UK, with 21% of this workforce employed in a hotel or related business (Economic Insight, 2019); however, this estimate includes not just hotels but other accommodation types such as holiday homes, campsites and trailer parks. According to People 1st (2015), the industry employed 2.5 million people in the UK in 2014, of which 281,311 were specifically employed in a hotel. A high proportion of jobs within the wider industry are low paid; D'Arcy (2018) reports that in 2017, 67% of employees within the hotel and restaurant industry were paid less than the LW, which is approximately 1,050,000 workers. Additionally, a large proportion of jobs within the industry are classed as low skilled; it is estimated that 38%

of jobs in the industry are low skilled 'elementary occupations', which have very limited opportunities for progression (Galbraith and Bankhead, 2012, p. 24).

The hotel sector is dominated by a small number of MNCs, such as Accor, IHG, Choice Hotels, Hilton International and Marriot, alongside a large number of small companies, and the vast majority of employers do not recognise any union (Wills, 2005). Employees tend to enter the sector as an hourly paid employee; additionally, workers in the sector are frequently subject to very poor terms and conditions, including minimum wages, long shifts, minimal training and excessive workloads (Mooney, Harris and Ryan, 2016). The sector is heavily reliant on workers who are more likely to be vulnerable to low pay, such as women, younger workers and students, part-time workers and migrant workers (Nickson, 2013). Hospitality work tends to attract women with caring responsibilities, where the hours of work and transport arrangements are suitable (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008). Young workers are particularly vulnerable and exploitation in this sector, viewed as cheap and disposable labour by employers (Goh and Lee, 2018). Migrant workers in particular are often employed seasonally or contingently and experience non-traditional careers, in that they are not able to progress from these positions into better paying or higher status work (Mooney, Harris and Ryan, 2016). Casual workers tend only to have very basic employment rights, are low paid, and will have limited attachment to the organisation (Davidson, McPhail and Barry, 2011). Additionally, the demand for numerical flexibility from employers and the seasonality of the sector mean that hourly paid workers often find themselves short of hours during quiet periods (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008). Part-time working is commonplace, as again this sector requires numerical flexibility from employees in order to deal with fluctuations in customer demands (Devins *et al.*, 2014). In the UK, across the industry there is a 45/55% split between part-time and full-time employees respectively, and approximately 10% of the workforce in the industry is employed on a temporary contract, compared to an average of 6% across the rest of the economy (Galbraith and Bankhead, 2012).

High turnover of staff is a significant problem with the sector. It is estimated that the sector needs to recruit 993,000 new staff by 2022, of which 870,000 of this is to replace existing staff (People 1st, 2015). Job seekers are often deterred by employment in the sector as the work is perceived as low skilled and low paid; additionally, some workers do not feel that they have

the soft skills required for work in the service sector, particularly where their employment history has been in more traditional sectors, such as manufacturing (Lindsay and McQuaid, 2004; Lindsay, 2005). Employees tend to have low levels of attachment to their job rather than hospitality being a purposeful career choice; individuals instead tend take up jobs in this sector out of necessity, convenience in terms of location and working hours, and minimal barriers in entry level positions (Hay, 2015; Mooney, Harris and Ryan, 2016). In terms of career longevity, social well-being has been identified as vital for hospitality workers, as good relationships with colleges have been shown to be an important factor for staying in a hospitality career; additionally, workplace relationships play an important role in 'validating worker's sense of professional identity' (Mooney, Harris and Ryan, 2016). It is for this reason that the authors argue that successful careers in hospitality should not be viewed simply as those who experience traditional linear career progression, but also as those who enjoy satisfying, long term careers in lower level positions. However, the use of casual labour reduces also the social connection between employees (Mooney, Harris and Ryan, 2016).

2.4.2 The Social Care Sector

The social care sector sits within the larger health and social care industry, and encompasses a number of sub sectors, such as adult social care, children's services, housing services and young people's service, to name a few. The social care workforce is estimated to account for 6% of employment in the UK, representing 1.8 million jobs (SfCD, 2019). D'Arcy (2018) estimated that in 2017, 22% of workers in the health and social work industry earned below the LW, totalling approximately 880,000 workers across the UK. Social care is currently a devolved matter in the UK, and so various organisations are responsible for the regulation and development of the social care workforce, and workforce data from the sector is quite fragmented. The skills council for the sector, Skill for Care and Development, is made up of a partnership of organisations from each devolved nation, which includes the Scottish Social Services Council, Northern Ireland Social Care Council, Social Care Wales and Skills for Care (England). In Scotland, Wales and North Ireland, it is mandatory for workers to register with these organisations and gain a qualification in social care, however there is no such requirement in England. Additionally, each country has an independent body responsible for the inspection of services, including the Care Inspectorate (Scotland), the Care Quality Commission (England), the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (Northern Ireland) and the Care Inspectorate Wales.

The social care sector has historically suffered from chronically low rates of pay due to being undervalued and underfunded. One of the key arguments as to why care is undervalued and poorly paid is because these jobs are mainly carried out by women and are associated with the traditional roles they have and continue to play in the home, in providing unpaid and informal care work (England, 2005). There is a high proportion of female employment within the sector; women represent 85% of staff in Scotland (SSSC, 2018) and 82% in England (Griffiths et al., 2017). Social care workers have experience of significant degradation in employment conditions, including pay, pension and sickness entitlements, alongside increasing insecurity and work intensification (Baines and Cunningham, 2015; Cunningham, 2015; Cunningham and James, 2017; Cunningham, Baines and Shields, 2017). In addition to poor terms and conditions, social care workers are also exposed to the risk of violence in the workplace. An increased the risk of violence for employees has also been attributed to flexible modes of staffing, as some vulnerable service users may react negatively to changes in staffing, and temporary staff often lack training and experience in dealing with volatile situations (Baines, 2006). Female employees are disproportionally affected by violence in the workplace, particularly from male service users, with several studies highlighting the gendered nature of violence against female care staff (Baines, 2006; Baines and Cunningham, 2011). Additionally, violence within social care has been normalised to a large extent by both management and staff and tolerated as 'part of the job' (Baines and Cunningham, 2011).

In spite of poor working conditions and work intensification within this sector, workers remain highly committed to their jobs. In contrast to hospitality, workers in the care sector are more likely to develop attachment to their job, finding a sense of worth from the work that they do (Hay, 2015). Voluntary organisations have typically attracted employees who have a strong conviction in the mission and values of the organisation, and as such, the sector has enjoyed a high level of commitment from staff who are intrinsically motivated and have a stronger non-monetary orientation, valuing job attributes such as job satisfaction and autonomy (Nickson *et al.*, 2008) . There is evidence that this commitment can be so strong that workers will withstand extremely stressful and sometimes dangerous working conditions because of their belief in the values and mission of the organisation (Baines and Cunningham, 2011). Qualitative work by Hebson, Rubery and Grimshaw (2015) demonstrated that women in need of local job opportunities with low entry barriers perceive jobs in the sector as more meaningful than the available alternatives. Furthermore, perceptions of the quality of care jobs will be shaped by

previous experiences of employment or unpaid caring, and this enables them to prioritise the intrinsic rewards of the job. The literature often documents the strong emotional attachments and family-like relationships that care workers develop with their service users (Baines, Cunningham and Fraser, 2010). Some recent research has developed this notion further. Venter, Currie and McCracken's (2019) research in the voluntary sector identify three forms of relationship intensity (RI) that care workers experience: sector RI, where individuals have a passion for working in the sector as they perceive care work as part of their personal identity; service-user RI, where individuals are motivated to work with specific groups, or develop close personal attachments to service users; and, organisational RI, where individuals develop a relationship with the organisation due to the associated mission, approach and values. In particular, strong emotional ties to the service user can make the employment relationship far more intense and less escapable, as the employee become dependent on their employment to maintain the relationship. This provides another layer as to why care workers will withstand poor working conditions for extended periods of time.

However, it is questionable as to how long the sector can continue to rely on high commitment from of employees in the face of poor job quality. In some areas of the UK, the care sector is facing a staffing crisis. There have been reports that in England, between 2015 and 2016, 338,520 social care workers left their jobs, with 60% leaving the social care sector entirely, and an estimated shortage of approximately 84,000 workers (Rhodes, 2017). While it has been shown that female worker in particular will prioritise the intrinsic benefits of care work, this does not mean that women can sustain low pay indefinitely, suggesting that workers do not necessarily leave the sector as a result of low commitment or satisfaction with care work, but due to economic pressures (Hebson, Rubery and Grimshaw, 2015). Furthermore, while workers have a high level of tolerance due to their high commitment, this has a limit and cannot be sustained long term; eventually employees will begin to engage in forms of resistance due to the poor conditions that they are subjected to (Baines and Cunningham, 2011).

2.5 The Implications of Low Paid Work

Having discussed who is most vulnerable to low wage work, it follows to discuss what the implications of being low paid is for workers. The effect that low pay has for workers is not just in their working life, but also their personal and home lives. The negative effects of low

pay, such as stress and poor health, will clearly affect employees not only in work but also outside of work and additionally will affect employees' capacity to participate in work. Other examples of this include difficulties in affording transport and childcare as a result of low pay, which may cause absenteeism. The stress caused in people's personal lives due to limited income, such as debt, can be carried over into working lives, where people are worried about their personal finances at work and become distracted or preoccupied. The conditions experienced in low paying jobs are also likely to impact the personal lives of employees; long working hours limit time spent with family, and jobs which require high emotional labour may cause employees to experience stress and exhaustion outside of work. However, there is also evidence in the low pay chapters that despite the negative consequences, low paid work can also enrich employees' lives. Evidence suggests that employees who find themselves trapped in low wage jobs remain committed to finding work, because the social status that work brings is valued (Shildrick, 2012). While social care work is amongst that of the lowest paying work in the UK with poor terms and conditions, employees consistently report high levels of job satisfaction (Hebson, Rubery and Grimshaw, 2015).

The literature highlights some issues which being to speak indirectly to the experience of low pay. These issues include the length of time that individuals find themselves in low paid work, the low pay no pay cycle, in-work poverty, and the literature on low pay from the work-family field. However, the literature says little about how workers experience low pay, or how low pay impacts on the well-being of workers. In particular, there is only a very limited literature base in the work-family field which considers low paying work.

2.5.1 Length of Time Spent in Low Paid Work

One of the key issues surrounding the discourse on low pay is whether it is a temporary or permanent state for the employee. There is an argument in the literature as to whether low paying jobs act as a vehicle to better paying jobs, and the question here is to what extent are low paid jobs transitionary or traps for workers. For young workers, low wage and entry level work can represent a first 'stepping stone' into the labour market towards better paying work; however, for many people – and in particular vulnerable workers - the majority of their working life is spent in low wage work with no opportunity to progress to better paying work

(Grimshaw, 2011). The potential for workers to use low paying work as a means for progressing into better paying work will often depend the nature of the job.

Additionally, the evidence suggests that for a significant proportion of employees, low wage work does not act as any kind of stepping stone into better paying employment. Several studies that have tracked low paid employees over a ten year period have found that a small percentage will manage to permanently escape low wage work, with a larger percentage stuck in low pay in every year of the study, and a significant percentage 'cycling', where they may move into better paying work for a short period but are unable to sustain it (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017; Hurrell, 2013; D'Arcy and Hurrell, 2014). Hurrell (2013) found in his study of low paid workers in the period 2002 – 2012 that 27% of low paid workers remained low paid each year in that decade. A further 46% had managed to escape low pay for at least one year in that decade, but for no more than three years. Of the 18% who did manage to escape low pay, they were more likely to be male, young and to have moved into public sector jobs, or professional and technical jobs (Hurrell, 2013). The more recent analysis by D'Arcy and Finch (2017) which tracked low paid workers from 2006 – 2016 reported a small reduction in the percentage of those stuck in low wage work (25%), but also a small reduction in escapes (17%) and an increase in cyclers (48%). Those most likely to be stuck in low pay were women and part time workers; furthermore, women were also least likely to escape low paying work, particularly those in their early twenties who had spent less time in employment, which strongly indicates that caring responsibilities and a lack of good quality part-time work is limiting progression opportunities for mothers (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017). Further findings from Kumar et al. (2014) indicate that being a lone parent with children under five or having a long-term health condition or disability are also strongly associated with a lower chance of escaping low wage work.

2.5.2 Low Pay, No Pay

Furthermore, the rise of precarious work and the nature of jobs has meant that many low paid workers are regularly moving between employment and unemployment. This has become known as the 'low pay, no pay' cycle, where an individual is likely to be or become unemployed, and who will likely move into another low paying job (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). Increasingly there is evidence that people are becoming trapped in this cycle, unable to progress into a better paying and more secure job. Several studies show that those who are in low-paid

work are more likely to become unemployed, and those who are unemployed are more likely to be low paid when they do re-enter the labour market (Stewart, 2007; Cappellari and Jenkins, 2008; Shildrick *et al.*, 2012; Clark and Kanellopoulos, 2013). Cappellari and Jenkins (2008) argue that the labour market positions of being unemployment and being low paid are closely linked, and find that there is a 'churning' of the labour market between unemployment and low paid work, as a result of jobs not lasting long term and high turnover in low wage jobs. The authors also found that being unemployed tends to lead onto lower quality jobs, similar to the 'scarring' effects of unemployment as described by Arulampalam et al. (2001), where periods of unemployment lead to the degradation of skills, and consequently, lower future earning potential. One of the explanations given for why employment scarring occurs is that low paid jobs do not provide employees with the skills or experience that is needed in order to progress into better paying work, with Stewart (2007) and Shildrick et al. (2012) arguing that better quality jobs are needed if people are to move out of unemployment permanently.

2.5.3 In-work Poverty

The relationship between low pay and poverty is a complex one. While low pay is strongly associated with poverty, being low paid does not always lead to poverty, as the status of in-work poverty is determined by the overall income of the household that the worker belongs to (Lee and Sobeck, 2012). Therefore, a person is thought to be in working poverty when they come from a household where at least one person is working. While on the surface it may seem obvious what poverty is, defining and measuring poverty can be difficult as poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional concept. In the simplest of terms, poverty can be defined as not having enough resources to sustain a reasonable standard of living; the resources lacking are wide ranging, including income, housing, fuel and food, but would also include a lack of opportunity, such as health and education (McKendrick, 2016). In the developed world, what is most concentrated on is income poverty, and this is where defining and measuring poverty becomes more complex. Like measures of low pay, poverty can also be thought of as a relative term. Relative poverty is defined as households that have an income that is less than 60% of median income, relative to the size of their household, and this measure (often referred to as the 'poverty line') is used throughout the EU to measure poverty (Seymour, 2009). It is commonly agreed among researchers and government that households who fall into this category do not have enough income to support what is considered to be a socially acceptable standard of living; interestingly, this measure does not provide an exact figure as to what

income is needed to provide this standard of living (Seymour, 2009). This is where using the MIS can give a more realistic picture of the income required for day to day living; however, the relative measure is most commonly accepted, and is what is used when calculating statistics on poverty.

McKendrick (2016) highlights that there are flaws to using a relative approach to measure levels of poverty. For example, in periods of economic growth, household may be categorised as poor, despite their standard of living improving. Conversely, in periods of recession, households may fall out of the category of poverty, despite there being no material change to their standard of living. However, McKendrick (2016) still believes that a relative measure of poverty is best, arguing that poverty should be defended and measured against the standard of living set by society. Apart from the relative measure, there is a further measure called absolute poverty, which refers only to the basic level of resources needed in order to survive (McKendrick, 2016). As a measure, absolute poverty will stay at the same level over time, no matter what the standard of living is considered to be (Seymour, 2009). The measure will only include very basic items that are essential for living, and the level will only rise to account for inflation (Seymour, 2009).

In-work poverty, or working poverty, is an area of growing concern, as it highlights the changing nature of poverty within the UK. Over the last decade, the number of workers in poverty in the UK has increased from 2.8 million in 2004/2005 to 3.8 million in 2014/2015 (Tinson *et al.*, 2016). Of these workers, 1.5 million were employed women, followed by 1.4 million employed men. In terms of self-employment, there were 250,000 women and 620,000 men in poverty. According to Tinson et al. (2016), from 2014-2015 there were 7.4 million people in poverty who belonged to a household where at least one person was working, which represents 55% of the total number of people living in poverty in the UK. This number includes 2.6 million children, and 78% of adults from these households are in work (Tinson *et al.*, 2016). Almost half of people who are experiencing in-work poverty contain a low paid member of the household (Hick and Lanau, 2017).

Alongside measures of income poverty, there are also variations in the lengths of time that people experience poverty for. Poverty can be a temporary state for some, perhaps brought about through changes of circumstances such as short-term unemployment, family breakdown or bereavement. Where these income shocks can be quickly resolved, poverty may only be a temporary state. However, for some, poverty is a persistent state. ONS (2016) defines a person in 'persistent poverty' as someone who is "…experiencing relative low income in the current year, as well as at least 2 out of the 3 preceding years." Persistent poverty is thought to have a far greater impact on households than short term poverty (ONS, 2016). Furthermore, approximately one fifth of people who are poor experience recurrent poverty, where they may move above the poverty line for a short period, but never manage to successfully remain above poverty line (Goulden, 2010; Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). There are many causes of recurrent poverty (such as changes to the household composition) but this is particularly an issue for people caught in the low pay, no pay trap, where they are able to move above the poverty line in times of employment, but ultimately end up back in poverty when times of unemployment hit (Goulden, 2010).

Working poverty is also a growing problem within the EU. McKnight et al. (2016) report that as of 2014, 9.6% of working people were in working poverty, up from 8.4% in 2007. In their comparative analysis, using data from the EU-SILC ('Statistics on Income and Living Conditions') Maitre et al. (2012) examined the relationship between low pay and household poverty amongst 22 EU countries. In their study examining the relationship between low pay and household poverty, Maitre et al. (2012) found that the instance of household poverty for full-time workers in the EU earning above the low pay threshold is very low. As shown in figure three, the percentage of workers in poverty ranged from 0.3% to 3.7%, with only Spain and Cyprus with rates higher than 3%. However, by comparison, the percentage of low paid workers who were also experiencing income poverty ranged from 4% to 24.6%.

Figure Three: Levels of Income Poverty by Low Pay Status

	% income poor		
	Not low paid	*Low paid*	*All full-time full-year employees*
Austria	1.9	19.5	4.8
Belgium	0.8	7.0	1.4
Cyprus	3.4	15.4	6.0
Czech Republic	1.6	9.0	2.9
Germany	1.3	11.6	3.6
Denmark	0.3	10.5	1.5
Estonia	1.3	17.2	4.9
Spain	3.7	15.7	5.8
Finland	0.5	10.0	1.5
France	1.9	12.9	3.2
Hungary	1.9	15.0	4.8
Ireland	0.8	8.4	2.5
Iceland	1.1	15.8	4.1
Lithuania	1.6	18.6	6.1
Luxembourg	2.2	24.6	8.6
The Netherlands	0.9	4.0	1.3
Norway	1.0	11.5	2.5
Poland	2.8	16.6	6.0
Sweden	1.1	15.0	3.3
Slovenia	1.1	8.5	2.5
Slovakia	2.4	12.4	4.0
UK	1.2	9.6	2.8

Source: (Maitre, Nolan and Whelan, 2012)

For every country in this study, there was a marked increase in the number of workers experiencing poverty, demonstrating that for a significant number of employees, full-time work does not provide a sufficient income from which to avoid poverty. Unfortunately, their study did not include part-time or temporary workers, and only employees who had worked full-time for the last twelve months were included. Given that the concentration of low pay is generally much higher among part time work than full time work, this is a significant limitation of this study. However, this study does show that low pay is still a significant problem for full-time workers. That said, there is evidence suggests that it is not low pay, but other factors that cause in-work poverty. Hallerod et al. (2015) conducted a longitudinal study of EU-SLIC data, analysing data over a 36 month period. They found that the risk of poverty to those who were employed full-time continuously over the three years was very low. In-work poverty affected the self-employed, and those who engaged in precarious work and had periods of unemployment. Therefore, they concluded that in-work poverty is not a problem of low pay, but a matter of unemployment, arguing that the link between low pay and poverty is weak, whereas the link between poverty and unemployment is high. The authors therefore argue that

these results suggest that where policy makers need to focus their attention on is unemployment and labour market insecurity, as well as unemployment benefits. This reiterates the earlier point, that too often the focus from policy makers is on weaknesses in the supply side of labour market, rather than there being problems with the demand side in providing the quality of jobs (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012).

So, it is clear that the relationship between poverty and pay is not a simple one, and so it may well be that pay is not the only influencing factor of working poverty. Scottish Government Social Research (2015) argue that there are three main factors that influence in-work poverty: firstly, the hourly rate of pay; secondly, the number of hours worked in total in the household (referred to as 'work intensity'); and thirdly, the impact of earned income on tax and welfare entitlement. This three-pronged approach is useful for considering the complexities of poverty and for understanding why households are impacted differently in terms of poverty, and are particularly relevant when considering workers engaged in precarious work. Work intensity[2] may be particularly helpful in explaining why some low paid workers are in worker poverty and others are not, as work intensity can affect low paid workers in a number of ways. Firstly, work intensity can be a matter of underemployment, particularly in the case of part time employment. As mentioned in previous chapters, there has been growth in the number of part-time jobs since the recession, particularly in low paying sectors (Coulter, 2016). STUC (2015) noted that in 2015, full-time employment in the UK has fallen below pre-recession levels, whilst part-time employment has increased by 11%. Most recent figures from ONS (2018) the number of people overall who are employed part-time who want to work more hours has also fallen, from 3.9 million in 2014 to 3.2 million at the end of 2017 (ONS, 2018). However, research by MacInnes et al. (2015) shows that analysis of ONS when broken down by skill level of occupations shows that the number of people in low skilled (and subsequently low paid) occupations who are underemployed has risen substantially from 2008 to 2014. This suggest that the rise in part-time work is not always voluntary, and that people in low paid work are not always able to work the number of hours that they want or need to (MacInnes *et al.*, 2015). Given that both hourly rates of pay and work intensity are both determined by the employer, it follows that while the exact relationship between low pay and in-work poverty may be complex, employers have an important part to play in reducing in-work poverty.

[2] Here work intensity refers to the number of hours worked

Findlay et al. (2019) have argued that paying wages in excess of the LW and guaranteeing working hours are the most important contributions that employers can make to reducing the incidence of in-work poverty.

Additionally, various barriers exist that both create and sustain situations of poverty. People experiencing in-work poverty face many difficulties and barriers in attending work, including: poor health, paying for transport; childcare and other caring responsibilities (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012; Richards and Sang, 2019a). The brunt of unpaid caring responsibilities still falls to women who are then only able to work part-time (Charlesworth, Baines and Cunningham, 2015), limiting their ability to work more hours. Sufficient working hours also affect households where there is only one working adult; single earnership, where only one person in the household is working, has been found to be one of the underlying features of in-work poverty (Maitre, Nolan and Whelan, 2012). The impact of earned income on tax and welfare is also an important consideration, particularly in enabling people to escape poverty permanently through work. People can experience great difficulties in moving from benefits to relying solely on paid work, as benefits can represent a form of financial security. When transitioning from unemployment benefits into work there can be long period of time between the last benefit payment and the first wage, leaving people with no money to live on and causing debt (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). Poor health is a vicious cycle in relation to in-work poverty, with evidence suggesting that poverty can act as both the reason for and cause of poor health (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012). Disability and poverty often intersect in the context of employment, with workers facing a range of barriers that contribute to poverty, such as difficulties in accessing welfare benefits, a lack of progression, failures of employers to enact reasonable adjustments and transport difficulties (Richards and Sang, 2019b). Therefore, there are a number of ways in which the intersection of low pay, work intensity and welfare benefits can influence the incidence of in-work poverty, further demonstrating that in-work poverty is not simply a matter of low pay. Additionally, there are clear consequences for employees in both their working and home lives.

2.5.4 The Intersection of Work and Home

The literature discussed in this chapter already begins to demonstrate the wide-ranging impact that low paid work can have on employees in their lives outside of work. Therefore, it is useful

to turn to the work-family literature, as this field is primarily concerned with the intersection of work and home life[3], and how these two domains are connected. This literature base also provides a number of theories and concepts for understanding how the experience of work affects well-being, and how work and home life can spillover into one another, which are central concerns to this thesis[4]. However, on closer inspection, limited attention has been paid by work-family scholars to the context of low paid work. A review of research methods in work-family research by Casper et al. (2007) found that the majority of studies focused on managerial or professional full-time jobs, and that the majority of participants in studies were white, married or cohabiting, with children living in the household; single parent households, alternative family structures, multi-generational households, ethnic minority households and low paid workers are underrepresented within this literature base. Only a very small number of studies from the work-family literature consider low paying jobs, and several scholars highlight that there are only a small number of studies in the field consider low wage and low skilled work (Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013). This signifies a significant empirical gap in this current literature base and an area where a contribution to the existing research can be made.

A small number of studies which considers some of the less researched demographic groups were identified. Much of the research which does exist that considers these characteristics is focused around the concept of social support, and several studies have highlighted the significance of social support within the work-family interface for low income parents. Social support in conceptualised as a valuable resource within the literature. Empirical quantitative research has demonstrated that social support is a vital resource for low paid workers; social support from family, work colleagues and the community is thought to reduce work-family conflict (Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013). For low paid workers, finding affordable and suitable childcare can be extremely challenging; childcare will often be provided informally by family, friends and neighbours, rather than official forms of childcare from registered or licensed providers (Kossek *et al.*, 2008). In a quantitative study of low-income mothers and informal childcare provision, Kossek et al. (2008) found that a positive relationship with their childcare provider can provide significant social support to families and improve family well-being; mothers who perceived the social support from their childcare provider to be high experienced

[3] With the work-family literature, more recent scholars have begun to refer to the family domain as the home domain, to reflect societal changes in household composition. The terms family and home are used interchangeably in this thesis.
[4] This will be explored in greater depth in chapter four.

lower work-family conflict and fewer depressive symptoms. Ciabattari (2007) conducted a study focusing specifically on single mothers. A nationally representative data sample from the US was used in the analysis. Her findings identified that women experiencing a high level of work-family conflict (and particularly a lack of flexibility in their working hours) were less likely to be employed, and that low-income women were more likely to experience work-family conflict, with less access to social capital compared with women earning higher incomes. For low-income women, social capital was the strongest predictor of work-family conflict, followed by working hours and ill health. Social capital was measured by asking the respondent if they had someone that they could rely on to loan them money ($200), provide emergency childcare, provide accommodation and guarantee a loan of $1000. There was a strong negative association between social capital and work-family conflict, and a positive relationship between income and social capital. These findings provide further support for the argument that social support acts a valuable resource within the work-family interface, especially for low paid workers.

Furthermore, social support from supervisors in low wage and low skilled jobs has been shown to positively influence job performance and reduce work-family conflict. Muse and Pichler's (2011) quantitative study surveyed employees and their supervisors; their findings indicated that support from supervisors was positively related to job performance and negatively related to work-family conflict, indicating that supervisors can play an important role in positively impacting employee well-being and job performance. A further study by Hammer et al., (2011) examined the effects of implementing training for supervisors on the work-family conflict on the employees in a grocery chain, a sample which contained many low paid and poor workers. Compared with the control group, employees who experienced high family-work conflict prior to the supervisory training were positively impacted in terms of improved job satisfaction, turnover intentions and physical health. These findings suggest that employers can potentially play a significant role in improving the well-being of low paid employees.

2.6 Chapter Conclusions

The low pay literature is often primarily concerned with how to measure low pay, and tends to preference large, quantitative studies. Certainly, the low pay literature is not short of statistics, and a considerable amount is known about the extent of low paid work and the composition of

the low paid workforce. There is less literature which preferences the employee voice and experience, and a gap emerges in research concerning the employee experience of work. The literature discussed in this chapter outline the severe, long lasting and far reaching consequences that low wage work can have for individuals. Given the substantial implications that low paid work can have, this raises questions about the well-being of these workers. In particular, there is a lack of studies that focus specifically on the experiences of workers in the hospitality and social care sectors, and a distinct lack of research that compares work in these sectors. The hospitality and social care sectors appear to provide quite different contexts of work, and yet, seem to struggle with many of the same problems. Given that a substantial proportion of low paid work within the UK is located in these sectors, and in-depth examination and comparison of these sectors could provide useful insights.

In light of the above, two closely connected research themes have emerged:

> How does low paid work affect the well-being of employees at the intersection of work and home life?

> How does the experience of work in the hospitality and social care sectors compare?

The next chapter will move on to focus on the supply side of the labour market. This will involve a discussion of the causes of low paid work and consider the role that employers have played in shaping the nature of low paid work through HRM strategy.

3. The Evolution of Low Paid Work: What Causes Low Pay?

Having focused on the low paid worker in chapter two, the aim of this chapter is to examine the role of the employer. This chapter will begin by looking at the contextual factors which contributed to the growth of low paid service work, including political, social and economic factors. The chapter will then move on to discuss the role that employers themselves have played in shaping low wage work, through their use of HRM strategy. The types of HRM used in low paid work are examined more generally, before specifically looking at the hospitality and social care sectors.

3.1 Causes of Low Pay

As outlined in the previous chapter, low wage work is a worldwide phenomenon. Its presence in the labour market is as a result of both complex contextual factors and as a direct result of employer strategies. There have been a complex mix of political, economic and social forces which have shaped the labour market over the last fifty years which have contributed to both the growth and the nature of low paid work. The process of globalisation and the advancement of neo-liberal economics over the last 50 years has substantially changed the labour market and employee relations. The move towards neo-liberalist values and globalisation, accompanied by de-industrialisation and huge growth in the service sector, fundamentally changed the labour market and the nature of work (Kalleberg, 2009). During this period, the inception of HRM and the actions of employers have shaped work, with particular implications for the hospitality and social care sectors. There are also a number of factors which influence management strategies which are discussed.

3.1.1 The Rise of Neoliberalism and the Flexible Firm

A number of the trends which have shaped the current labour market can be pinpointed to the late 1970s/early 1980s. During this time, the process of globalisation was well underway and neo-liberal economics was growing in popularity. Neo-liberalism is difficult to define, but the underlying principles of the ideology are: public policies that promote the free market economy; and, minimising state inference in the market, including deregulation of the labour market, privatisation of the public sector, minimal welfare, taxation and the removal of state protections (Campbell and Pedersen, 2001). The promotion of neo-liberalism was aided by the election of right-wing politicians during this time that endorsed these principles, such as

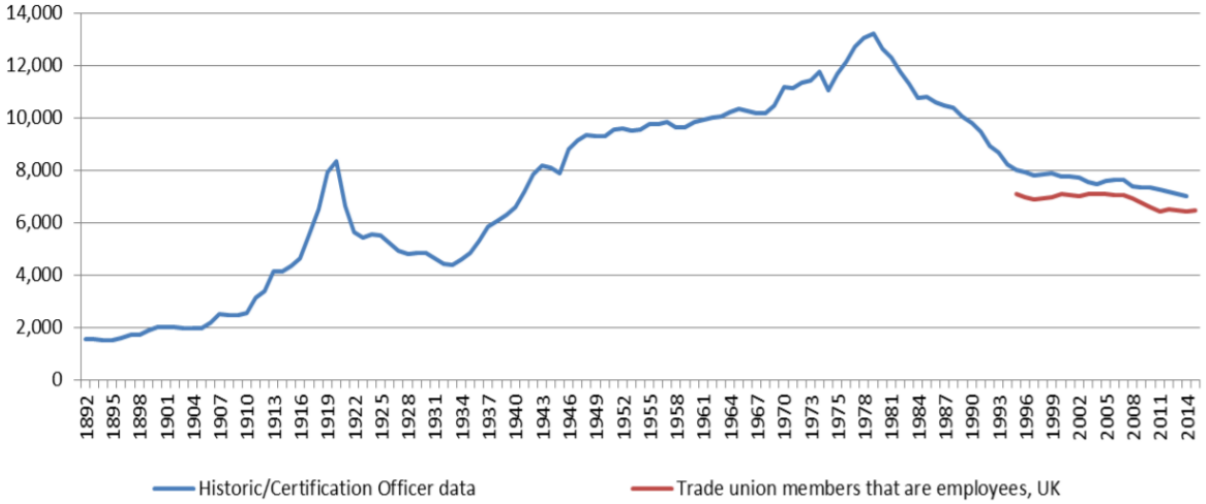
Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Reagan in the US. Kalleberg (2011) identifies the mid-1970s as the beginning of the drive for flexibility in the labour market in America. At this time global trade was increasing and competition for businesses was intensifying. Labour market institutions which had traditionally protect workers began to erode; union membership began to decline and government regulation of the labour market was relaxed (Kalleberg, 2009). Growing competition lead to more competition over price, particularly in product market, which forced businesses to focus on improving efficiency and reducing their costs in order to stay competitive (Kalleberg, 2011). As a result, business began to move their production to other countries where labour costs were lower (Kalleberg, 2011).

One of the key components of neo-liberal philosophy was the emphasis on a need for flexibility in the labour market that would allow businesses to compete in a global market economy. The main argument behind this philosophy was that unless labour markets were made more flexible, businesses would move their production and investment abroad, to countries with lower labour costs (Standing, 2011). Employers have sought forms of flexibility to improve their ability to respond quickly to changes in business demand. This has included numerical flexibility which allows management to vary the size and cost of the workforce, and functional flexibility where organisations seek to employ staff who are multi skilled, allowing for the headcount to be kept low with less impact to service or production (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Many organisations have chosen to combine these types of flexibility in what is known as the flexible firm model (Atkinson, 1984), with core, permanent employees who can perform functional flexibility, and the use of numerical flexibility through periphery workers, such as agency, temporary, contractors and outsourced staff (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

3.1.2 Declining Union Membership and Collective Bargaining

The decline in the presence and density of trade unions is thought to be one of the main contributing factors to the growth of low wage work and inequality of pay in the UK (Rubery and Edwards, 2003; Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008). Traditionally union membership had been strong in the UK, reaching its peak in 1979, however, since 1980 union membership has fallen sharply, with membership standing at 6.5 million in 2015 (see figure four).

Figure Four: Trade Union Membership Levels From 1892 to 2015



Source: (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2016)

Union membership dropped from its peak of 13.2 million members in 1979, to 7.8 million in 1997; this drastic decline represented a crisis in membership for trade unions (Bryson and Forth, 2010). The sharp decline in union membership during the 1980s is largely attributed to falling support from employers for union membership, which was reinforced with the election of the Thatcher Conservative Government in 1979 (Millward, Bryson and Forth, 2000). This government was highly influenced by neo-liberal values of labour market deregulation, the free market and reduction of the public sector; part of the Conservative government's strategy to deregulate the labour market was to attack the trade unions. (Williams and Adam-Smith, 2010). During the conservative reign from 1980 to 1997, the Thatcher and Major governments introduced successive legislative reforms that substantially reduced the powers of the unions, making it more difficult for unions to recruit members and implement industrial action (Millward, Bryson and Forth, 2000). Notable pieces of legislation included the Trade Union Act 1984 which required a secret ballot to be held for a strike to be lawful, and reforms to the Employment Act in 1980, 1982, 1988 and 1990, which eventually outlawed the 'closed shop', prohibited secondary action, and which made unions liable for any unlawful industrial action (Dickens and Hall, 1995). These legislative changes weakened and undermined the powers and legitimacy of the trade unions, and a rapid decline in union membership followed (Wills, 2004). Additionally, while the decline during the 1980s has been attributed to the lack of management support, a key cause of membership decline in the 1990s has been due to decreasing enthusiasm from workers in union membership (Millward, Bryson and Forth,

2000). The ability of unions to recruit and retain new members is essential for their survival (Bryson and Forth, 2010). While the rising number of non-unionised workplaces has certainly contributed to downward trend in membership, Bryson and Gomez (2005) argue that it has been the failure of unions to recruit new members that has been the largest cause of union decline since the 1980s; in particular, increasing numbers of workers have now never been union members, and this rise in 'never membership' is a significant contributing factor to union decline.

Furthermore, unions have struggled to organise themselves effectively in sectors where low paid work is concentrated, such as social care and hospitality, due to the fragmented nature of the workforce in these sectors and high levels of turnover (Wills, 2004). Hostility from employers and a high presence of small businesses within the service sector (particularly in the hospitality sector), their wide geographical spread and the 'family culture' that exists in many of these small workplaces create challenges for unions to organise; additionally, there is a strong culture of individualism among the workforce and the workforce is largely composed of workers that have typical not engaged with unions, such as young people, students, part-time, agency and migrant workers (Wills, 2005; Dutton *et al.*, 2008; Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008). ONS (2019d) data for 2018 indicates that rates of union membership within the accommodation and food services industry are the lowest in the UK, with union density just 3.3% (ONS, 2019d). Union membership within the social care sector is less clear; union density in the wider health and social work industry is high at 38.1% (ONS, 2019d), but this includes highly professional health occupations within the public sector (nurses, doctors, etc) where membership is typically very high. When analysed by occupation[5] rather than sector, membership falls to 26% among full time workers and 12.6% of temporary workers (ONS, 2019d). Trade unions themselves have failed to develop strategies to unionise and attract new members in low paying sectors (Dutton *et al.*, 2008). The lack of unionisation in low paid and precarious jobs has contributed to the degradation of job quality, as the absence of unionisation amongst low paid workers means that vulnerable workers who experience problems at work or who are denied their employment rights have limited recourse and are unable to resolve

[5] Social care roles fall under Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations from the Standard Occupational Classification 2010.

disputes, particularly in workplaces where there are no systems of collective representation (Pollert and Charlwood, 2009).

Accompanying the weakening of union powers and falling membership has been an overall declining trend in collective bargaining, which has eroded the main form of voluntary wage regulation in the private sector, where the majority of low wage work is situated. Rates of CB are lowest within the hospitality sector; in 2018, just 3.5% of workers had their pay determined by CB (ONS, 2019c). Unions have typically been able to secure a wage premium for members; additionally, unionised jobs have also exhibited lower wage dispersion, as CB compresses wage structures and increases the wages of the lowest paid (Bryson and Forth, 2010; Kersley, 2006). However, the wage premium has been declining since the mid-1990s (Blanchflower and Bryson, 2003), narrowing from 14% in 1994 to just 6% in 2009 (Bryson and Forth, 2010). Unions do continue to lower wage dispersion where they operate (Bryson and Forth, 2010) however given that there are now far fewer workplaces covered by CB, fewer employees benefit from this advantage. In their analysis of WERS 2004, Kersley et al. (2006, p. 199) found that workplaces with no CB were far more likely to have low paid employees; 81% of low paid employees in the private sector were employed in workplaces with no CB. Grimshaw's (2011) analysis of the 2006 Eurostat Structure of Earnings Study suggests a strong negative correlation between CB coverage and the incidence of low wage employment; countries with CB coverage of less than 40% were likely to have over 20% low wage employment, whereas countries with CB coverage of 80% and over were likely to have less that 15% low wage employment. Charlwood's (2007) analysis of private sector organisations that abandoned CB were more likely to adopt a cost minimisation approach to labour costs. With no effective alternative or replacement for CB, many employees have been left with no form of representation in the workplace, with pay decisions left entirely to management discretion (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004). Therefore, the decline in coverage of CB has contributed to both declining levels of pay and widening wage inequality.

3.1.3 Deregulation of the Labour Market

In addition to the attack on trade unions and collective bargaining, actions taken to deregulate the labour market have involved the removal of statutory protections for low paid workers, contributing to the growth of low wage work. Various forms of statutory wage regulation have

existed in the UK over the last century which have provided some limited protection for low paid workers not covered by collective bargaining. Formal regulation was generally underpinned by the principle that wages should be fair and comparable to collective bargaining, and the purpose of regulation was to ensure fair wages for workers who did not benefit from the voluntary systems of collective bargaining (Rubery and Edwards, 2003).

The Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons was established in 1891, which stipulated that contractors of government departments conform to the employment terms and conditions (such as pay and working hours) equivalent to at least the minimum rates agreed in relevant industry based collective bargaining (Kessler, 2005). Further to the public sector, in other industries Wage councils (originally known as Trade Boards) were established in 1909 with the purpose of setting minimum wages in sectors where no voluntary form of regulation existed (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Wage councils acted in the same format as collective bargaining, with negotiations between employers and employee representatives; the main difference being that once agreed, minimum rates of pay were then legally enforceable (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Initially four trade boards were set up which covered 20,000 workers, but at its peak, 3.5 million workers were covered under 66 councils (Kessler, 2005). In a similar fashion, Schedule 11 of the Employment Protection Act 1975 also acted as a mechanism for extending voluntary collective agreements to employers which did not recognise a trade union or collective agreement. Schedule 11 gave employees recourse to compel their employer to match pay levels of comparable workers, which in practice meant the industry-level minimum pay rate (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Further statutory protections of wages have also been introduced via the Equal Pay Act 1970, ensuring equal pay for women.

However, the move away from the trend towards collective bargaining in the 1980s brought with it a move away from the principle of fair wages through statutory protection (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). Much of the statutory protection that existed was dismantled by the successive Conservative governments during the period 1979 – 1997. Firstly, the provisions for the extension of collective bargaining under Schedule 11 of the Employment Protection Act 1975 was abolished in 1980. Rubery and Edwards (2003) comment that in reality, during the brief time that Schedule 11 existed, it had been a largely inadequate form of regulation that was not commonly pursued. The process involved to enforce this employment right was

complex and the results fragmented as unlike the Wages Councils, there was no system for imposing minimum wages on all employers in the industry. Further steps were taken in 1983 when the Fair Wages Resolution was rescinded by the Conservative government, to enable their agenda of reducing the size and cost of the public sector via the introduction of competitive tendering of certain services in the public sector (Rubery and Edwards, 2003).

One of the most significant steps that the Conservative government took to deregulate wages was the dismantling of the Wage councils. The powers of Wage councils were reduced to setting minimum wages only by the Thatcher government in 1986 as a consequence of the Wages Act, and the number of councils was reduced to just 26 (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). The full removal of the Wage councils was a policy of the Major Conservative government, based on the belief that wage councils raised wages and reduced levels of employment as a consequence, despite limited evidence to support this claim (Manning, 2009). The Wages councils were abolished entirely through the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, with the sole exception of the Agricultural Wages Council which was not abolished until 2013 (Prowse and Fells, 2016). This removed the only legalised form of minimum pay that existed in the UK at this time to protect low paid workers, leaving the most vulnerable workers with few employment rights and no guaranteed minimum wage floor for their pay (Wills, 2004). The abolition of wage councils is also thought to have contributed to the growth in low wage jobs in sub-contracted public services, as it removed the requirement for private sector companies to pay minimum wages (Prowse and Fells, 2016).

The consequences of these actions by the Conservative government was that there was substantial growth in low wage work. While the UK labour market has always had very low levels of wage regulation, during 1979 to 1997 the Conservative government took away what little regulation and pay protection existed (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008). However, in 1997, New Labour gained power, with a manifesto promise to introduce a national minimum wage (NMW). Upon their election, the Low Pay Commission was set up and the NMW introduced in 1999 (Williams and Adam-Smith, 2010). The introduction of the NMW in 1999 was a key moment in the history of wage regulation and was considered a radical step, as this was the first time that there had been a minimum rate of pay set for every employee in the UK. The introduction of the NMW raised the pay levels of approximately 1.7 million workers, of

which two thirds were women, with two thirds of these women working part time (Rubery and Edwards, 2003). In addition to the NMW, a new package of in-work benefits was introduced in the form of tax credits. The aim of this policy was to get the unemployed back into work, even if they only received very low pay, and to tackle the problems associated with low pay and poverty through in work benefits to supplement income (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008).

While the introduction of the NMW was a victory for the New Labour government, the extent to which the NMW combated low pay is questionable. Firstly, it has been argued that the initial rate set in 1999 was too low. As the minimum wage is not calculated based on the cost of living, it does not provide enough income for many households to live on, and while there is a system of tax credits to supplement this income, the system is difficult to navigate (Wills, 2004). Statutory minimum wages only provide a wage floor for low pay, and so the NMW had little effect in terms of decreasing the volume of low wage work in the UK. Furthermore, Mason et al. (2008) argue that while the NMW initially halted the growth of low pay, overall there has been a growth in low paid jobs. This is partly because in work benefits have effectively acted as a subsidy for employers, allowing them to pay low wages as workers receive benefits to top up their income (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008).

More recently, regulation has been introduced that has increased the wage floor for employees over the age of twenty-five, in the form of the National Living Wage. The NLW was introduced in 2016, which initially raised the NMW by fifty pence per hour for eligible employees. The introduction of this policy has led to the largest fall in low pay in since 1977; in April 2016, 5.1 million employees were low paid (earning less than two thirds of the hourly median wage) , compared with 5.4 million in April 2015 (D'Arcy, 2017). However, during the same period the number of employees earning the needs based LW increased from 6 million to 6.3 million, which represents 23% of employees (D'Arcy, 2017). In their analysis, Padley and Hirst (2017) calculate that despite the increase of the NLW, a single person working full time would still be 22% short of the MIS. So, while the NLW has served to address extreme low pay for some employees, it seems that the number of people who are still not paid enough to sustain a basic standard of living continues to grow.

Finally, it is important to note that regulation does not necessarily protect workers from low wages or extreme low wages. Regulation tends only to address the extreme elements of poor job quality, and without effect enforcements, there is very limited benefit that regulation can provide to employees (Findlay *et al.*, 2017b). A prime example of this is the number of people in the labour market who continue to be paid less than the NMW. In 2016 there were an estimated 362,000 jobs with pay less than the NMW, comprising of 178,000 full-time jobs and 184,000 part-time jobs (Office for National Statistics, 2016). The highest instances of pay below the NMW were retail, hospitality and social care sectors (Office for National Statistics, 2016), which are also the three sectors which employ the largest numbers of low paid workers overall (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). It is unclear as to what extent these low paid jobs are because of employer non-compliance, as the Office for National Statistics do not assess whether employees in these jobs were eligible for the NMW. However, recently there have been a number of cases of large employers who have not complied with minimum wage legislation, particularly following the introduction of the NLW in April 2016. Expecting employees in low paid jobs to work unpaid overtime is often the cause on non-compliance with NMW, and continues to remain a problem even in firms that are profitable (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008). Indeed, 359 employers were 'named and shamed' on a list of businesses published by the government for non-compliance (Gov.uk, 2017). These incidents of non-compliance highlight what was concluded by Warhurst et al. (2008) that tackling low pay requires not just higher minimum wages, but better regulation and stronger enforcement around working hours.

3.1.4 Voluntary Regulation: The Living Wage

Amidst declining union coverage and deregulation of the labour market, the pressure placed on organisations by through its other stakeholders – customers, the media, charities, civil society groups, etc. – is potentially a powerful mechanism for improving employment conditions (Voegtlin and Greenwood, 2016). An example of the has been the LW campaign by Citizens UK, which has acted as a form of voluntary regulation on firms to ensure that all staff are paid a minimum of a living wage (Heery, Hann and Nash, 2017). The LW Foundation was established in 2011 to accredit employers who commit to pay the LW to all employees, and there are now almost 7000 organisations that have been accredited (Living Wage Foundation, 2019). Through their campaign and by raising the profile of low pay as a political issue among politicians, the LW Foundation has arguably indirectly affected public policy, owing to the

similarly named NLW (Heery, Hann and Nash, 2017). The LW campaign has also strengthened the position of unions in the public sector when negotiating better rates of pay for outsourced and subcontracted workers, as LW commitments require that these workers are also paid at the LW rate (Prowse and Fells, 2016). The LW is yet to make a significant dent in the pay of hospitality workers; a rudimentary search of the LW Foundation database shows that formal accreditation not yet been adopted by any MNCs within the hospitality sector, and take up remains limited to a handful of smaller operators. Where the LW campaign has made more headway is the social care sector in Scotland, where the Scottish Government made a commitment in 2016 to fund the payment of the LW to all social care workers (Unison, 2017). However, reports have emerged that organisations in the sector have struggled to implement the LW and that it has jeopardised the financial sustainability of some providers, due to difficulties in receiving the funding for it form local authorities (Cunningham and James, 2017; Cunningham *et al.*, 2018).

3.1.5 The Economic Cycle

A further contributing factor in the growth of low wage jobs has been the influence of the economic cycle. The global financial crash of 2008 has been the deepest recession experienced by the UK since the 1930s (Kalleberg, 2011), and the following decade has become known as an era of austerity, following the economic downturn and a change of government (Bach, 2012). This recession has had considerable impact on the labour market and has arguably contributed to the growth in low paid and poor quality jobs. During periods of recession, high paying employment sectors such as manufacturing typically experience some decline. However, during this recent most recession, employment has also taken a hit in the public sector; in their analysis of the WERS survey, van Wanrooy et al. (2013) found that there was a higher proportion of public sector organisation reporting that they had been adversely effected by the recession in comparison to private sector organisations, which has had a ripple effect on other parts of the economy.

The state is a major employer in the UK and is a source of well-paying jobs. At its peak, the total number of employees in the public sector stood at 6.4 million at the end of 2009; however, levels of employment in the public sector have been declining since that time, and in March 2017 employment in the public sector had shrunk to 5.4 million (ONS, 2017). The shrinkage

of the public sector has been as a direct result of the election of the coalition government in 2010. Prior responses to the crash by the Labour party to stabilise the financial sector through strategies such as bank 'bailouts' and the nationalisation of certain banks, whilst increasing GDP, left the UK with a substantial deficit of around £163 billion in 2009-2010 (Williams and Scott, 2016, p. 7). The coalition government aimed to reduce the size of UK deficit through austerity measures, under the guise of 'Big Society', which in practice has involved radically reducing public expenditure to a level not seen since 1945 (Bach, 2012). Analysis of the Labour Force Survey by Coulter (2016) suggests that the majority of jobs that were cut in the public sector during this period were low skilled jobs, meanwhile the jobs that were created in the private sector, were predominately low skilled in nature. These trends correspond with the increasing marketization of the public sector through the outsourcing of public services to the voluntary and private sector, which particularly affects the social care sector. While this has been carried out as a cost cutting exercise to reduce the size of the state, it has ultimately forced private and voluntary sector providers into low paying models of employment (Cunningham and James, 2014). Further cost cutting measures have included wage freezes, work intensification, restructuring, restricted training and reductions in overtime; while these measures were also used in the private sector, their use was more pronounced in the public sector (van Wanrooy *et al.*, 2013). These measures have degraded the quality of jobs, and wage freezes have seen real earnings drop.

Additionally, several low paying sectors saw a percentage increase in their share of jobs in the labour market from 2008 to 2014. Health and social care sectors have experienced a 15% increase (equivalent to half million jobs); accommodation and food services have had a 10% increase, and the growth of the number of part-time jobs has also been considerable, particularly in these low paying sectors (Coulter, 2016). Furthermore, according to the Office for Budget Responsibility (2014), the greatest growth in employee numbers between 2010 and 2014 was at the lower end of the wage scale, in jobs paying £20k per annuum or less, further indicating that there has been growth in the number of low wage jobs since 2010. This has also been accompanied by a growth in self-employment during the recession, as the total number of workers classed as self-employed has risen from 3.7 million in 2008 to 4.4 million in 2014 (Coulter, 2016). Wickham and Bobek (2016) arguing that a growing proportion of this self-employment is in fact 'bogus' as although these workers are registered as self-employed, they are carrying out the roles of traditional employees but without the legal protections of an

employee. This type of self-employment is considered false or 'bogus', as the normal activities of self-employment such as tendering, setting prices, and employing people do not happen, and rather the work resembles employment in that the work is carried out for one organisation and the worker has a lack of control over when and how work is carried out (Behling and Harvey, 2015). Online platforms such as Uber and Deliveroo have taken advantage of this model, operating under the guise of an 'agency' which connects contractors and customers, to circumvent the costs of employment regulation, such as national insurance, the NMW and holiday entitlement, when in fact they treat these workers like staff (CIPD, 2017). Self-employed and low skilled workers within the gig economy are very vulnerable to low wages. A recent report by Lepanjuuri et al. (2018) found that 49% of gig workers performed taxi and food delivery services, and 25% of gig workers earned less than £7.50 per hour, with a further 16% earning less than £8.44 per hour. In this way, the growth in self-employment has also contributed to the incidence of low wage work.

3.1.6 Financialisation

Financialisation refers to the increasing role and presence of the financial sector within the economy, alongside a "greater emphasis put on financial returns in a nonfinancial corporation" and has been identified as a key driver in the growth of precarious and poor quality jobs, and in growing wage inequality (Kalleberg, 2012, p. 429). Financialisation also refers to the changes, consequences and costs associated with financial innovations to firms and their employees (Clark, 2016). Sawyer (2013) describes financialisation as the present era of financial capitalism, beginning in the 1980s, in which the financial sector has dominated the economy. Within the non-finance sector, the emergence of the finance conception of the firm as a 'tradable bundle of assets' and the shareholder value model have fundamentally changed the orientations of management; managerial commitments shifted away from long term goals, innovations and investments in a specific products and markets, towards short term finance orientated goals (Tomaskovic-Devey and Lin, 2011). The model of corporate governance within firms has subsequently changed from the stakeholder model, which gave priority to the welfare of employees and other stakeholders, to the shareholder model, which prioritises the interests of shareholders (Kalleberg, 2012). There have also been new forms of investor-owner models, which have taken a more active role in managing the share performance of their investments, including private equity groups, hedge funds and sovereign investment funds (Sisson, 2010). These shareholder models of financial capitalism have shifted the focus of

investments, from long term investments in productive companies, to extracting capital from companies for further trading activities, which reaps higher short term returns (Thompson, 2011). Furthermore, this finance orientation shifted capital investments from productive and physical assets to financial assets, creating a new form of competition based on financial performance, where firms compete as an investment opportunity, and all are judged by the same standard of financial performance (Williams, 2000).

This financialisation of firms has had substantial implications of the management of employees. Firms following the shareholder model have a high concentration of share ownership by investment trusts, pension funds, venture capital and private equity; this drives the focus on short term profitability and places a large emphasis on the financial management of firms (Sisson, 2010). There is greater corporate level pressure on management to reduce labour costs and retain numerical and functional flexibility in order to respond to external labour market conditions (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). This ultimately fosters the management orientation to treat labour as a cost to be minimised, rather than a resource to be developed (Sisson, 2010; Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Increasing the short term returns for investors is the priority, therefore profits are not reinvested in human capital (Kalleberg, 2012). The private equity business model can have substantial implications for the management of employees as investors seek to extract financial value from the firm to maximise returns; these implications include work intensification; restructuring and delayering the workforce through redundancy or voluntary resignation; intense performance management structures; and a lack of investment in training and development (Clark, 2016). These pressures strongly influence the practice of HRM; even where managers want to adopt employee-centred HRM, they may be unable to do so due to these prevailing financial interests (Guest, 2017; Thompson, 2011).

3.2 Human Resource Management: The Role of the Employer in Low Wage Work

Employers in low wage sectors have arguably played a significant role in shaping the nature of low paid work. Organisations operating in low paying sectors such as hospitality and social care are often labour intensive with tight profit margins. Employers have therefore sought to manage labour in a cost-effective way, enacted through HRM strategies. Regardless of the definition or model of HRM examined, two common assumptions that can be drawn out of any approach to managing people in any organisation, which are of central concern to this thesis.

The first is that with all HRM models and management approaches, there is an underlying philosophy which guide management decisions. The second is that firms will manage their staff in such a way as to achieve organisational objectives. Both of these assumptions help to outline what the role of the employer is in the well-being of employees. This section will discuss the approaches to HRM in low wage work more generally, before moving on to discuss employment and HRM in the hospitality and social care sectors more specifically.

3.2.1 HRM in Low Wage Work

HRM began to emerge within organisations in the 1980s, in response to many of the macro factors previously discussed, including increased competitive pressures caused by globalisation, neo-liberal economic policies, and deregulation in the labour market (Farnham, 2010). Defining exactly what is meant by HRM brings with it some complexity. Key texts which define HRM (Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Torrington *et al.*, 2009; Farnham, 2010; 2013) recognise two commonly held definitions. Firstly, HRM has become a catch-all phrase for people management, with it being defined as "all those activates associated with the management of employment relationships in the firm" (Boxall and Purcell, 2003, p. 1). This generic definition labels all forms of people management, such as traditional management, as HRM, when there is an argument to say that HRM should be considered as a distinctly different approach to management (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004). As such, the second definition of HRM argues it is "a distinctive philosophy towards carrying out people-orientated activities" (Torrington *et al.*, 2009, p. 4), and which "delivers organisational objectives by HR professionals in collaborations with line mangers" (Farnham, 2010, p. 5). The central ideological assumption of this distinctive approach is that work and employment can be organised in such a way that maximises the productivity of workers, achieves business goals, and which is consequently also beneficial for workers through a fulfilment of their needs (Edwards and Bach, 2013).

As an academic discipline, the inception of mainstream HRM is usually pinpointed to two seminal works: the Harvard model by Beer et al. (1985), and the Michigan model by Tichy et al. (1982). The underlying principles of these two early models provide two different perspectives on the management of labour, which are now referred to as soft and hard HRM respectively. In the Harvard model, employees are considered significant stakeholders in

organisation, and therefore business strategies should be developed alongside the needs of employees. HR polices are designed to foster desirable HR outcomes, such as commitment, and longer-term consequences including individual, organisational and societal well-being. This employee-centred approach has become known as soft HRM and from its inception has considered well-being to be a long-term consequence of HRM. In contrast, the Michigan model by Tichy et al. (1982) places central importance on there being a close fit between HR strategy and business strategy, with the aim of improving organisational performance. Organisational performance is underpinned by a cycle of HR practices designed to improve performance, which includes appraisal, rewards, and training (Tichy, Fombrun and Devanna, 1982), and has become known as hard HRM. Unlike soft HRM which is centred around the human aspect, hard HRM is concerned with the resource aspect, viewing labour as a resource like any other and as a cost to be minimised (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004). Since the 1980s there have been various developments in the field of HRM, such as high commitment HRM, High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and strategic fit (Guest, 2002); high involvement HRM; and, best practice and best fit (Farnham, 2010). What these various models and HRM systems have in common is that they involve HR practices based on an underpinning HRM philosophy, from either the hard or soft camp, or somewhere in between.

Critical writers have been highly sceptical as to whether soft HRM actually exists, with some arguing that it is nothing more than a rhetoric that has been severely undermined given the actions of HR practitioners. The social legitimacy of HR is derived from its capacity to act as a steward of a social contract in employment relationships, balancing the interests and requirements of employers, employees, and their society; having failed to deliver on this promise, HR now faces a crisis of trust and "a loss of legitimacy in the eyes of its major stakeholders" (Kochan, 2007, p. 599) . Thompson (2011) reflects that the reality of work in the marketised public sector and highly financialised private sector is a far cry from the narrative of soft HRM, and questions whether there can be anything distinctive at all about HRM at all. Legge (2005) has been particularly critical of this kind of HRM, arguing that it is merely rhetoric and a way of reasserting management control under a new label. Others have likened HRM to 'a wolf in sheep's clothing', arguing that approaches to HRM will only be employee-centred where there is an economic benefit to the organisation in implementing such practices (Keenoy, 1990, p. 9). Guest (1999; 2002; 2017) has been critical of the failure of HRM research in addressing the concerns of workers; the mainstream literature has a

preoccupation with relationship between HRM and performance, with the well-being of workers a secondary concern, whereas the critical perspective will usually come to the conclusion that HRM is harmful for workers, but without offering an alternative. Thompson (2011) argues that what is needed now is not further indulgence in mainstream or critical arguments, but for more research into the 'nuts and bolts' of hard HRM and HR practices, as a way forward for researchers. This approach is reflective of what Boxall (2007) has coined as 'analytical HRM' which focuses on what employers actually do in practice.

In terms of the practice of HRM, low paying jobs are typically associated with harder forms of HRM, where profit margins are small and labour costs are tightly controlled (Lucas, 2002). That said, there is still evidence to suggest that not all approaches are the same, and a distinction made in the literature between two forms of hard HRM. Some employers within low wage work will adopt more high commitment or high involvement HR practices and attempt to adopt basic best practice, taking what is known as a high road approach to HRM. Equally, more extreme versions of hard HRM use a combination of exploitive HR practices such as low pay, highly repetitive or routinized work, long working hours and non-standard employment contracts; these approaches have been termed 'low road' HRM (Clinton and Van Veldhoven, 2013). Osterman (2018) defines the distinction between high and low road on the basis of how companies determine their wage levels, the high road approach being where organisations offer wages which exceed the legislative minimum. In low wage sectors, this may not mean paying high wages but instead paying wages which are adequate in relation to living standards and superior to their competitors (Osterman, 2018). Additionally, organisations taking a high-road approach will generally comply with other minimum legislative requirements in relation to employees (such as working time, holiday pay, etc.) whereas organisations taking the low-road will actively avoid compliance with these minimum requirements as part of their business strategy (Osterman, 2018). Organisations following a high road approach tend to be those who are competing on the basis of product or service quality and innovation instead of cost, and who take a high skill and high wage approach to their employees, with improved job quality (Milkman, 1998; Youndt *et al.*, 1996; Osterman, 1994). However, some evidence suggests that in the service sector the link between product quality, skill and higher wages is weak (Lloyd, Warhurst and Dutton, 2013) and so a product quality strategy does not guarantee better conditions for workers. Additionally, research has shown that non-compliance with basic employment law rights occurs is still an issue in hospitality organisations operating in the

luxury end of the market, despite these organisations being profitable (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008).

A further distinction made by Kalleberg (2003) between the high road or low road approach is in how organisations respond to competitive demands for organisational flexibility. Some organisations will take a high road approach and adopt high performance work practices to develop functional flexibility with a core workforces; others will take a low road approach and use numerical flexibility, where labour costs are kept down through use of peripheral workforce of contingent labour (Kalleberg, 2003). Of course, many organisations will also use a mix of both types of flexibility, as identified earlier in this chapter, using the flexible firm model; however, combining these strategies effectively creates a two-tiered workforce, who are likely to experience different forms of HRM despite being employed by the same organisation (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Clinton and Van Veldhoven (2013) comment that employees in the lower levels of organisations who do not play a strategic role and who are considered 'non-essential' now often experience very hard and low-road HRM. Kalleberg (2003) argues that a considerable number of firms adopting the flexible firm will use high road HRM practices with core employees, using HPWS and developing functional flexibility, whereas numerical flexibility will be sought with periphery employees, where low road HRM practices will be adopted as these workers are thought of as 'disposable'. Additionally, research by Jackson and Schuler (1992) showed that in service organisations, employers use different HR practices for different groups of employees, such as hourly paid employees versus management. Even where roles were considered essential to the operation of the organisation, such as security, clerical, accountancy and aspects of HR, as these were routine jobs where labour could easily be replaced, there is a growing tendency for firms to retain numerical flexibility in these roles through use of contingent labour (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Using these more precarious forms of labour shifts the financial burden and risk of terminating these employees from the employer to the employee, as redundancy and severance costs are minimal (Burgess, Connell and Winterton, 2013).

The high and low road perspectives are helpful in identifying approaches to HRM within low paid work, however a limitation of these perspectives is that they predominately centre on the actions of organisations, rather than focus on the effects and outcomes of HR practices for

employees. The literature surrounding these perspectives is still typically employer centred, with the concerns of workers and the implications for their well-being typically ignored (Guest, 1999; Guest, 2002). Additionally, it is often incorrectly assumed that an organisation taking a high road approach will lead to better outcome for employees, and this is not necessarily the case. Greenwood (2007) argues that the presence of high road HRM practices does not guarantee the ethical or fair treatment of workers, and nor does the absence of such practices necessarily mean that workers will receive poor treatment, because the use of such approaches in the furtherance of corporate objectives can still result in the organisation acting irresponsibly towards its employees. Here, responsibility is considered to be the extent to which the organisation acts in the interests of employees, in comparison to other more powerful stakeholders, such as shareholders.

3.2.2 SRHRM and SIHRM: An Alternative Perspective

Alternative perspectives which take a more employee centred approach have surfaced within the literature, and of particular relevance to low paid work is the extent to which organisations have embedded the principles of CSR into their HRM practice. In recent years, the concept of socially responsible HRM has emerged, following the increasing engagement of organisations with corporate and social responsibility, which has extended into employment practices (Shen and Zhu, 2011). Over the last three decades, organisations have increasingly engaged with CSR activities, in order to enhance their reputation, build social legitimacy and to protect their long term interests (Lee, 2008), and SRHRM can be thought of as a dimension of CSR, in which CSR policies and practices are directed at employees (Shen and Zhang, 2017). One of the earliest conceptualisations of SRHRM was proposed by Carroll (1991), who argued that the management orientations regarding the ethical responsibilities that an organisation has towards its employees can be categorised as moral, immoral or amoral. Organisations fulfilling their ethical responsibilities to their employees take a moral approach to management, treating employees with respect and dignity, valuing their human rights and seeking fair dealings with employees. SRHRM is therefore a model of HRM that addresses power imbalances that exist between employees and the organisation (Greenwood, 2007; Voegtlin and Greenwood, 2016), and in recent years these concerns have extended more widely to include the fair treatment of labour across the value chain (Shen and Zhu, 2011).

Building on these ideas, Richards and Sang (2019a) propose a model of SRHRM, arguing that HRM practices are underpinned by management philosophies based on humanist principles of respect, fairness, social justice, ethics and participative leadership and investment. These underlying principles will lead to positive outcomes for employees through the HR practices used, of which a key outcome is employee well-being. Additionally, SRHRM has been shown to positively influence employees work behaviours, as it is positively related to discretionary helping behaviours and task performance (Shen and Benson, 2016). As such, SRHRM is enacted through the HR practices and policies of the organisation. SRHRM is considered to be more than simply providing superior pay and working conditions, and will include practices such as the recruitment of socially responsible employees, providing CSR training, and taking account of employees' CSR contribution during appraisal and when making decisions relating to promotion and compensation (Shen and Zhu, 2011; Shen and Benson, 2016). Barrena-Martienz et al. (2017) attempt to gain some consensus from academics and practitioners as to what is meant by SRHRM policies in practices (what could be considered the 'nuts and bolts' of SRHRM), and propose a framework of eight policy areas of SRHRM including: 'management of employment relationships'; 'prevention, health and safety at work'; 'training and continuous development'; 'diversity and equal opportunities'; 'fair remuneration and social benefits'; 'communication, transparency, and social dialogue'; 'attraction and retention of employees'; and 'work–family balance'. Shen and Zhu (2011) identify three components of the SRHRM system: legal compliance HRM, which requires that the firm adheres to legislation regarding employment such as minimum wage and working hours; employee-orientated HRM which requires firms to provide for employees and their family's needs over and above the required legal minimum, such as training and development; and general facilitation CSR HRM, which concerns the "application of HRM policies and practices that help firms engage in general CSR initiatives". Again, employee well-being is a key outcome for employees in SRHRM systems (Shen and Zhu, 2011; Richards and Sang, 2019a). For multinational companies (MNCs), Shen (2011) adds an additional dimension of local sustainability contributor HRM practices, as SRHRM must extend to the treatment of labour employed in their value chain in other countries.

This approach to HRM very much echoes the principles of soft HRM philosophy, viewing employees as a significant stakeholder of the organisation, and using high commitment practices to foster desirable HR and employee outcomes. The SRHRM model address some

of the weaknesses identified in the high and low road approaches. An employer need only use legally compliant approaches to be considered high road, regardless of the impact of these practices on employees, as this approach focuses on the actions and outcomes for employers. SRHRM, which is an employee centred approach, identifies that it is not simply the presence of good HR practices that is required to result in positive outcomes for employees, but also an unpinning management philosophy which creates and sustains the conditions required for employees to thrive (Richards and Sang, 2019a). However, as already discussed, HRM in low paid work is largely driven by a hard HRM philosophy; the distinctions made between high and low road approach really only represent hard and harder forms of HRM. This raises the question as to whether a socially responsible approach to HRM is present in low paying sectors. And if it is not, what of socially irresponsible HRM?

While there is much recognition in the literature for irresponsible actions by employers, few authors have specifically conceptualised these actions as part of a specific HRM system. One such attempt is made by Richards and Sang (2019a), who argue for the existence of SIHRM through their qualitative study of employees experiencing in-work poverty. In a SIHRM system, like SRHRM, HR practices are underpinned by management philosophies, which have long term outcomes for employees. The true nature of management philosophies in SIHRM is often hidden, however employees become aware of these philosophies through the operationalisation of HR practices. Management philosophies in a SIHRM system are unsupportive, unfair, disrespectful, with a lack of transparency and accountability, and which do not seek to develop employees. These philosophies promote practices such as minimal compliance with employment regulation, limited avenues for employee voice, active non-compliance with employment law, bullying cultures and limited progression. These practices lead to negative outcomes for employees, such as poor well-being, stress, debt and poverty. The underlying philosophies foster the environment that sustains these poor outcomes for employees, potentially for long periods of time.

3.3 Hospitality and Social Care

Having considered HRM within low wage work more widely, it now falls to consider the sectors of concern to this thesis more specifically. The following sections will present a

summary of the key literature regarding the use of HRM within the hospitality and social care sectors.

3.3.1 HRM in the Hospitality Sector

The management of human resources is the dominant concern of hotel managers across the globe (Solnet, Kralj and Baum, 2015). Hospitality businesses tend to be service driven in nature and "employees become part of the product, represent the organisation, and help to form the image of the organisation"; therefore, there are strong arguments to say that the employee plays a critical role within service delivery and consequently organisational performance (Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010, p. 172). It is common for major hotel companies to make public statements that proclaim employees as their most valuable asset who are vital to the success of the organisation, promoting a "people first" philosophy whereby keeping staff happy will lead to increase customer satisfaction and improved organisational performance (Solnet, Kralj and Baum, 2015). This argument finds basis in softer HRM philosophy that employees can be a source of competitive advantage (Nickson, 2013). In the tourism sector more generally, larger organisations have taken a more professional and comprehensive approach to HRM and have invested in providing line managers with HR skills (Baum, 2007). For example, luxury hotels are more likely to have specialist HR managers to train line managers in HR matters; formalised and written HR policies, such as health and safety and grievance; and high commitment HRM practices, such as appraisal, training, and team building (Knox and Walsh, 2005). High-commitment HR practices have been shown to have a significant positive affect on the commitment and satisfaction of managers and supervisors; additionally, for supervisors this leads to improved organisational performance through improved customer service (Domínguez-Falcón, Martín-Santana and De Saá-Pérez, 2016).

However, despite some evidence of a high road approach, it is widely agreed that hard, low road HRM is the common approach across hospitality, and the sector suffers from a number of chronic HR related issues. (Lucas, 2002; Knox and Walsh, 2005; Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010; Nickson, 2013). These issues include: high turnover and poor retention of staff; a lack of training; skills shortages; difficulties attracting suitable and quality candidates, poor perceptions of the sector and career opportunities, and low morale (Enz, 2009; People 1st, 2015). Highly competitive pressures force businesses within the sector to compete on price,

which fosters a short term approach to HRM and a drive to keep labour costs to a minimum (Nickson, 2013). The minimum wage has become the accepted standard in the hospitality sector, and with a large supply of labour and lack of union presence, there is little incentive for employers to increase wages or improve the quality of work (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008; Lloyd, Warhurst and Dutton, 2013). In particular, hotels benefit from a loose labour market of women who have already acquired the foundational skills of the role in the home, allowing organisations to employ their hard approach of minimising labour costs (Powell and Watson, 2006). The lack of investment in HRM practices is also thought to have hindered skills development in employees (Lucas, 2002). These many issues are associated with the use of a combination of low road HR practices, including: low pay, antisocial working hours and shift patterns, breaches of employment regulation, poor work-life balance, limited progression opportunities, an overrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities in low status jobs, heavy relied on causal labour, high use of informal recruitment methods, and a general short term and cost cutting approach to HRM (Keep and Mayhew, 1999; Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010; Nickson, 2013; Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008).

Tight numerical control of labour is a strong feature of HRM in the hotel sector, with employers relying on contingent, part-time and temporary labour (Knox and Walsh, 2005). Hospitality businesses are often highly labour intensive, and the nature of the hospitality business is seasonal, therefore organisations seek a high level of flexibility in their workforce in order to respond to fluctuations in demand (Tracey, 2014). The use of casual labour within the hospitality sector is commonplace, allowing managers to adjust staffing levels quickly in line with business demands and to keep the cost of labour down (Davidson, McPhail and Barry, 2011). Additionally, organisations in the sector rely heavily on migrant workers to fill seasonal, entry level and low skilled positions, where it is more difficult to recruit from local labour markets due to the poor terms and conditions offered and the low status of the work (Joppe, 2012). In addition to numerical flexibility, casual employees are also expected to be mutli-skilled and provide functional flexibility, while permanent employees are also expected to provide a certain amount of numerical flexibility by being prepared to work irregular hours week to week (Knox and Walsh, 2005). Despite a large proportion of low skilled jobs, there also appears to be a shortage of skills within the sector, particularly in relation to soft skills. According to People 1st (2015), 21% of hospitality and tourism businesses report a skills gaps - particularly in customer service - which is thought to be as a result of poor retention within

the sector and employees being inexperienced in their role. It is predicated that these existing skills gaps could be made worse by the potential fall in migration from the EU as a result Brexit (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017).

The hotel sector has been affected by increasing financialisation, yet surprisingly, the influence of financialisation on HRM in the sector is an issue which is rarely raised in the literature. The growing trend since the 1990s among MNCs with global brands has been to divest from their physical hotel assets, growing their business through franchising, management contracts, and outsourcing their services (Mooney and Baum, 2019). Within the UK there is a large amount of financial investment in the hotel sector, with luxury and boutique hotels with four and five star ratings a popular choice for investors (particularly private equity groups). Hotel property attracts a huge amount of overseas investment, worth approximately £2.5billion in 2017, with investors attracted by long term fixed-leased hotel assets and a weak pound due to the uncertainty surrounding Brexit (Knight Frank, 2018). This increasingly financialised activity has lead to complex ownership configurations in hotels, often with multiple stakeholders. Melissen, van Ginneken and Wood (2016) identify that the ownership, operation and brand of a hotel may be split across several partners, with as many as five stakeholders involved, which include: the owners of the physical hotel property; the owner of the land on which the physical property sits; the owners entitled to the business profits; the operator that runs and manages the hotel; and, the owner of the hotel brand. The three most common configurations of owners in the sector are owner-operated[6], leased[7], or management contracts[8], which is the most popular option among MNCs and end high luxury brands[9] (Melissen, van Ginneken and Wood, 2016). However, as their ownership arrangements diversify, MNCs run the risk of having inconsistent HRM policies and discrepancies in terms of pay and employment conditions for employees across their brands (Mooney and Baum, 2019). The employment of staff and the associated HR practices will normally be an activity of the operator, however that operator may be subject to the demands of more powerful stakeholders within the ownership configuration. For example, the operator may manage the staff, but those staff will most likely be on the payroll

[6] Where the property and profits belong to the same owner.
[7] Where a landlord leases the property to an operator.
[8] An operator is paid to run the hotel by the owner that is entitled to the profits, who provides the property, but may not be the owner of the property.
[9] In any of these ownership configurations, a hotel brand may be leased or franchised to the operator, or the operator may also own the brand.

of the profit entity; despite claims from the industry that people are the most valued asset, it is highly questionable whether this same philosophy will be at the heart of decision making by all owners who will likely have conflicting priorities (Melissen, van Ginneken and Wood, 2016). Ultimately, hospitality organisational struggle to live up to the 'people first' mantra in terms of HRM practice, as the associated costs of investing in people are considered too high (Solnet, Kralj and Baum, 2015). All too often, hospitality organisations find themselves in highly competitive markets with tight profit margins and high shareholder expectations, for which a low cost workforce that is readily available and easily replaceable provides the remedy (Kusluvan *et al.*, 2010).

3.3.2 HRM in the Social Care Sector

HRM within the social care sector has been strongly shaped by political factors and has become increasingly marketized over the last 40 years. Marketisation refers to the increasing use and influence of market principles in management decision making, and is reflected in practices such as competitive tendering, joint ventures partnerships, subcontracting and outsourcing, as a way to reduce labour costs; it has been a powerful force over employment relations the public sector, due to competition for scarce resources (Sisson, 2010). These practices have increased reliance on precarious labour and has resulted in the creation of low quality jobs (Kalleberg, 2012). Various reforms made to the public sector under New Public Management after the Conservative government gained power in 1979 has led to the majority of social care being privatised or outsourced to the private and voluntary sector, as part of a neo-liberal agenda to shrink the size of the state (Davies, 2011). Later policies of the New Labour government, such as Best Value, further increased the state's reliance on the voluntary sector for the delivery of public services, by contracting the voluntary sector to deliver a wider range of public sectors (Davies, 2011; Cunningham, 2011). Best Value placed more emphasis on service quality and offered more security to the voluntary sector through longer funding contracts, with an ethos of partnership working with stakeholders; however, there were still competitive tensions for providers as local authorities still required efficiency savings (Cunningham, 2008d). More recently, the austerity measures of the coalition government to reduce the deficit and size of the state following the recession has been enacted through marketisation, often under the guise of 'Big Society', and has severely affected the funding of social care, leading to the degradation of employment conditions (Baines and Cunningham, 2015; Bach, 2012).

Outsourcing is now a major feature of the social care sector, and the nature of the purchaser-provider relationship has had significant implications for HRM, and for employment terms and conditions in the voluntary sector (Baines and Cunningham, 2015; Cunningham and James, 2017). Local authorities have responsibility for commissioning the delivery of care, and as the dominant funder, they greatly influence the employment terms for employees (Rubery and Urwin, 2011). Marchington et al (2004) describes how this has created a 'multi-employer' environment, where the funder (the local authority) in the outsourcing relationship has substantial influence over the pay and conditions of the staff employed by the service provider. Cunningham (2008c) argues that service providers are most vulnerable to the actions taken by funders where service providers have a high dependency on a single funder - such as the local authority - within a highly competitive market. Local authorities will often only pay providers for 'contact hours' where care is provided to a client, and will not pay for the full cost of employment, which includes costs such as holiday pay, training, sick leave, and recruitment, leaving the provider to make up the shortfall in funding (Rubery and Urwin, 2011).

A further change to the purchaser-provider relationship in social care has been the introduction of personalisation. One method of deficit reduction introduced under the Big Society Agenda has been to promote more cost efficient ways of delivering public services by adopting a 'user-centred' approach (Bach, 2012), and the move towards user-led services has been termed personalization (Needham, 2011). Under personalization, service users become the direct purchasers of their care services through means of an individual budget, which allows service users to choose and change their care providers rather than receiving services allocated by local authority or healthcare trust (Bach, 2012). Again, this represents the increased presence of marketisation within the sector, with the changing role of the clients of social care from users of services to purchasers. The use of personalisation, alongside austerity measures, has created great uncertainty and precariousness within the sector, as service users are free to switch providers; furthermore, funding authorities have used personalisation as a means of cost cutting, and the combination of local cuts and personalization have created greater job insecurity for employees, as well as work intensification (Cunningham, 2015). Personalisation has also been viewed by organisations as a potential opportunity to gain more business as clients have more choice; however, it brings staffing and recruitment difficulties with regards to the type of contract workers should be hired on, due to the lack of security associated with the funding (Cunningham and James, 2017). Personalisation has also threatened the job

security of workers, as the insecurity of funding associated with personalisation has caused employers to move away from the standard employment relationship to zero-hours and temporary contracts (Rubery and Urwin, 2011; Cunningham and James, 2014).

The result of various austerity measures for HRM has been downward pressure on employee terms and conditions, particularly in the voluntary sector. Traditionally the terms and conditions offered by voluntary organisations have mirrored that of the public sector, providing employees with additional benefits that encouraged commitment (Cunningham, 2008a); however, many organisations have implemented pay freezes and reduced pension benefits as a result of funding cuts which has created a struggle to maintain staff morale amidst the pressure of cutting costs (Cunningham, 2011; Cunningham and James, 2014; Cunningham and James, 2017). As a result, the quality of the standard employment relationship (i.e. permanent contracts, training and development, representation, standard working patterns) for employees in the lowest paying positions has deteriorated, with the use of zero hours and temporary contracts commonplace (Rubery and Urwin, 2011). Job demands have increased, work has intensified, and pressure has been placed on benefits such as unsocial hours payments, with organisations adopting controversial practices such as sleepovers to cut costs (Cunningham, 2008b). Downward pressure has been placed on terms and conditions including sickness and pension benefits in an attempt to make savings, as well as recruiting new, less skilled staff to lower paid positions (Cunningham and James, 2014).

Training and development is an important feature of HRM within the sector, which has come under pressure for various reasons. The social care skills councils across the UK have increased the regulation of workforce, and care organisations are under increasing pressure from the Care Commission to ensure that their workforce is accredited to NVQ/SVQ standards; however, cuts to training budgets have meant that many organisations have struggled to meet targets set by the Care Commission regarding accreditation of staff (Cunningham, 2008b; 2008d). Organisations have been forced to cut their budget for training and development in response to funding cuts, which has been linked to poorer levels of care and skills shortages (Cunningham, 2011; 2015). Reduced training budgets also compromises health and safety of workers; staff reductions and lone working has become more common as a result of budget cuts, leading to stress and the burnout of employees (Baines and Cunningham, 2011).

Additionally, HRM within social care organisations operating in the private sector has been affected by financialisation. Private sector organisations have increasingly been of interest to private equity firms, which use highly sophisticated forms of financial engineering and debt leveraging to build their investment portfolios (Sisson, 2010; Clark, 2016). These techniques are best suited to high risk/high return investments; however these techniques are being applied to adult care, which is a low risk, low return business, and therefore is often unable to yield the 12% capital return targets sought after by investors (Burns *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, these organisations will adopt low road HRM practices as a cost cutting measure when competing for local authority tenders. So, while financialisation is specific to private sector organisations, it has also had indirect consequences for the voluntary sector through increased competition which intensify the pressures of marketisation, creating a 'race to the bottom' for pay, terms and conditions, with consequences for the quality of care (Cunningham, 2008a). A prime example of this is Four Seasons, one of the UK's largest care home chains, operating 23,000 beds. Burns et al. (2016) describe the chain of buyers of Four Seasons as a 'pass the parcel game', where each seller made a profit as each buyer was able to pay a higher price, covering the cost via increase borrowing. By 2008, the debt associated with the chain amounted to £1.5 billion, with an annual interest charge over £100 million equating to approximately £100 per bed per week, an insurmountable burden (Burns *et al.*, 2016). There is also evidence that these highly financialised pressures have also affected the quality of care via HRM practices within the Four Seasons. A care home located in Widness, Millbrow Care Home, was found to have inadequate standards of care, poor leadership, insufficient levels of staffing and an over-reliance on agency staff (Quality Care Commission, 2017), and the home has since been taken over by the local authority after Four Seasons announced their plans to close following the inspection (Ford, 2017). This demonstrates how managers' commitments have been orientated by short term finance driven goals instead of product quality, with little regard for the welfare of their stakeholders, customers and staff included. This leads to highly irresponsible HRM practices by management, with a clear disregard for human dignity, and demonstrates a distance and disconnect between the objectives of a social care organisation and the objectives of private equity.

3.3.3 HRM in Low Paying Sectors: Pre-destined or a Choice?

The intense market pressures faced by organisations within the hospitality and social care sectors raises questions as to what extent employers have the agency to determine the HRM

practice that they use. Organisations in these sectors would argue that they would like to offer better terms and conditions to employees but are unable to do so. Highly financialised pressures from the hospitality sector (Melissen, van Ginneken and Wood, 2016), and the increasing presence of marketisation in social care (Cunningham and James, 2017), leave firms will little choice other than to do adopt a cost cutting approach to managing labour. Thompson (2011) argues convincingly that in a market economy dominated by such forces, HRM will not change unless duty-bound, and even where local manages would wish to make different choices, they are constrained from doing so. Organisations who are able to adopt something akin to the high road approach within low paying sectors tend to still be in private ownership, unrestricted by the shareholder model or marketisation and with the discretion to reinvest profits back into the workforce; it is therefore questionable whether the high-road approach is one that is generalizable or scalable (Osterman, 2018). Even in small, owner-managed firms, more often than not private ownership does not provide any assurance that high road practices will be used. Employers in small firms are often unaware of workers' rights, and both union density and trade union recognition are extremely low among small businesses is extremely low (Jack, Hyman and Osborne, 2006). Additionally, owners of small firms can struggle to break the cycle of low road employment practices where it is the industry norm. This is particularly true in the hospitality sector; a study of 448 restaurateurs across America, found that the majority were following a low road strategy of employing low paid and low skilled workers, and consequently faced problems with retention and recruitment, as well as a lack of skilled staff and poor standards of customer service (Enz, 2004). These employers recognised that low wages paid and the lack of health care benefits were insufficient for employees and that this needed to be improved to improve job quality; however, these employers were also caught in the dilemma of being unable to increase labour costs, whilst low road strategies were simultaneously costing them significantly in terms of recruitment and service standards (Enz, 2004).

That said, there is an extent to which these forces simply provide a smokescreen of sorts for employers to use SIHRM practices which are unethical and harmful to employees, under the justification that shareholders must profit. Richard and Sang (2019a) argue that despite the many contextual factors that cause low pay (including those outlined earlier in this chapter), the presence of SRHRM indicates that employers often have that capacity to prevent working poverty, but lack the mindset to do so; the authors conclude that it is the underlying philosophy

of HRM practice that is the main driving force which creates and sustains the conditions that lead to negative outcomes for employees in low paid work, such as poor well-being and in-work poverty. Findlay et al. (2017a) found in their case study of hospital pharmacies that despite facing significant constraints, employers have the choice and capacity to make positive improvements to job quality, particularly where these improvements will also help achieve organisational objectives. In their study of low paid jobs, Metcalf and Dhudwar (2010) found that from among relatively similar businesses in the same sectors who were subject to the same kinds of constraints, some employers were still able to offer greater job security to employees rather than operating a core-periphery model, demonstrating that employers have considerable choice in the jobs that they create. Importantly, these authors determined that the main differentiating characteristic of employers was the underlying ethos of management to treat employees fairly and provide decent work. What cases such as these do show is evidence that a high-road approach is possible and not just a 'pipe dream' within low paying sectors (Osterman, 2018). While firms may be constrained by these forces, to be ruled by them is choice: "Agency is possible: levels of job quality are not wholly structurally determined and employers facing similar market conditions can make distinctive choices" (Findlay *et al.*, 2017b, p. 16). Profitability will arguably always be the aim of firms, but the choice presented from the SRHRM perspective is whether profitability should be sought after to the detriment of other stakeholders. Avoiding negative outcomes for employees is often possible, yet the vision to achieve this is often lacking (Richards and Sang, 2019a). What is clear that any genuine attempt at high road HRM within low paying sectors (or indeed, any sector) requires a strong orientation from management to make ethical and moral choices about the treatment of their staff, if better outcomes and quality jobs are to result.

3.4 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has summarised some of the main contextual factors that have contributed to the growth of low wage work. The role of political, social and economic factors cannot be underplayed. Equally, powerful market forces including financialisation in the hospitality sector, and marketisation in the social care sector, have shaped the employment context substantially and placed constraints on HRM within these sectors. Additionally, this chapter has outlined the role that employers have played in shaping the environment of low paid work through HRM strategy. It has been argued that hard HRM is the reigning management philosophy, but that distinctions can still be made between a high and low road approach.

SRHRM and SIHRM are presented as an alternative lens through which the impact of HR practices on employee outcomes is of central concern. Underpinning these discussions has been the argument that while contextual factors play a significant role in shaping the employment context, choices with regards to HRM are not wholly predestined, and the underlying philosophy and orientation of management will ultimately guide the decisions made in relation to HRM. This underlying philosophy will in turn shape the employee experience through the choice of HR practices. Therefore, a better understanding of these philosophies and the choice of HR practices are required in more fully understanding the experience of low paid work.

In light of the above, the following research themes have been identified:

> What management philosophies underpin the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work, and how do these philosophies and practices compare?
>
> How do these HR practices affect the experience of well-being in low paid work?

Well-being, and how HR practices influence this, has not been discussed in depth yet. Additionally, the previous chapter identified the intersection between work and home life in low paid work, however, the role of HR practices in shaping this it is not yet clear. The next chapter will address these issues and provide the conceptual framework for this study.

4. The Conceptual Framework

The aim of this conceptual chapter is to identify the theories and concepts that explain well-being, and to provide a conceptual framework which ties together the various strands of this study. The previous chapters have discussed well-being and the experience of work, but so far well-being has not been fully defined or conceptualised. Given that exploring the experience of well-being in low paid work is the overall aim of this thesis, this chapter will open with a discussion of the theories surrounding well-being. As the second chapter highlighted, the impact of low pay on workers extends beyond their work life into their home life. Therefore, a conceptual model which considers both the work and home lives of workers is essential for understanding the full far-reaching experience of low wage work, and in understanding how low wages can affect well-being. While the JD-R model has been used extensively to investigate the experience of work, it will be argued that the W-HR model provides a stronger conceptual basis for this study, as this model considers the work home interface. However, as chapter three highlighted, the employer plays a significant role in shaping the nature of low paid low through HRM strategy. Therefore, it will be argued that the W-HR model has to be extended in order to conceptualise the employer's role in the processes involved in the work-home interface.

4.1 Defining Well-being

Well-being is a complex concept which is often poorly defined, and there is a lack of consensus surrounding the definition. One of the reasons why it is so difficult to pin down an exact definition of well-being is because it is studied in multiple disciplines, such as HRM, economics, psychology and sociology to name a few. The concept is also multi-dimensional in nature, with well-being thought to be physical, psychological and social (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007). This study has the added challenge of considering well-being in multiple environments, taking into account the home as well as the workplace.

Many academic authors and professional bodies (such as CIPD) refer to the definition given by the World Health Organisation, which defines well-being as: "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 2017). However, this is more a description of overall health, rather than of well-being itself; furthermore, this definition does not highlight the complexity or significance of the

concept (La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013). Several authors who have tried to define well-being have instead just described well-being, and definitions of well-being are often confused with measurements of the construct (Dodge *et al.*, 2012). As Lister (2015, p140) reflects, "measures are but imperfect attempts to operationalise definitions." For example, Ryan and Deci (2001, p144) in their attempt to define subjective well-being argue that it is comprised of "life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood, and the absence of negative mood, together often summarized as happiness." However, this definition only provides the measurements of subjective well-being, and little about the concept. Ryff (1995) also identifies six core components of psychological well-being, which are autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. But again, these components represent measures of psychological well-being rather than an explanation of what well-being actually is, and only relate to one dimension. Dodge et al. (2012) attempts to move beyond description, by defining well-being in terms of resources, challenges, and finding a point of equilibrium between the two (see figure five). A state of well-being is considered to be "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced" (Dodge *et al.*, 2012, p. 230). A challenge is an event that could disrupt a person's state of well-being, with the stronger the challenge, the greater the risk to well-being. However, each person will have a set of resources or skills which they can draw upon to meet challenges. Well-being is not the absence of challenges in one's life; in fact, challenges are required in order to for an individual to achieve well-being. Challenges provide stimulation for individuals, and successfully overcoming a challenge leads to development (Dodge *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, a state of well-being is considered to be when individuals possess enough resources with which to meet the challenges they are faced with.

Figure Five: Depiction of Well-being

Source: (Dodge *et al*. 2012)

This definition of well-being is helpful as it goes beyond a mere description of well-being as something that people experience or feel, to outlining the concepts involved in a state of well-being, and by introducing the idea of balance between demands and resources. Furthermore, this definition can be applied to the various dimensions of well-being including physical, social and psychological, and begins to demonstrate how different types of well-being might interact and overlap with each other. For example, a social resource might be required to meet a psychological challenge. However, even still it is questionable whether this really defines what well-being actually is and raises more questions. For example, who decides if balance has been achieved? If it is the individual, is well-being then the perception of the balance between demands and resources? Or is well-being a feeling that occurs when it is perceived that there is a balance?

Theories of well-being are better developed and go beyond descriptions of the concept by explaining the underlying processes (Kowalski and Loretto, 2017). Arguably, the key theory in understanding human stress and well-being is Hobfoll's (1989; 2002) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, as it "describes how people react to the stressors they encounter in their environment and how those encounters influence their well-being" (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012, p. 547). The key assumption of COR theory is that individuals are driven to accumulate, protect and maintain resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources are defined as "objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or that serve as a means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies" (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). Resources may be valuable to the individual, such as health or self-esteem, or may be considered valuable if they are a means to obtaining further resources, for example money (Hobfoll, 2002). Resources may also have symbolic value where they help people to define their identity (Hobfoll, 1989). When individuals lose these resources, or risk losing their resources, stress will occur as a result; however, where individuals have an abundance of resources they are likely to experience positive well-being (Hobfoll, 2002). Therefore, two key processes exist within COR theory: the process by which resource are lost which creates stress, and the process by which resources are gained, resulting in improved well-being. It is argued by Hobfoll (1989; 2002) that these processes are cyclic in nature, whereby the loss of resources leads to further resource loss, and the accumulation of resources leads to further gains in resources. Well-being is not explicitly defined, however Hobfoll (1989) states that stress is a reaction to an environment where an individual loses resources or is threatened

with the loss of resources. Additionally, Hobfoll (1989, p. 517) states: "When people develop resource surpluses, they are likely to experience positive well-being." Therefore, it is inherent in the theory that well-being and stress are reactions to the various demands and resources in their environments and are therefore subjective experiences.

4.2 The Relationship Between Well-being and HRM

The idea that well-being is a subjective experience is carried throughout the literature in employee well-being and in the conceptual models underpinning research in this field. Employee well-being is discussed extensively in the HRM literature, where there is an underlying assumption that HRM practice and employee well-being are linked. In this setting, discussion are usually more specifically focussed on employee well-being, defined by several authors as the overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work (Warr, 1987; Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007; Kooij *et al.*, 2013). Peccei et al. (2013) argue that the idea that HRM and well-being are linked is based on two key assumptions: firstly, the quality or perceived quality of employees' experiences at work significantly impacts their well-being; and secondly, that HRM practices and polices directly affect the quality of those experiences. In other words, it is the quality of experiences that create well-being, and these experiences are shaped by HR practices.

Resource based perspectives of well-being have been utilised extensively in understanding the experience of work. One theoretical model which has conceptualised well-being as an outcome of experiences in the workplace is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. According to the model, employee health and well-being outcomes are a result of the combination of job demands and job resources which they experience. Job demands are defined as the:

> physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, p. 312).

Therefore, demands are the requirements of the role and factors from the work environment which the individual must use their resources in order to satisfy. As such, job resources are defined as:

> those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are either/or: functional in achieving work goals; reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; stimulate personal growth, learning, and development. (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, p312).

Therefore, according to the JD-R model, "job demands are most likely to result in strain and reduced performance, whereas job resources are most likely to result in work engagement and excellent performance" (Bakker, 2015, p. 840). It is argued that HR practices can also be viewed as job resources and demands using JD-R model, which is how the relationship between HRM and well-being is conceptualised (Conway *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, the JD-R model explains how employees' experiences in the workplace, which are understood as demands and resources that are shaped by HR practices, can result in well-being or stress. COR theory provides a strong theoretical basis for the JD-R model, and for the assumption that employees experiences of the workplace affect their well-being (Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013).

Many studies have been conducted using the JD-R model to show how aspects of the work experience can lead to positive and negative outcomes for workers. The JD-R model represents two processes that take place in the workplace as a result of the mix of job demands and resources, which are health impairment (or job strain) as a result of high demands, and motivation where there is an abundance of resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). There is considerable evidence which links work demands to burnout and exhaustion. JD-R have been linked to employee absences, with job demands acting as a predictor of the duration of the absence through burnout (indicating health problems), and job resources as a predictor of the frequency of absence through organisational commitment, indicating motivation (Bakker *et al.*, 2003; Schaufeli, Bakker and Van Rhenen, 2009). The consequences of high demands for the employee are job stress and burnout (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001) which can lead to long term health problems such as chronic fatigue (Bakker and Geurts, 2004). Bakker and Geurts (2004) found that high job demands (specifically workload and emotional demands) and high work-family conflict require employees to exert more time and energy to meet these demands, making it more difficult for employees to manage their resources well, due to a depletion in personal resources. This in turn also negatively affects their work performance. Exhaustion and feelings of worry that develop as a result of high demands can spillover into the family domain, causing work-family conflict (Bakker and Geurts, 2004). Bakker et al. (2004) found that job demands such as work pressure and emotional demands are antecedents to burnout, which then

negatively affect role performance, whereas job resources such as autonomy and social support are antecedents of engagement, which positively affects role performance. Job resources have also consistently been found to positively relate to work engagement. Where employees have sufficient or abundant resources, this has a number of positive outcomes for employees, such as increased employee well-being, improved performance, increased motivation and job satisfaction (Bakker and Geurts, 2004). Job resources may be used by employees to buffer the harmful effects of job demands (Bakker *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, where resources are sufficient, some job demands have even been shown to improve performance because they provide challenging and meaningful work (Bakker, 2015).

The relationship between HRM, well-being, and organisational performance is somewhat contested within the literature. The mainstream HRM literature takes the perspective that HRM is good for both organisations and employees. Peccei et al. (2013, p. 20) terms this perspective as the 'optimistic' view, which argues that HRM improves the performance of both organisations and their employees, and it also has positive outcomes for the well-being of employees. Utilising HR practices such as training and development, job design, performance related pay and coaching are thought to improve organisational performance; additionally, these practices are thought to make work more fulfilling and satisfying for employees, which in turn increases their wellbeing (Clinton and van Veldhoven, 2013). Van De Voorde et al. (2012) argues that social exchange theory, as outlined by Blau (1964), explains why the use of high commitment practices results in better organisational performance. Employees perceive HRM practices as signs of trust and support from the organisation, and in turn, employees then chose to repay their employer with commitment, satisfaction and trust (Whitener, 2001) and also with increased engagement in their job and to the organisation (Saks, 2006). Therefore, in short, this argument for HRM considers there to be 'mutual gains' for both employees in terms of well-being and employers in terms of organisational performance (Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012).

Conversely, the critical perspective argues that instead of mutual gains, HRM has conflicting outcomes for organisations and employees. HRM is considered to only benefit organisations and that HRM has negative or even harmful consequences for employees and their well-being (Peccei, 2004). HRM seeks only to improve organisational performance, often to the detriment

of employees and their well-being (Clinton and van Veldhoven, 2013). Authors from the labour process tradition argue that high commitment and high involvement forms of HRM lead to the intensification of work, leading to stress (Godard, 2001), work overload and high levels of demands being placed on workers (Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley, 2000). High performance forms of HRM have come under high criticism. Osterman's (2000) analysis of American private sector organisations using HPWSs found there to be very little evidence of mutual gains for employees, finding that these practices were positively associated with layoffs, have no relationship to wage gains, and are associated with greater use of contingent labour. In practice, HPWSs are commonly associated with measures such as downsizing and de-layering (Boxall and Purcell, 2003) and whilst operating under the guise of an employee-centred approach, it would appear that in many situations HPWS are implemented as a cost saving strategy. Therefore, organisational performance and employee well-being are viewed as two distinct and separate goals, each of which are influenced by different HR practices (Boxall and Purcell, 2008). The practices that improve well-being may not always be the same as the ones which improve organisational performance (Peccei, 2004).

Furthermore, the multi-dimensional nature of well-being means that trade-offs may exist between the levels of well-being (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007). Where management practices are implemented to improve one area of employee well-being, other areas of well-being can be adversely affected. For example, efforts to redesign work by making work more meaningful, increasing task variety autonomy, and providing feedback have been shown to increase job satisfaction and improve psychological well-being; however, increasing the challenges of a job can also cause employees to experience stress, strain and fatigue, undermining their physical well-being (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007). Further to this, Van De Voorde et al. (2012) in their review of 36 quantitative studies found that the effects of HRM on well-being were not wholly consistent; overall HRM was found to have positive effectives on psychological and social well-being; however, HRM had a negative effect on employee health. Therefore, it would appear that some trade-offs in well-being exist.

4.3 The Work-Family Interface: Conceptualising the Link Between Work and Home

The JD-R model provides a useful starting point for understanding employee well-being, however, the model is limited, as it does not consider how the experience of work affects

employees home and personal lives. Low wage work has clear implications for workers that effect their well-being, such as poverty, however the JD-R model does not connect the demands and resources of low wage work to this outcome. Equally, resources and demands available to individuals outside of the workplace also have a bearing on their experience of work, but the JD-R model only considers that resources and demands available in the context of work. Therefore, at this juncture, it is useful to turn to the work-family literature, to extend the understanding of how work and home life are connected to well-being.

The connection between work and home or family life has been a critical issue for management researchers and psychologists, particularly as increasing individuals are taking on both work and home commitments (Bakker and Geurts, 2004; Edwards and Rothbard, 1999). Traditionally the work and family domains where viewed as two distinct entities that existed separately and which did not affect one another; however, the growth of research into work and family has shown that these domains are connected through the roles played by the individual in these domains, and through the processes experienced by the individual as a result (Lambert, 1990). The work-family literaute explores these different roles, and how participation in multiple roles can enrich people's lives, and also create situations of conflict for individuals.

The term 'work-family interface' is used extensively within this literature. A precise definition is rarely provided, but the work-family interface generally refers to the relationships and interactions between the different roles and domains in a persons' life, and how the boundaries between these roles are managed by the individual. It is argued that the extent to which work and family roles are linked will depend on the boundaries that exist between these roles. As such, role theory underpins most of the key concepts within the field, which views individuals as social actors, with every activity that people participate in falling under a role which has a set of behaviours and norms (Huda, 2016). Within the work and home domains, individuals will take on various different roles in each domain, such as employee, manager, parent or care-givers. Each role brings its own stressors and demands which the individual must manage and provides rewards which the individual may be able to use. Kinman (2016) argues that the boundaries that exist between work and family roles range on a continuum from integration to segmentation. Integration between work and family roles occurs where the boundaries between

two roles are flexible and permeable, and "where an individual's role identities are similar for the two roles"; however, segmentation occurs where the boundaries are inflexible and impermeable, and "when there is a high contrast between role identities for the two roles" (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006, p88). The degree to which individuals are able to successfully manage the boundaries between work and family life can have significant consequences for their well-being, as effective management of these boundaries has been shown to lead to increased well-being (Edwards and Rothbard, 1999).

Of course, the management of this boundary is no easy task. As such, the concept of spillover is one of the central ideas within the work-family literature, which attempts to explain the work-family interface. Spillover is defined as a process whereby "positive and negative feelings, attitudes, and behaviours that might emerge in one domain and are carried over into the other" (Googins, 1991, p. 9). Spillover has also been described as "the push of family life into work life and vice versa", and is thought to now occur more frequently now as a result of the increase of dual earner households and more women taking on paid labour in addition to unpaid domestic labour (Stevens *et al.*, 2007, p. 243). Spillover represents a transfer of experiences from one domain of life to another, and so the quality of experiences in one domain is influenced the quality of experiences in another (Lambert, 1990). This transfer of experiences can be either positive or negative in nature, and is a bidirectional process that can occur from work-to-home, or from home-to-work (Crouter, 1984; Grzywacz and Marks, 2000; Dilworth, 2004). Early research in the field largely focused negative spillover and the potential for paricipation in both work and family to create conflict; however, there is now a growing body of evidence demonstrating that participation in multiple roles can hugely enrich people's lives and improve well-being (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Spillover is therefore the central concept that explains how individuals experience the work and home domains, of which the two main perspectives are conflict and enrichment.

Participating in multiple roles can be a source of conflict for individuals when it becomes difficult for individuals to fulfil the expectations of each role. Work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict, whereby the demands of each role are incompatible, and so participation in one role makes the participation in another more difficult (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). There are three forms of conflict: time based, where time spend in one role makes participation

in another role more difficult; strain based, where the strain experienced in one role affect the participation in another role; and behaviour based, where the behaviours required in one role are incompatible with the expected behaviours of another role (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Carlson, Kacmar and Williams, 2000). The concept of conflict includes the processes of negative spillover, but also extends beyond these ideas. Several different theories have informed the development of the conflict perspective, including spillover, boundary and compensation theories, but it is argued that the main theory that underpins conflict is role strain theory (Demerouti, Peeters and Heijden, 2012). Role strain theory assumes that individuals have a limited set of resources with which to fulfil their roles, and the different roles in separate domains compete for these limited resources (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Grzywacz and Marks, 2000). The demands or stressors that individuals experience in one domain will deplete their personal resources, making it more difficult to meet the demands or stressors of another domain because there are less resources to draw upon to meet these demands (Kinman, 2016). Studies of conflict have identified some very serious consequences of this process. Empirical studies have identified work overload as an antecedent for work-family interference (Eby *et al.*, 2005; Byron, 2005). Overload is where the demands on time and energy from multiple roles are too great for the individual to carry out each role effectively, and interference is another term for conflict, where conflicting demands from each role make it more difficult to fulfil the requirements of each role (Voydanoff, 2002). Allen's et al. (2000) review of work-family conflict identified a number of ways in which conflict negatively affects work life, home life, and general well-being, through forms of job burnout and work related stress. Frone et al. (1996) found that both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict to be significantly and positively related to several negative health outcomes, including depression, poor physical health and high alcohol consumption.

Participating in various roles in life (also known as role accumulation) can also be hugely rewarding for individuals, as positive outcomes in one role can also lead to positive outcomes in another role (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). The concept of enrichment explains how participating in both the work and family domains can be of benefit to each role (Carlson *et al.*, 2006). Work-family enrichment is defined as "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role" (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006, p. 72). When positive experiences from one domain spillover into another domain, this spillover has been shown to enrich the individual's experiences in the other domain. However, enrichment

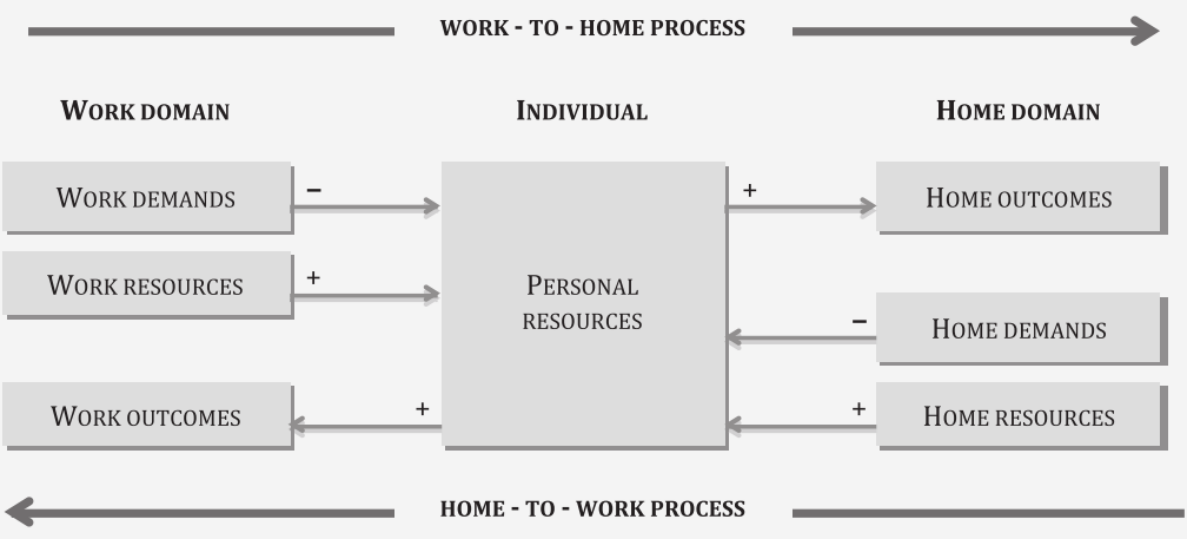
stipulates that experiences not only transfer from one domain to the other, but that these experiences improve the quality or performance of the other domain (Carlson *et al.*, 2006).

The second chapter of this thesis identified a small number of studies from the work-family literature that consider low paid work. Therefore, it should be noted that it is likely that the current work-family literature base does not fully reflect the experiences of low paid workers. For example, Byron's (2005) meta-analysis of over sixty quantitative studies concluded that there was a relatively low relationship between income and conflict. However, the majority of the studies included in this meta-analysis were of middle and upper class employees, and none of the studies specifically examined low income households or low paying occupations. This literature is therefore limited in capturing the complicated challenges that low wage employees face in managing the work-family interface; given the precarious nature of low paid work, and the financial hardship associated with low paid low, it seems more than likely that these workers will experience forms of work-family conflict as a result of low pay. Workers in low paid jobs arguably find themselves with higher demands and fewer resources with which to meet those demands (Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013; Odle-Dusseau, Mcfadden and Britt, 2014; Heymann *et al.*, 2002).

4.4 The Work-Home Resources Model

The conflict and enrichment perspectives have dominanted research in this field. However, rather than being thought of as competing prespectives, ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) argue that they can be thought of as two distinct processes which can occur simutaneously within the work-family interface, which can explain how individuals experience participation in both the work and home domains. In their Work-Home Resources model, ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) conceptualised the processes of conflict and enrichment in terms of resources, demands and outcomes, with the domains of work and home connected through the personal resources of the individual (see figure six). ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) use COR theory as the theoretical underpinning for the WH-R model, which is particularly relevant to this study, as COR theory is key theory in the area of well-being. The key concepts withing the WH-R model are personal resources, contextual resources, contextual demands and outcomes.

Figure Six: The Work-Home Resources Model



Source: (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012)

4.4.1 Personal Resources

The role of personal resources is a crucial aspect of the work-family interface, as it is through the personal resources that the work and home domains are connected, providing the pathway for conflict and enrichment to flow from one domain to the other (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012). Hobfoll (2002) makes the important distinction between resources that are located within the individual (personal), and those which are located within the individual's environment (contextual). Additionally, ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) identify resources as either volatile or structural in nature. Volatile resources are things like time, physical energy or mood, which can only be used once and when available, and can be temporal in nature. Structural resources are more durable in nature and can be used more than once, such as physical assets like a home or vehicle. Personal resources originate from the individual themselves and include things like personality traits and energies (Hobfoll, 2002). Personal resources have been shown to mediate the relationship between job resources and work engagement, suggesting that job resources can be used by employees not only to fulfil job demands, but also to help to build personal resources (Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007). This is consistent with Hobfoll's resource gain spiral, whereby the accumulation of resources in turn creates further resources. Demerouti and Bakker (2011) argue that the level of personal resources an individual has can affect the way in which job demands and resources are managed, and the following outcomes. The authors propose that employees with low personal resources in jobs with low job resources are more vulnerable to burnout where there are high job demands, and that employees are more likely to have positive outcomes where they have a

high level of personal resources where job demands and resources are high. A person's level of personal resources may explain why some people are more able to cope with certain demands than others, irrespective of income.

A further categorisation of personal resources is key resources. These are personality traits which individuals use to manage and make best use of other resources in response to demands (Hobfoll, 2002). Key resources are thought of as the more stable and enduring of the personal resources, such as optimism, self-efficacy and social power, as opposed to other personal resources which may be more volatile in nature, such as health (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012). Within the W-HR model, key resources are thought to act as a buffer between the work and home domains. It is argued that key resources explain why some individuals are more able to cope with stress than others, as possessing more key resources makes individuals more able to deal with stress, able to make better use of the resources they have available, and better are gaining more resources.

4.4.2 Contextual Resources

Contextual resources are external to the individual and found in their social context. The concept of resources has been researched extensively in the work domain, particularly in research using the JD-R model, however the concept of contextual resources can also be applied to the home domain, and there is evidence to support this. In the home domain, contextual resources may include physical resources such as a property, or less tangible resources like social support. Contextual resources in home such as family support has been shown to help individuals with a low level of personal resources (Tement, 2014). A further categorisation of contextual resources is macro resources. These resources are "the larger economic, social, and cultural system in which a person is embedded" (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012, p. 548). Macro resources can include things like public services, social equality, culture and welfare. The quality of macro resource available to the individual will determine the extent to which the individual has to use other resources. These resources provide context to the individual, however, as these resources exist outside of the control of the individual, these resources are normally more stable than contextual resources.

4.4.3 Demands

The concept of demands is based on resource drain theory, which stipulates that individuals only have a limited supply of personal resources; as a result, using resources to meet the demands of one role will reduce the resources available to meet the demands of other roles (Kinman, 2016; Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2006). Therefore, it follows that demands are activities that require an individual to use their resources to fulfil. In the work domain, demands have been more thoroughly conceptualised and tested using the JD-R models. Demerouti et al. (2001) relates demands to external factors – also known as stressors – which affect the 'cognitive-emotional-environmental system' of an individual, which can either create stress or a state of well-being or stress, depending on what resources the individual can access to deal with these stressors. When resources are limited, or job demands require highly energetic resources, job demands are likely to cause strain and reduced performance at work (Bakker, 2015). Therefore, demands are thought to be the sources of conflict in the work-family interface.

The concept of demands is not exclusive to the work domain and can be applied to other social contexts such as the home. Voydanoff (2004, p. 398) defines demands as "structural or psychological claims associated with role requirements, expectations, and norms to which individuals must respond or adapt by exerting physical or mental effort." Job demands have been categorised as quantitative demands (i.e. work overload), emotional demands and cognitive demands, (i.e. sustained mental effort) (Bakker *et al.*, 2011; Peeters *et al.*, 2005). However, an empirical study by Peeters et al., (2005) found that demands experienced in the home can also be categorised as quantitative, emotional and mental. Therefore, ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012, p. 549) argue that stressors can be defined as contextual demands, which are the "physical, emotional, social, or organizational aspects of the social context that require sustained physical and/or mental effort."

While the traditional perspective views demands as a resource drain, where resources are plentiful, the impact of demands is likely to be less, and some demands are thought to foster work engagement and performance (Bakker, 2015). Not all demands cause a drain on resources; in studies of job demands, some have been found to generate positive outcomes and resources, such as work engagement and well-being. This relates back to the earlier definition

of well-being from Dodge et al. (2012), which argued that well-being is the equilibrium of challenges are resources, and that 'challenges' were necessary for well-being. For example, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2005) found that cognitive demands (i.e. sustained mental effort) were negatively associated with burnout and positively associated with work engagement, for which they give the explanation that cognitive demands were experienced as challenging (as opposed to demanding) for the participants, thereby increasing engagement in work and reducing feelings of burnout. In their longitudinal study, Mauno et al. (2007) found that there was a positive correlation between time demands and engagement, which was unexpected, and therefore suggested that time demands can act as a job resource, provided they are not extreme. Mauno et al. (2007) conceptualise a lack of resources as a hindrance in meeting job demands. Van Den Broeck et al. (2010) in their quantitative study argued that there are two types of job demands: those that hinder employees by causing strain on their health and functioning, and those that require energy, but which challenge, motivate and stimulate employees. Their study found that job hindrances positively correlated with exhaustion, and negatively with vigour, and therefore impacted negatively on health. Conversely, job challenges correlated positively with psychological well-being and did not cause exhaustion. This suggests that not all demands are experienced in the same way.

4.4.4 Outcomes

Outcomes are the resulting product of the individuals' attempt to balance demands with resources. Stress and well-being can be conceptualised as the outcomes of individuals attempts to manage the demands and resources of a domain; well-being will occur when an individual is able to adequately balance demands with resources (Dodge *et al.*, 2012) and where there is a perecieved or actual lack of resources to meet demands, there is the potential for stress (Arnold *et al.*, 2016). Having insufficient resources to meet demands is thought to result in several negative outcomes, such as stress, whereas the balancing of demands with resources is thought to produce a number of favourable outcomes, such as well-being. Various other outcomes that may result are identified in the W-HR model. ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) point to Cohen and Bailey (1997) to identify three other types of outcomes which are incorporated into the W-HR model: performance, behaviour and attitudinal. Performance in the work domain would be improvements to efficiency or quality of work; in the home domain, this could represent realising a personal goal. Behavioural outcomes in the work domain might be the level of absence. In the home domain, behavioural outcomes are things like availability

at home. Attitudinal outcomes in the work domain include job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and employee well-being; in the home, this may represent relationship quality. All of the outcomes posed by ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) are positive outcomes, and while it is likely that there would be positive outcomes as a result of work-family enrichment processes, this overlooks the possible outcomes of conflict process.

Other literature in the work-family domain identifies other kinds of outcomes, including physical and psychological health outcomes, work outcomes and family outcomes (Eby *et al.*, 2005). Work outcomes have been researched extensively using the jobs demands-resources model. Positive work outcomes include work engagement and job satisfaction. Job resources have been shown to be a predictor of work engagement, suggesting that work engagement is a positive outcome as a result of an abundance of job resources (Mauno, Kinnunen and Ruokolainen, 2007). Negative work outcomes include burnout, which has been shown to lead to other negative outcomes, indicative of the loss spiral outline in COR theory. Demerouti and Bakker (2011) review of the JD-R model identified that burnout has been linked to various negative mental health outcomes and may also pose a risk to physical health, and that burnout has also been linked to increased likelihood of hospitalisation as a result of poor mental health, cardiovascular disorders and musculoskeletal pain. These negative health outcomes develop over an extended period of time as a result of exposure to chronic demands. Therefore, while some outcomes may occur as a result of short term processes, other outcomes will develop as a result of long term processes, such as health problems due to chronic demands. A further negative work outcome is personal debt is often creates a significant spiral of resource loss. Where an individual cannot afford their debt repayments and then borrow more money to repay pre-existing debts, this pattern then reproduces itself when the individual is unable to service the new debt. More colloquially referred to as ‘robbing Peter to pay Paul’, this cycle can then cause significant outcomes in the work domain. Individuals may be stressed and preoccupied about their financial situation at work or may struggle to afford to attend work if cash flow is interrupted by debts.

4.4.5 Processes Involved in the Work-Home Interface

ten Brummelhuis and Bakker use COR theory to explain the how the management and interaction of demands and resources create the processes of conflict and enrichment, and the

resulting outcomes, by applying the loss and gain spirals in COR theory to the processes of conflict and enrichment. Contextual demands experienced by indviduals in either demain are a potential source of conflict, as these demands drain the personal resources of the individual; this leaves less personal resources available to the other domain, which may limit the outcomes in the other domain through a lack of resources. This reflects the loss spirial outlined in COR theory, whereby the loss of resources can lead to further loss, given that there are less resources availabe to cope with any demands. In the process of enrichment, contextual resources are thought to build personal resources. Contextual resources from either domain can develop the personal resources of the individual, which subsequently may improve the outcomes of the other domain as a result of increased personal resources. The accumulation of resources leads to further gains in resources, thus creating a gain cycle. Work-to-home enrichment has been shown to build and strengthen key personal resources of individuals, such as persistence in meeting goals and resilience to stress; this has been attributed to the upward resource spiral that occurs when resources are accumulated (Russo, 2015). Personal resources are therefore thought to be the key mechanism through which the management of these processes across different domains occurs. The contextual demands and resources from either domain are thought to either respectively deplete or increase the personal resources of the individual, which can potentially affect the outcomes in either domain. In this model, personal resources act as the link between the contextual demands and resources experienced in the work and home domains. Indivduals with more key resources are less likely to experience work-home conflict and more likely to experience work-home enrichment, as these resources reduce the negative impact that contextual demands can have on personal resources, and strengthen the relationship between contextual and personal resources.

Using COR theory, the model also shows how demands and resources affect individuals over extended periods of time, using the loss and gain cycles. Long term processes are explained through structural demands and resources. ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) argue chronic, structural demands from work or home require the individual to continuely use their personal resources, causing a depletion of resources. This depletion of personal resources can eventually lead to a depletion of structural personal resources, such as health. On the otherhand, the availability of structural contextual resources in one domain can build the personal resources of individuals through a gain cycle. Over time, this aids individuals in achieving their long term goals in the other domain, as a result of increased structural personal resources. Short

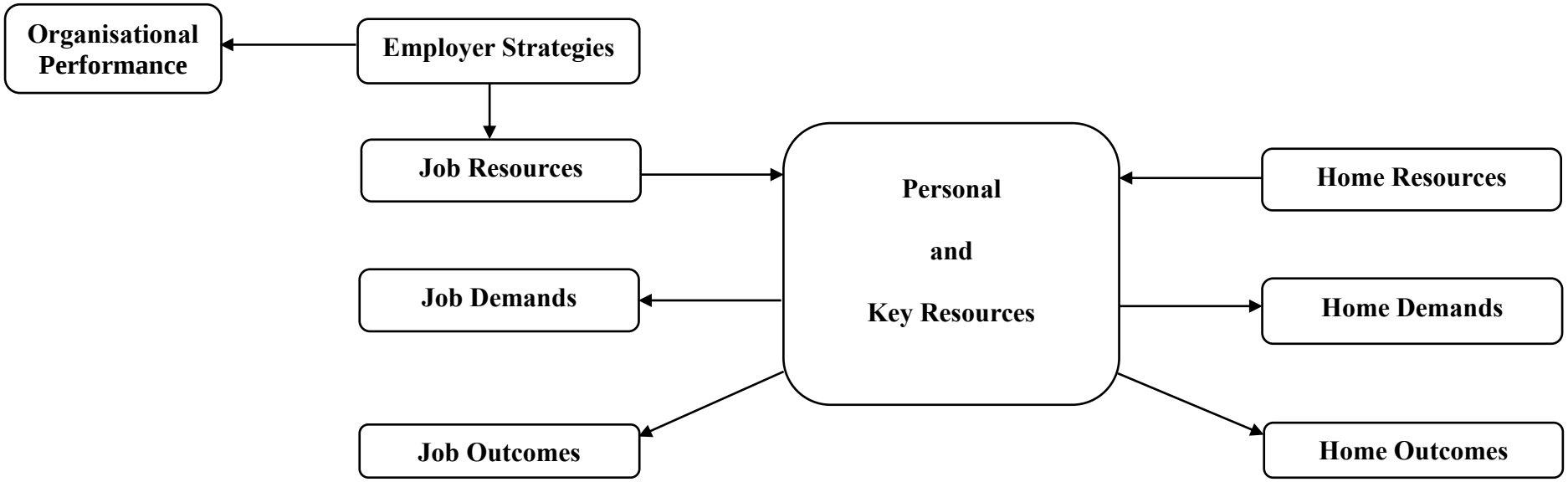
term processes are explained via volatile resources and demands. These processes affect the outcomes of each domain on a day to day basis. The availabilty of volatile resources builds volatile personal resources, such as time or energy. These resources are immediately available to the other domain. Conversley, temporal demands drain the volatile personal resources of an individual, impacting the outcomes of the other domain. For example, caring for a sick child can cause loss of sleep, leaving less energy available to for the work domain.

4.5 Extending the Model

The WH-R model provides a strong conceptual basis for understanding how the work and home domains are connected. The previous chapter outlined the role of the employer in shaping the nature of low paid work through choice of HRM strategy. It follows that working conditions will have consequences for the well-being of employees. However, the WH-R model does not fully address the role of the employer in shaping the employee experience. Therefore, this model needs to be extended further, to fully capture this complex environment.

The final point to add to this framework is to return to the role of the employer within the WH-R model. This chapter outlined the relationship between HRM and well-being, and argued that HR practices affect the quality of the employee experience by shaping job resources and demands. Figure seven proposes an extended version of the W-HR model, which accounts more explicity for the role of the employer. This conceptual framework also maps out how the vaious demands, resources and outcomes disucssed in this and previous chapters fit into to the WH-R model, and provides a map for exploring and understanding the experience of well-being. This model demonstrates the cyclical nature of the work-family interface, the constant transaction of resources and demands, and the various processes that may be at play at any given time such as conflict (resource loss) and enrichment (resource gain).

Figure Seven: The Conceptual Framework



Concept	Examples
Organisational Performance	KPIs, Profits, Revenues, Sustainability,
Employer Strategies	High and low road practices, SRHRM and SIHRM
Personal and Key Resources	Personality, Skills, Social network, Health, Self-esteem, Time, Energy, Education, Cultural and social capital
Job Resources	Training, Social support, Progression, Autonomy
Job Demands	Physical labour, Emotional labour, Overload, Cognitive, Work pressure
Job Outcomes	Work related well-being, Job satisfaction, Commitment, Stress and burnout, Absenteeism
Home Resources	Social support, Assets – Income, home, vehicles, etc, Leisure activities
Home Demands	Bills and expenditure, Childcare and caring responsibilities, Emotional demands
Home Outcomes	Home related well-being, Stress and burnout, Debt

Furthermore, by identifing the role of the employer in the experience of well-being, this also outlines how the employer is connected to the outcomes of the employee in the work and home domains, including poverty. This model is not intended to be linear, but rather to reflect the messiness of day-to-day life experiences, and from this model, processes can be mapped out which demonstrate how employers are both directly and indirectly connected to the outcomes of the employee, through the ways in which employers determine and control the resources and demands available to and experienced by the employee.

4.6 Chapter Conclusions and Research Questions

The literature review identified a widely debated discourse surrounding the relationship between HRM and well-being. There is the mutual gains perspective, which argues that HRM is good for both organisational performance and for the well-being of employees (Guest, 2002; Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013). The other side of the argument, which is grounded in labour process theory, argues instead that there are conflicting outcomes; HRM may positively impact performance, but does not benefit the well-being of employees and is harmful to employees (Keenoy, 1997; Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley, 2000; Godard, 2001; Legge, 2005). Even when management practices are designed to improve performance through improving well-being, this often leads to trade-offs in between the different dimensions of well-being; management practices that improve one type of well-being may consequently decrease another area of well-being (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007). In their systematic review, Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven conclude that the literature supports ideas that HRM may have mutual gains in terms of subjective well-being, but there are conflicting outcomes for health physical well-being. As the majority of research carried out has been quantitative in nature, there is a lack of research that explores "*how* and *why* HRM leads to specific types of employee well-being and organisational performance" (Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012, p. 402). Peceei (2004, pp. 15-16) reflects on the difficulties in research this area as:

> the phenomena involved are multi-faceted and complex and, therefore, difficult to both conceptualise and measure precisely… It leads one to question whether it really is possible to capture and understand the full complexity of the systems one is trying to study - the complex reality, in other words, of what goes on in organisations.

Given the issues discussed in making assumptions about what is a demand or resource, it is therefore argued that a shift in focus is required in the understanding of the HRM-well-being relationship, from asking how HR practices translate in to job demands and resources (Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013), to asking how employees experience HR practices as demands and resources.

Additionally, the conceptual framework provided in this chapter is useful for examining questions around the well-being of low paid workers, as the it outlines how the processes of well-being occur across the work-home interface. This model shows how the complex mix of various resources and demands from all aspects of life interact, to either produce well-being through the building of personal resources, or stress thorugh the depletion of personal resources. The model also demonstrates how stress and well-being can produce various outcomes in different areas of life. The spirals of resource gains via the process of enrichment and resource loss via the process of conflict are also helpful for understanding low pay and its long reaching affects of peoples lives. The proposed model in figure seven knits together the concepts from the wide ranging theories discussed, providing the map that will be used to nagivate the rest of this study. Thus, the employee experience of work and well-being is understood in terms of demands, resources and outcomes, with the intersection of work and home life connected via personal resources.

As such, the research themes from the previous literature chapters have been refined into the following research questions:

1. What management philosophies underpin the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work, and how do these philosophies and practices compare?
2. What is the experience of low paid employees of managing job demands and resources across the work-home interface?
3. How do HR practices influence the employee experience of well-being across the work-home interface in low wage work?
4. How do these experiences compare across hospitality and social care sectors?

5. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methods used to address the research questions of this study. Firstly, the research questions of this study will be summarised. The researcher's choice of a pragmatism as a philosophical foundation will then be argued. The chapter will then move on to discuss the justification for a qualitative approach using a multiple case study strategy, situated within the hospitality and social care sectors. The choice of semi-structured interviews at various levels of the organisation will be discussed. The chapter will then move on to explain the rationale for data analysis, the ethical considerations of this study, and the limitations of the selected methodology.

5.1 Research questions

The research questions for this study were crafted as a result of the literature review. These questions were initially developed in the first two literature chapters and refined following the conceptual chapter. This gave rise to the following research questions:

1. What management philosophies underpin the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work, and how do these philosophies and practices compare?
2. What is the experience of low paid employees of managing job demands and resources across the work-home interface?
3. How do HR practices influence the employee experience of well-being across the work-home interface in low wage work?
4. How do these experiences compare across hospitality and social care sectors?

5.2 Research Philosophy

> Sophie hurried to the gate and looked inside the green mailbox… She tore it open and fished out a note... *Where does the world come from?* It said. I don't know, Sophie thought. Surely nobody really *knows*. And yet- Sophie thought it was a fair question. For the first time in her life she felt it wasn't right to live in the world without at least *inquiring* where it came from (Gaarder, 1995, pp. 6, emphasis in original).

In the first few pages of Gaarder's (1995) history of philosophy, fourteen-year-old Sophie is faced with two somewhat disturbing questions: who are you, and where does the world come from? Attempting to answer these questions, and contemplation of what can be known and how it can be known, challenges the researcher to consider their own philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality. Herein lies the crux of the existential crisis that vast numbers of past, present and future doctoral candidates within the social sciences will invariably experience. Understanding these assumptions and philosophical position is essential for the researcher in developing their own reflexivity – that is, the ability to question and critically analyse their own thinking (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Often researchers will simply "inherit" research philosophies from their field, colleagues, and teachers, without given much thought as to how or why a certain philosophy should be adopted, when it is in fact a choice; understanding the implications of this choice is necessary for the practice of responsible scientific enquiry, in developing researcher reflexivity, and for engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007). As such, the next section will argue that Pragmatism is the most appropriate research philosophy to adopt for this study and will outline the philosophical assumptions of the paradigm.

5.2.1 A Pragmatic Approach

The foundation of pragmatism is generally attributed to classical writers such as Peirce, James, Dewey and Mead (Elkjaer and Simpson, 2011; Biesta and Burbules, 2003), with some contemporary authors including Rorty, Bernstein and Simpson. However, what constitutes pragmatism often varies between pragmatists (Van de Ven, 2007, p. 54) and as Ulrich (2007, p. 1109) puts it, "…there are probably as many pragmatisms as pragmatists." Lovejoy (1908) proclaimed there to be as many as thirteen different versions of pragmatism, while Bernstien (2010, p. 5) remarked that it was "far too conservative in discriminating *only* thirteen pragmatisms." The existence of so many views on the subject have led some to suggest that pragmatism has no clear or distinct philosophical parameters (Creswell, 2009); however,

Simpson (2017) rejects this claim and instead argues that 'Classical Pragmatism' is a " thoroughly elaborate philosophy which accounts for the social experience of living and working together".

Modern philosophy is strongly influenced and shaped by the Decarsten principle of mind and matter, and so the more established paradigms, such as positivism and constructivism, differentiate based on ontology (what can be known) and epistemology (how can it be known). Burrell and Morgan (1982) surmise these distinctions well in their categorisation of paradigms. The central question of epistemology concerns how the immaterial mind can gain knowledge of the material world, and modern philosophy usually assumes a separation – a dualism – of mind and matter, or the objective and subjective (Biesta and Burbules, 2003). However, Classical Pragmatism rejects the dualistic characterisation of ontology and epistemology as distinct, opposing categories, and instead views these positions as inseparable (Simpson, 2017). This principle can be traced back to Dewey (1917), who rejected the idea of epistemological dualisms, and instead viewed knowledge as the interaction between people and their environment, proposing that the transaction of "organism and environment is an active, adaptive, and adjustive process in which the organism seeks to maintain a dynamic balance with its ever-changing environment" (Biesta and Burbules, 2003, p. 10). Dewey considered the mind and matter to be in transaction, viewing this as a whole. People are already connected to reality, unlike dualistic philosophies which separate 'the immaterial mind and the material world'; however, this reality only becomes clear to us through our actions (Biesta and Burbules, 2003, p. 10). Pragmatism assumes the existence of an objective and independent reality out with the human mind; however, knowledge is a "construction that is located in the organism-environment transaction itself", and it can therefore be argued that our knowledge is both constructed and based on an objective reality (Biesta and Burbules, 2003, p. 11).

Pragmatism differentiates itself from other philosophies through its focus on action and everyday experience, with knowledge valued in so far as it can make practical improvement to everyday life (Korte and Mercurio, 2017). Knowledge is gained through experience and action, and it is through our constant interaction with the natural and social world that we continuously construct and re-construct our understanding of both the world and of our own self (Elkjaer and Simpson, 2011). Notions of pragmatism happily accept that there will be situations where

an objective claim of reality can and should be made; where a constructed reality must be deconstructed; and when subjective perspectives can lead to a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Padgett, 2008). The idea of experience is a central theme within the pragmatist philosophy, which Elkjaer and Simpson (2011, pp. 15-16) describe as define as a "…temporal flux that is located in the living present, and that is informed by the interpreted past and the projected future." Individuals find themselves positioned between the past and future, and so their understanding in the present is how they have interpreted the past and their anticipation about the future. Essentially, pragmatism asserts that knowledge is gained through our existence in a real world, where we continuously construct and reconstruct our understanding of that world based on our experience in it. The dualistic assumptions of modern philosophy with regards ontology and epistemology are therefore rejected, as they are considered inseparable positions (Simpson, 2017) and any attempt to seek out knowledge while dealing with these issues separately provides only an impartial and incomplete representation of knowledge (Dewey, 1917).

Pragmatism also distinguishes itself from the traditional philosophies in its approach to the research process, which tend to be based on either inductive or deductive reasoning. Pierce (1903) argued that it was not possible to come to a new idea or theory by deduction or induction alone, and that only a combination of these approaches would result in the generation of new theory. For the Pragmatist, the research process is one of inquiry, which is a process of logic that uses inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning. Inquiry begins with the sense that something is wrong or doubt, which is structured into a 'problem of some sort'; this doubt is situated in experience, where expectations of what we think will happen proves not to be so (Simpson, 2017, p. 60). Where the deductive approach would identify a known theory and test it with data, and the inductive approach would begin with data before moving to theory, in an abductive approach, the researcher moves back and forth between theory and the data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). An existing theory is identified, a surprising phenomenon is observed out with this theory and consequently, a new theory is proposed to explain this phenomenon (Peirce, 1903). This process allows the researcher to deal with surprising or unexpected findings from data and establishes the link from practice to theory (Simpson, 2017). Abductive reasoning is therefore an inherently creative process, and many would assert that the process of abduction is necessary if the researcher is to introduce new ideas and generate new theory (Suddaby, 2006).

Returning the heart of Sophie's quandary, this section has attempted to answer how we can come to know the world in which we live. The assumptions of Pragmatism provide a close epistemological fit with the overarching aims of this research. Pragmatism is presented as a philosophy concerned with social experience, situated in the tension between the material world and the immaterial mind. A key proposition of Pragmatism is that knowledge is gained through lived experience of the participant with their environment; given that the research questions of this study are primarily concerned with the experience of work from the perspective of low paid workers and understanding the how context of work affects the experience of well-being, Pragmatism offers a uniquely fitting lens through which to understand that experience. Unlike positivistic notions of reality, which conceptualise experience as the objective and measurable outcomes of action, pragmatism views reality as the transaction of the participant with their context, which is interpreted based on past, present, and anticipated experiences. A perspective such as this is ideally placed to underpin this study.

5.2.2 The Qualitative Approach

Pragmatism is often associated with a mixed methods approach, making use of both quantitative and qualitative data; however, Pragmatism does not favour any particular research design or method, and instead places value on the method which will best explore the practical world, and the method(s) which are most suited to answering the research questions (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the most important consideration for the pragmatist is to select the method and type of data that will best serve to answer the research questions.

For this study, a predominately qualitative approach was considered most appropriate for answering the research questions and in addressing methodological gaps identified in the extant literature. Firstly, the research questions of this study ask for an examination of the experience of well-being in the context of low paid work. The research questions were not concerned with the measurement of the concepts, but rather how these concepts are experienced by the participants in their daily life. At the very core, qualitative methods place emphasis on understanding the experiences and of participants and the meanings that participants attach to those experiences (Merriam, 2009). Using a qualitative method allowed for a rich and detailed exploration of the experience of work and gives preference to the lived experience of the participants (Beigi and Shirmohammadi, 2017).

Furthermore, using a qualitative approach addresses a large methodological gap uncovered in the literature. Much of the studies cited in the literature review from the various fields is quantitative in nature, and there have been calls from within for more qualitative work. One such area is the literature surrounding the relationship between HRM and employee well-being. In their systematic review of research into this relationship, Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven (2012) identify a need for more qualitive research to provide a better understanding of the linkages between HRM and well-being, and for more exploration of the how and why HRM strategies lead to specific forms of well-being and performance. From the work-family tradition, there have been calls from more qualitative research to address criticisms within the field, including weak, underdeveloped theory and a distinct lack of studies which feature low income participants and low status jobs (Casper *et al.*, 2007; Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013; Beigi and Shirmohammadi, 2017). In particular, the literature examined on well-being has been predominantly quantitative. This is unsurprising, given that the majority of literature on well-being was taken from the fields of psychology and organisational behaviour, which have long standing positivist roots and well-established quantitative methodologies (Troth and Guest, 2019). This literature has been useful in building a conceptual basis for this study and in identifying the sensitizing concepts with which to understand the processes of how well-being works. However, this methodology largely considers well-being from the point of view of what is observable and what can be measured. This means that there is a lack of research into the experience of well-being, despite it being in its very nature, a subjective experience. Healy-Ogden and Austin (2011, pp. 88-93) reflect in their account of researching well-being that "Well-being is not found outside of a person; instead, it is experienced deep inside at one's very core… we found well-being to be inherent in life and therefore lived." From the Pragmatist perspective, the treatment of well-being as an objective and measurable phenomenon in the research would provide only a partial, over simplified representation of the construct. Therefore, research from a pragmatist perspective that uses qualitative methods can serve to further knowledge in this area, by unpicking and exploring how the reality of the phenomenon is lived and experienced.

Finally, few studies use a multi-stakeholder perspective or give enough voice to the employee perspective. This is particularly so in the field of HRM, where research has preferenced the employer perspectives (Lloyd, Warhurst and Dutton, 2013; Guest, 2017; Beer, Boselie and Brewster, 2015; Richards, 2020). This research uses a qualitative approach to diverge from

the commonly investigated organisational perspective, to give voice to an under-represented group in the literature and explore the complexities of how well-being is formed and experienced. A qualitative method allows for this complexity to be explored and unpicked in a way that a quantitative method could not capture and allowed for a higher level of theorising to occur (Beigi and Shirmohammadi, 2017).

5.3 The Research Design: Case Studies

A case study research design was selected for this study, as it was well suited to the proposed research questions in several ways. Firstly, case studies allow the researcher to explore a current phenomenon within a live context, and to explore how and why a phenomenon has occurred (Yin, 2018). The research questions of this study call for an in-depth exploration of the work-family interface in the specific context of low paid work in two sectors. Within the research questions, there are phenomenon to be explored and a specific context. The research questions also ask how a phenomenon has occurred, which is well suited to a case study methodology. Secondly, case studies are a flexible research design rather than a prescribed method, and are well suited to qualitative methods (Hartley, 2004). Finally, the use of case studies allow for multiple perspectives to be explored and for various data sources to be used, producing contextually rich and meaningful interpretation (Padgett, 2008). As the research questions specifically ask for the perspectives of management and of low paid employees, exploring these perspectives in their context will help to produce a rich interpretation of how low pay can impact the work-home resources model. Furthermore, the case study design also allows for other perspectives that are relevant to the research questions to be explored. The literature review identified that in low wage work, social support from supervisors and line managers can act as an important resource for the well-being of workers; therefore, it is prudent to also explore the perspective of line managers, to gain a wider understanding of the issues surrounding well-being.

It is important to make clear from the outset what constituted the cases in this research. A case is simply a bounded system where the object of interest is researched in depth within a particular setting (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2018). Often the case will refer to an individual, organisation, location or event (Merriam, 2009). In this study, the sectors in the research questions constituted the cases; therefore, a multiple case study of the hospitality and social

care sectors was undertaken. These cases chosen as they represented two of the largest employing sectors of low paid work within the UK (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016), and provided a good coverage of low paid work whilst still exploring distinct categories. Given the plethora and diversity of low wage work, sectoral cases allowed for a more tightly defined scope for the study, and for an exploration of the contextual factors that were specific to each sector. Furthermore, the literature reviewed indicates that there are distinct differences in the HRM and employment contexts of these sectors, and research that compared the experiences of work within these sectors was distinctly absent. Examining multiple cases instead of a single case allowed for cross case comparisons to be made, leading to useful and interesting insights, as well as addressing a specific gap in the literature. This approach also allows for a certain degree of triangulation and cross checking between cases in each sector.

5.3.1 Defining the Unit of Analysis

In case studies, it is often assumed that the case and the unit of analysis are one and the same (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002), and this is usually true of case studies with a holistic design (Yin, 2003). However, a slight distinction is made in this study between the case and the unit of analysis. This study aims to compare two cases within the low pay context: the hospitality sector and the social care sector. However, Merriam (2009) defines the a unit of analysis as a bounded system which is finite, i.e. there is a limit to the number of participants that could be interviewed. The selected cases, while arguably finite, are too large and diverse to practically examine in their totality in this study. Therefore, the unit of analysis within each case is the organisation. This is also due to the nature of the research questions. The first research question explores the management philosophy and HR practices, and the following questions ask about how the experience of well-being is influenced by these practices. To explore in depth how these phenomena might be connected, and as multiple perspectives were required to answer the research questions, it was necessary that participants of the study came from the same organisation to provide continuity of context. Yin (2018, p. 288) describes this kind of multiple case study as an embedded design, where each case contains an embedded unit of analysis, which are "a unit lesser than and within the main case in a case study, from which data also are collected" Therefore, each organisation acted as a 'mini-case' within the larger sectoral case. Additionally, the units of data collection[10] occurred at three organisational

[10] Sometimes referred to as the unit of observation

levels: frontline, low paid employees; supervisors and line managers of low paid employees; and, senior management and HR managers.

5.3.2 Research Instruments

The main research instrument of this study were semi-structured qualitative interviews. Qualitative interviewing was selected for this study as it allows for a rich source of data to be collected. Using semi-structured interviews was a particularly useful research tool for this study, as it allowed the researcher to explore common themes in each case which could later be compared, but also gave the researcher the flexibility to vary the sequencing of the questions asked and to explore interesting replies from the participants with further probing questions (Bryman and Bell, 2015). A separate interview guide was developed for each level of participants, focused around aspects of the research questions, which can be found in appendix one. The interview guides were developed around themes taken from the conceptual framework, using general topics and questions, with prompts under each question. Over the course of the interviews, these guides were refined as initial themes emerged. Practically, at the time of the interviews, time with frontline employees was often particularly short. This meant it was not always possible to ask every question from the guide. However, the researcher was careful to ensure that questions from every topic in the interview guide were asked.

5.3.3 Selection of 'Mini Cases'

A common criticism of case studies is that little can be learned from a single case, as it provides such a narrow scope. While this case study examines multiple sectors, a criticism could be made at the level of the unit of analysis if only one organisation from each sector were to be investigated, as each unit was in effect a 'mini case'. However, conducting a qualitative organisational case study is a time intensive activity, and given that participants were to be interviewed at three levels of the organisation, this would require multiple interviews at each level. Practically speaking, the researcher must balance the need for rigour with the available time and resources. So, the consideration of the number of mini cases was twofold: how many estimated interviews would be required from each organisation, and how many interviews overall could the researcher realistically undertake?

Of course, the answer to the question of how many interviews and participants is enough in a qualitative study is difficult to estimate and usually amounts to 'how long is a piece of string'. However, the general consensus is that the right number of interviews is that which allows for saturation. The number of interviews that can be conducted also has to be weighed against what is a realistic expectation of access from the organisation. Advice from colleagues who had previously carried out research in these sectors suggested as a guide to aim for approximately 20 interviews per organisation, with no less than 10 interviews. Saunders and Townsend's (2016) extensive review on the numbers of participants in qualitative organisational studies found that a normal of acceptable range of 15-60 participants is reported in the literature, and further advise that when participants are chosen from multiple organisations or groups, that a sample of at least 50 participants is generally considered credible. On the basis of approximately 20 interviews per organisation, it was decided that two organisations from each sector should be investigated, as this was considered achievable for the researcher.

5.3.4 Negotiation of access and fieldwork

In the selection of organisations, as the remit of this study only allowed for two organisations within each sector to be explored in depth, the researcher limited the selection of organisations within each sector to those with similar characteristics, such as structure, size and market positioning. The expectation was that while there would be some contextual differences in each organisation, common themes would emerge within each case, which could then be compared across cases. Initially, several organisations within the social care and hospitality sectors were approached. Negotiating access in low wage sectors is notoriously difficult, as participation in research is often perceived as time consuming, with limited benefit to the organisation. As such, the organisations in this study were recruited through introductions by personal contacts. Initially, key contacts contacted by email with an invitation letter, and interested parties were then followed up with a face to face meeting to discuss the requirements of access. In H1, access was negotiated with the General Manager, and in H2, SC1 and SC2, with a senior HR manager.

In the hospitality case, interviews took place at two large, four star hotels in city centre locations. Both H1[11] and H2 were owned large multinational hotel chain. The parent companies of each hotel both operated in over 100 countries, employing 8000 people in the UK in H1, and 9000 in H2. The interviews for each organisation were conducted at a single hotel in Scotland from each organisation. As both hotels were part of such large organisations, it was more straightforward to negotiate access at the level of the individual hotel, rather than at a corporate level. Furthermore, as each hotel employed in the region of 250 staff, it seemed likely that it was be possible to gain enough interviews from one site in each organisation.

SC1 and SC2 were both charitable organisations, and each portrayed themselves as market leaders within the sectors in terms of service provision. SC1 operated in Scotland only, employing approximately 1600 staff, whereas SC2 operated in Scotland and England and employed approximately 4000. Each organisation operated a range of different services at multiple sites across the country, including supported living, residential and day services for children, young people and adults, with both learning and physical disabilities. Interviews with frontline staff and line managers took place at the location of the service where the participants worked. As a smaller number of staff were located at each individual site, and anticipating the challenges that may be involving in releasing frontline workers from their role to participate, interviews were undertaken at four different sites in each organisation. In SC2, the researcher was also keen to ensure that interviews were undertaken with low paid staff in social care from England, who are currently paid less than their Scottish counterparts. The interviews with HR and management took place at the head office of each organisation.

In each organisation, an initial meeting was arranged with the key contact. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the purpose of the study more fully, and to ensure that the organisation could fulfil the access requirements. The main issue that concerned the researcher was ensuring that each organisation would be able to commit to sufficient numbers of interviews at each level of the organisation, to ensure that saturation was achieved. Overall, this strategy worked well in gaining commitment from the host organisations and ensuring that communication with the hosts remained open. However, some access issues were experienced in H2 at the point of

[11] At the time of data collection, H1 had just completed a transfer of ownership to a new parent company, which was a large multi-national chain. H1 was previously owned by a UK based private equity firm.

data collection. While the access requirements had been fully discussed and agreed with the HR director in H2, the reality at the time of data collection was that very few workers were made available for interviews. Additionally, while communication began well with this organisation and initial enthusiasm for participating in the study seemed to be high, this was not sustained following the initial interviews with management and it became difficult to achieve full participation. The researcher tried to maintain communication with the initial key contact within the organisation by email and telephone; however, there was either no response or a delayed response to these attempts. The main contact then asked the researcher to liaise with another member of staff to arrange the remaining interviews. This member of staff then advised that there would be only very limited availability from frontline staff to participate in interviews, and that this would very much depend on the availability on the day. The researcher made three further visits to the organisation to attempt to conduct interviews with frontline staff; however, there was only the opportunity to interview 6 frontline participants in total. This unfortunately meant that only 11 interviews could be undertaken in total at this host organisation, which was a smaller sample than any other organisation, as shown in table two:

Table Two: Interviews Conducted in Each Organisation, by Participant Group

Organisation	Frontline interviews	Line management interviews	Management /HR interviews	Total number of interviews
H1	9	5	5	19
H2	6[12]	3	2	11
SC1	11	4	4	19
SC2	12	6	4	22

Despite the smaller sample, interviews still produced rich and interesting data, and were still of enough depth to be included in the study. However, it should be noted that this meant the findings from the hospitality sector relied on a smaller sample of frontline workers compared with the social care sector. A further breakdown of the low paid frontline participants with some demographic details is provided in table three:

[12] This includes two interviews with supervisors, who were paid less than the LW. These interviews therefore drew on questions from both the frontline and line management interview schedules, in line with the participant's knowledge and experience.

Table Three: Frontline Participants

Organisation	Interview Number	Gender	Age	Dependant Children	Part/full-time/ Variable hours	Type of Contract	Length of service
H1	2	Male	40	No	Full-time	Permanent	5.5 years
H1	15	Female	45	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	7 years
H1	3	Male	23	No	Variable	ZHC	1 year
H1	8	Female	24	Yes	Full-time	ZHC	1 year
H1	9	Female	42	No	Full-time	ZHC	8 years
H1	12	Male	45	No	Variable	ZHC	6 months
H1	16	Male	24	No	Full-time	ZHC	6 weeks
H1	7	Female	56	No	Full-time	Permanent	1.5 year
H1	6	Male	57	No	Full-time	Permanent	5 years +
H2	62	Male	21	No	Full-time	Permanent	1 year
H2	66	Female	17	No	Full-time	Permanent	5 months
H2	67	Female	23	No	Full-time	Permanent	10 months
H2	69	Female	53	Yes	Part-time	Permanent	19 years
H2	68	Male	20	No	Full-time	ZHC	6 months
H2	63	Female	28	No	Full-time	Permanent	8 years
SC1	40	Female	28	No	Part-time	Permanent	3 months
SC1	44	Male	47	No	Full-time	Permanent	1.5 year
SC1	45	Male	29	No	Part-time	Permanent	4 years
SC1	47	Female	59	No	Part-time	Permanent	16 years
SC1	48	Female	33	Yes	Part-time	Permanent	5 years
SC1	52	Female	27	No	Part-time	Permanent	1 year
SC1	54	Female	29	No	Full-time	Permanent	1 year
SC1	56	Female	27	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	2 years
SC1	57	Female	60	No	Full-time	Permanent	17 years
SC1	58	Female	21	No	Full-time	Permanent	3 months
SC1	53	Female	20	No	Part-time	ZHC	1.5 year
SC2	19	Female	56	No	Part-time	Permanent	5 years
SC2	20	Female	52	No	Part-time	Permanent	5 years
SC2	21	Female	46	Yes	Part-time	Permanent	5 years +
SC2	23	Female	54	No	Full-time	Permanent	9 months
SC2	24	Female	52	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	9 years
SC2	25	male	58	No	Full-time	Permanent	1 year
SC2	26	male	40	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	9 months
SC2	27	Female	27	Yes	Part-time	Permanent	2 years
SC2	30	Female	30	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	10 years
SC2	35	Female	28	Yes	Full-time	Permanent	2 years +
SC2	37	male	52	No	Full-time	Permanent	3 years
SC2	39	Female	59	No	Full-time	Permanent	1 year +

As identified in chapter two, various definitions of low pay exist, and so a decision had to be made as to what the threshold would be for inclusion of frontline participants in the study. While the OECD relative measure is most commonly applied to studies of low pay, an absolute measure at the level of the LW was utilised as the threshold in this study. Absolute measures are most appropriate when considering issues of low pay and poverty (Grimshaw, 2011), and it is argued that anyone earning less than the LW is unlikely to be able to afford a basic quality of life in the UK (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). Therefore, pay below the level of the LW will likely have consequences for well-being. As such, workers earning at or below the LW, which was £9.00 per hour at the time of data collection, were considered low paid for the purposes of this study.

5.3.5 Recruitment of Participants and Ethical Considerations

The interview schedules for each participant group were prepared in advanced, and corresponding participant information sheets and consent forms were prepared in line with institutional regulations. Ethical approval was gained from the departmental ethics committee at the University of Strathclyde prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

Participants for the study were then recruited by the host organisations. Arguably, this presented a potential source of bias, as the organisation may be motivated to select participants that will present the organisation in a favourable light. The participants themselves may also feel inhibited about providing information which is critical of their employer. This also presented a potential ethical issue, as participants who were unfamiliar with participating in an academic study may not be convinced of the confidentiality of their responses, fearing surveillance from the organisation and retribution for any negative comments. Additionally, given that the interview content for frontline workers was of a more sensitive nature, asking questions about the impact of earning levels, particular care was taken to ensure that these interviews were conducted in a respectful and ethical manor.

Participant information sheets and consent forms were given to the host organisations to be distributed to participants prior to interviews; however, it was clear at the point of interview that this had not happened. Therefore, the participant information sheet and consent form were

fully discussed with every participant before the start of the interview, to ensure informed consent was gained. This also allowed the researcher an opportunity to build rapport and trust with participants prior to the interview, which assisted in generating rich interview data. At this point, two participants from H1 declined to take part in the study and those interviews did not proceed.

Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed, and notes were also taken during the interviews. To protect the identities of the organisations and participants, personal information such as names, locations, specific job titles or brand names were not transcribed, and instead, pseudonyms were assigned. In line with institutional regulations, all digital research data including notes, audio files, transcriptions and NVivo files were stored securely on university systems only. Paper copies of documents collected were stored in a locked cabinet. These were later converted to a digital format, with the original copies shredded.

5.3.6 Data Analysis

When considering how to conduct the analysis of qualitative data, these choices should be guided by the underlying research philosophy and the research questions. Taking a position of 'pragmatic realism', Miles et al. (2020, pp. 6, emphasis in orginal) stress that no one method of analysis will provide an exact fit for a study, and instead advise the researcher to "seek out what will be *useful* in your work". The ways of doing qualitative research vary greatly between the philosophical camps (Saunders and Townsend, 2016) and no less so when it comes to the analysis of qualitative data. That said, across the more established qualitative methods, some basic principles are common to the process of analysing qualitative data. Namely, most approaches to analysis agree that coding is the critical tool; Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2020) go as far as to say coding is analysis, as the process of coding requires deep reflection interpretation of the data. Most writers on qualitative analysis agree that coding involves two stages, where the data is firstly sorted and assigned initial codes, after which the researcher then looks for patterns and relationships between the codes, with the aim of identifying themes or categories within the data (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2020).

Where scholars tend to differ in opinion on how analysis should be conducted concerns whether codes should be developed deductively, a priori from the literature, or developed inductively and from the data alone. Given that the researcher already has prior knowledge of the subject, and that an extensive literature review and conceptual framework was developed prior to data collection and analysis, it follows that the a purely inductive approach to analysis could not be claimed, as the researcher is influenced and guided by this knowledge. However, to use a purely deductive approach during the data analysis would have ignored the very heart of the research questions, which asked how the work-home interface is experienced; this experience may not have been fully explained by pre-existing concepts. This tension between the inductive and the deductive leads the researcher back to the Pragmatic notion of abduction, which allows for both inductive and deductive reasoning to be used in a complementary fashion (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The epistemology of pragmatism implores the researcher to make plausible suggestions for what might be going on based on /what is observed. Abductive reasoning allows for the constant back and forth between the literature and the data, to develop these insights (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016), to develop solutions to the 'mysteries' discovered in the empirical (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2007). In this way, abductive reasoning enables a connection between practice and theory (Simpson, 2017).

Therefore, in keeping with the Pragmatist framing, the analysis was conducted in an abductive manner, making use of both theory and data in the process of developing codes. The conceptual framework and literature were used to generate an initial list of codes. However, the generic application of pre-existing concepts as a general rule in the initial phases coding did not seem wise, as there was a risk that the researcher would make the assumption that these concepts automatically fitted with the data, rather than interrogating any similarities or differences found within the data to current theory. As Padgett (2008, p. 131) argues, "Pre-existing theories and concepts may be invited into the proceedings but are asked to stay only if they fit." Therefore, these concepts represented a starting point to the analysis, and inclusion of these concepts was by no means guaranteed. As such, the data was open coded, with a priori codes also used when found in the data. This generated a large initial list of codes in each mini case. All 71 interviews were coded. This amounted to a very large data set, well over 100,000 words. The researcher recorded these initial codes in a code book and made memos while coding each interview to record thoughts and reflections about what was being observed in the data and

how this might connect to theory (Padgett, 2008). The interviews from each organisation were coded in their participant groups, although at times there where overlapping codes and themes between these groups. Multiple readings of the transcripts were required. Throughout the process, as codes emerged, the researcher began to look for higher level patterns, categories and themes connecting these codes. This gradually led to a smaller number of categories and subcategories. Pre-existing concepts were used more in this later stage of coding, where the emergent data themes were compared with the concepts from the literature. It was an iterative process of constant back and forth with the literature and research material.

5.3.7 Limitations of Case Study Research

Case studies as a research strategy have been subject to fierce criticism due to the limitations that they pose, particularly with regards to the generalisability of findings. Case studies are often viewed as low quality, inferior, and lacking in rigour, as the context dependant nature of the research does not allow for statistical generalisations to be made (Jenson and Rodgers, 2001; Yin, 2003; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Hyett, Kenny and Dickson-Swift, 2014). The matter of generalisation is also a criticism made of qualitative methods more generally, and it is indeed a limitation of this research. This objection is rooted in the philosophical assumptions of the researcher, and therefore must be answered in such a way. This criticism is usually based on positivist assumptions that place the greatest value on research that is independent of context, where findings can be generalised to the population (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This perspective assumes that generalisability is of more value than other kinds of knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The philosophical position outlined at the beginning of this chapter argued that knowledge is gained through experience, which is in constant transaction with environment. It therefore follows from this position that the purpose of this research is not to produce context free findings from which statistical generalisations can be made; furthermore, this position questions whether it is realistically possible to make such claims about social research. In support of case studies, Flyvbjerg (2006, p224) argues that in the study of human affairs, hard, predictive theory and proof does not exist; instead there exists only context-dependant knowledge, which he considers far more valuable than “the vain search for predictive theories and universals.” Granted, if the aim of this research was to produce findings from which

statistical generalisations could be made, then the case study strategy would be an inappropriate choice, and so too would the choice of Pragmatism as an underlying philosophy. The Pragmatist philosophy values knowledge is so far as it can affect action and practice; methods are therefore chosen based on their suitability for answering research problems (Korte and Mercurio, 2017). As such, Pragmatism does not place central importance on the generalisation of findings; the strength of Pragmatist research lies in its ability to unlock the human experience, located within both independent realities and socially constructed worlds. As Watson (2010, p. 921) describes:

> Pragmatism is not about pursing absolute or final truths about reality. It is about attempting to make theoretical generalisations which might inform human practices and help us better appreciate the relationships between individual's predicaments and institutional and historical patterns better.

The research questions of this study call for an in-depth examination of experiences within a particular context. As such, the strengths of the case study strategy are well suited to the research problem at hand, as it allows for the in-depth examination of practice within its setting (Yin, 2003). The case study design accepts the duality of mind and matter, rather than insisting that matter is examined free from context, as with what are considered the more scientific approaches (Biesta and Burbules, 2003). Additionally, while it may not necessarily be possible to make statistical generalisations, the richness of understanding that can be gleaned from a case study can allow for generalisations to theory to be made (Hartley, 2004). Furthermore, the presence of multiple cases in this study strengthens the theoretical generalisations that can be made. Miles et al. (2020, p. 29) argue that while it does not completely overcome the problem with generalisability, using a multiple case study strategy, "gives us confidence that our emerging theory is transferable", as the evidence is drawn from more than one case.

5.4 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has argued that Pragmatism provides a strong philosophical foundation for this study. The justification for both the use of a case study research strategy and qualitative data was provided. Details were given on the selection of case studies, negotiation of access, and the recruitment of the participants. The process of data collection and analysis were described. Finally, the limitations of the research strategy were addressed. The following two chapters will move on to present the finding of the research.

6. Data Chapter One: The Management Perspective

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings in relation to the first research question: *what management philosophies underpin the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work, and how do these philosophies and practices compare?* In answering this question, this chapter will set out the perspective of senior management and HR practitioners in the hospitality and social care sectors regarding the management of people. The case of the hospitality sector will be outlined first, followed by the social care sector. This chapter will discuss the management strategies and philosophy, the HR practices and the pay strategies found in each sector, and will conclude with the senior and line management awareness of the impact of low pay on employees.

6.1 The Hospitality Sector

Both H1 and H2 were part of large luxury hotel chains, holding four and five stars respectively. Both hotels were keen to position themselves as employers of choice who *"put people first"*. However, the data uncovers a distinctly hard approach to managing labour.

6.1.1 Management Strategy and Philosophy

In the hospitality cases, the management in both organisations described a strategy akin to the service-profit chain model, in keeping with what would be expected from hotels marketing themselves as high end or luxury providers. Both H1 and H2 referenced a similar philosophy in terms of their underlying strategy, of driving sales through customer satisfaction, achieved through high levels of customer service from happy employees. H2 described this as a rejection of the mantra that the customer always comes first: *"The H2 philosophy is if you look after your staff, they'll look after your customer, so your customers will come back and, therefore, look after your business"* [Interview 60]. In H1, this strategy was regularly described as a stakeholder approach of 'People, Guest, and Owners', where if you ensured that your staff were happy, they would look after the customers, who generate the revenues for the owners.

There were some conflicting views as to the power and emphasis placed on each of these stakeholders. HR practitioners were keen to present the image that these stakeholders all had an equal footing, but even this view was conflicted at times:

> Well in my opinion, they've all got an equal rating. [The operations director] and [the general manager] might tell you something different, but … the way I see it, yes, the guests are here, the guests paid the money, the guests have an expectation, but we can't give that to the guests if we're not looking after our people. So, we need to be looking after the people to be able to deliver that for the guest. But, of course, at the end of the day we're a business. We've got somebody up there who wants us to make X amount of money, so we need to deliver on that because that's what they expect. [Interview 11]

It was clear from the data in both cases from senior management that the owner was the most powerful stakeholder in each organisation, and the inclusion of staff and customers in this equation was simply a means of achieving the required financial performance. The general manager of H1 clearly described delivering the required level of profit as the most important objective:

> Ultimately, we're a commercial business and have to make money. The people and the guest bit is about how you do it… The owners will always have the biggest muscle in that pie… To be perfectly honest, if we were hitting our budgets, nobody would ever ask me how things are going with the other two parts of that pie really. [Interview 14]

In terms of the values underpinning this strategy, both H1 and H2 had a set of five organisational values which had been passed down from their senior management. In H1, this included *warmth, intuitive, local at heart, distinctive* and *generous*. In H2, the values were *put people first, act with integrity, serve our world, embracing change* and *pursuing excellence*. The HR director in H2 described how the HR agenda was focused on the delivery of the first organisational value: *"So, putting people first is the big strapline of the organisation. Very much family values, focusing on the core values of the organization. All the things that [HR] do support putting people first."* [Interview 60].

The HR departments in both H1 and H2 were also heavily involved in disseminating these values to employees, particularly in the induction of new employees. However, the extent to which these values were embedded within the organisations were contested, particularly where decisions had been guided by overarching principles of profit maximisation rather than the values. For example, one senior manager challenged the extent to which H1 were committed to the values, giving the following example, *"we buy strawberries from Poland. How is that local at heart? It's because it's the best price"* [Interview one]. For this manager, acting in accordance with his own personal values and beliefs was important, and was an issue of

personal integrity. Where the organisational values were in contrast to the actions of the hotel, this manager preferred to rely on his own personal values, which better allowed him to act consistently with his own beliefs:

> Some of the values I've used previously in the past with [the general manager] in another hotel of, honesty, respect, trust, commitment, and pride. I'd probably use them to the company values because they're my personal values and my winning morals and beliefs that I use to drive if you like the hotel values. [Interview one]

The general manager of H1 also identified that organisational values only really become embedded where they aligned with individual's personal values:

> [The organisational values are] not fully lived and breathed in the hotel as far as in organisational values perspective. And some of the reason for that to be honest is because you can't tell people what their values are. You've got to be able to create your values yourself as well. And that's something that's an exercise, at least in my view, at least, I think you need to go through to make sure it's a bit more authentic. [Interview 14]

The values were rarely mentioned by managers in interviews, but where these values did become more evident was in attempts to drive quality standards and the customer experience. H1 tried to instil the value of generosity in frontline staff through an initiative called 'freedom in a framework', where within certain limits, staff were able to give gifts to guests, such as a free glass of wine, without having to ask permission to do so. The aim of this initiative was to give staff the autonomy they needed to practice the value of generosity with guests.

In H2, there was a large emphasis on monitoring performance levels and delivering a consistent service, which related to the value of pursuing excellence: *"We measure absolutely everything"* [interview 59]. One way in which was enacted was through what was referred to as 'brand standards', which dictated the service level that staff were required to deliver. For example, at breakfast, a brand standard would be serving tea and coffee within one minute of a guest sitting down. Therefore, this overall strategy was seen as a means to achieving the required financial performance for the owners, and this is also evident in the employment practices used, which are considered in the chapter later.

6.1.2 The Approach to Managing Well-being

In H1, both managers and HR staff expressed how staff well-being had been a particular focus within the organisation. The focus on well-being within H1 had begun several years prior following a transfer of ownership, and was largely attributed to the leadership given by the Head of HR at the corporate head office, who *"set the tone as far as what the values are, and what the behaviours are that go with it"* [interview 14]. The Head of HR was described as *"touchy-feely"*, and as someone who was interested in the welfare of staff: *"we've got a lot of properties, and anytime he visits a property, if he's met you, he knows your name"* [interview 18]. H1 did not have a formal well-being policy or strategy. The main change that was described by management was a focus on work-life balance, which was heavily emphasised as a means of ensuring employee well-being. Managers described how this had been a change in ethos, and again attributed this change in the head of HR. In particular several managers mentioned how staff were no longer expected to work excessive hours:

> We got a new head of People Development, if you like, for [the organisation]. He's really all about work-life balance. When I first started, say, five years ago, there was people who were working 60, 70 hours a week, even more. See now, if I'm honest with you, it's a very rare occasion you got anybody working over 50 hours. And like that, it's usually because it's Christmas or something along those lines. [Interview 18]

This change had been enacted through various policies. Managers talked about a policy of ensuring that full time staff have two days off together within the week and making sure that staff were given time back in lieu when they worked overtime. Staff rotas were now issued six weeks in advance so that staff would have plenty of notice of their shifts: *"gone are the days that you get your rota the day before"* [Interview 11]. The induction programme for new employees also now included a 30 minute discussion on health, well-being and work life balance. Aside from work-life balance, the approach to well-being was usually described in terms of various employee benefits. This included a free staff canteen, an employee assistance programme, and long service awards. Engagement activities, such as a staff appreciation week, were also considered part of the well-being approach.

H2 had a long-standing well-being program operating within the hotel. This had started informally within the hotel, and had focused on career, emotional, physical and financial well-being. However, over the last three years, a formal well-being strategy had been launched at a corporate level, which was in the process of being rolled out across all sites in the organisation.

This strategy focused on personal well-being, team building and giving back to the community. This initiative was promoted throughout the organisation using their in-house intranet, with resources available to help sites with the delivery of the programme. A certification process had also been developed in association with the well-being programme which individual sites could apply for. H2 had achieved the highest level of certification, being platinum.

In practice, the well-being strategy comprised of various initiatives and activities that were put on for staff, such as yoga, fitness activities, and charitable activities. The intension was that employees across the organisation would take ownership of in the form of well-being champions. However, the participants highlighted that in reality, the bulk of responsibility for the well-being initiatives lay within the HR department: "*I can guarantee if HR did nothing about it, it wouldn't happen*" [interview 59]. Even where staff did participate in running initiatives, this had to be initiated by HR:

> [Managers] certainly wouldn't come and say, "I've got an excellent idea, why don't we go around and give out smoothies tomorrow?" They wouldn't. Those ideas have to come from me or the HR team. [interview 60]

Managers also discussed how it was difficult to get engagement from staff in these well-being activities, particularly as staff were expected to participate in these activities during their rest breaks so that the needs of the business were not disrupted:

> We did have a jogging club at one point and we had a walk at lunchtime, but it's difficult for our team because we only get a half hour break, so to be away from your desk and go for your walk, plus get something to eat, it starts to eat into the working day. So, it's great that these things are there, but for our team, in particular, it's such a busy period, to get any-- we even struggle to get everybody off to go to lunch. [Interview 64]

The demands placed on this manager's team were such that it was difficult just to ensure that staff received their statutory rest break, let alone make time to participate in well-being initiatives. There was also a sense in which this well-being strategy was viewed by managers as an activity that had to be done, rather than an approach to looking after their staff or concern for their welfare. As the previous quote demonstrated, participation in these activities was an additional pressure on the time of staff and therefore engagement was difficult. However, it was also the case that managers involved in organising these activities also viewed this as an additional demand on their time:

> Even when we do Staff Appreciation Week… They do lots of activities across that week but again, it's during the working day. They do an afternoon tea, they did a well-being zen room where you could go and chill out, and we've even had people come in from the spa before and do mini-massages… But again for us all, it's just another pressure to deal with… We still have our jobs to do as well as all these nice things as well. It can be challenging. That's when the laptop comes out at night [chuckles] because it's still there, you need to keep going and you need to keep that, otherwise it'll just spiral. [Interview 64]

The most common reasons for employees to be absent in both organisations were back pain, or mental health related illness including stress, anxiety and depression. Back pain was attributed to the physical and manual nature of the jobs with the organisation, where employees are on their feet all day and carrying out repetitive tasks that over time cause strain. The majority of absence within each organisation was described as short term, with only a small number of employees on long term sickness absence. With regards to mental ill health, this was attributed mostly to employees' personal circumstances, rather than work-related stress. Any work-related stress that caused absence was attributed to situations that were the making of the employee, such as disciplinary and grievance processes, or conflict in relationships with people at work. Both H1 and H2 had well developed absence management policies and processes, with trigger points that prompted further disciplinary action when employees reached a certain level of absence. Both organisations treated absence as a performance issue, and closely monitored absence levels and costs using KPIs (the Bradford Factor):

> "We measure it monthly. We measure it in number of days, I think. Number of days lost and also in a cost. We tend, again, to focus on the company sick pay. So, how much are we paying for people to be off sick… The company policy is [line level employees] aren't paid for the first three days of any illness. But we do track it quite closely, and we do have quite a robust program to manage the one day absence, the repeat offenders." [Interview 60]

Both organisations also had access to an occupational health service. While available, this tended only to be used in situations of long-term absence where employees had already been absent for some time:

> "My experience is that occupational health tend to tell you what you already know. I'm quite happy to hear it from the staff member… If the employee needs something medical that they're not getting, then we would offer them the opportunity to have occupational health. If they don't know, or if their doctor is not being very helpful with regards to what's best for them and getting back to work, that's when we would tend to say, "Let's refer you." But the policy is, I think after four weeks absence, we can refer." [Interview 60]

Instead, the HR directors in both H1 and H2 reported that they tended to make more referrals to their employee assistance program for advice, rather than to use occupational health.

6.1.3 HR Practices

In both H1 and H2, HR and management representatives aimed to present the organisation very much in the light of best practice and as setting themselves apart from competitors as an 'employer of choice'. However, the underlying philosophy was still very much that of tightly controlling the cost of labour. A variety of HR practices were still used, but were only used where there was deemed to be a clear efficiency in doing so from a cost saving perspective. So, while there was the management rhetoric of valuing people, it was clear that keeping labour costs to a minimum was the priority, with HR practices viewed as a means of achieving this whilst also driving customer satisfaction.

As such, one of the practices that was a priority for both organisations was staff engagement. Both H1 and H2 felt that there were benefits to having an engaged workforce. The level of engagement was viewed as an indicator as to how well the strategy of 'people, guest, owner' was working in practice, and good levels of engagement were generally seen as a way to improve retention rates, which was viewed as cost efficient and better in terms of service quality. An engaged workforce was perceived as the means to improving revenues from customers:

> I think most people now, most intelligent people understand that you've got to motivate your workforce, you've got to have them engaged, you've got to treat them in the right way. You can't be the carrot and stick approach all the time, you got to get them involved a bit more, and I think most people understand in the service sector that it's your customers that drive the revenue. You look after your customers, they'll drive that revenue as well for you, through your people. [Interview 14]

The communication channels between management and staff in both organisations involved daily meetings, staff committees, and 'town hall' meetings (open to all staff), and these activities were viewed as key in driving engagement. Both organisations also used engagement activities as a form of recognition for staff. This included activities such as a staff appreciation week, which were held in both organisations. In H1, any member of staff could reward another member of staff with a voucher for £5 as a way or recognising or saying thank you for good

work. H1 also operated a form of staff awards, were staff could nominate each other and receive prizes. These activities were generally viewed as beneficial in terms of boosting the morale of staff and improving staff retention. These were also attributed to well-being in terms of their feel good factor, but this was more of an added bonus rather than a direct aim.

Levels of engagement were monitored, with each organisation conducting an annual staff opinion survey. In H2, staff engagement was a priority for the GM, and was also used as a metric in calculating the bonus of the GM. However, when questioned further, it would appear that this practice is more of a token gesture:

> I: You mentioned that the associate satisfaction forms part of your bonus. Is that the case for anyone else in the hotel? Any other managers?
>
> P: No, and it's a small part. My bonus structure is very structured I should say [chuckles]. I suppose what I was just trying to emphasise is just how important the company takes it. In that, it's actually on there… Most companies I've worked for were focused on sales and a profitability and that's it. Ours is that too, but there's lots of little strap-ons, and that's one of them. It's not a lot of cash, but it's something. It just demonstrates how important, the company takes it I suppose, as opposed to we do a survey and that's it. It's quite important. It's also discussed on my annual appraisal each year as well. [Interview 59]

Therefore, in keeping of the overall management philosophy, it would appear that engagement was only a priority for management in so far as it was perceived as cost effective in driving profits.

Training and development was another key area of concern in both H1 and H2. This was motivated by a drive to improve the retention of new staff, and therefore each organisation had a strong focus on the training workers received within the first 12 weeks of their employment, operating a monthly review system within this period. In H1, this would start with a mandatory two-day induction programme, introducing the various departments in the organisation, introducing the company values, training in completing various tasks, health and safety training, a discussion on personal grooming standards, and the need for work-life balance. The aim of this was also to improve employee's experience at the start of their job:

> All the heads of department and the other managers, they come and say hi, they introduce themselves. So, from the very beginning, you capture and you like, become the part of the family. Then once you're actually on your first day at work, you already have lots of familiar faces… [Interview 18]

Both organisations used an online learning management system (LMS) for mandatory and compliance training. H1 had also put in place 'training gurus', who were experienced members of staff who would take on responsibility for training staff on the job.

Within both organisations, activities falling under the banner of corporate and social responsibility lay within the HR remit. The core of this seemed to be organising fundraising and charitable events which were promoted through the HR departments. Further to this, H2 had an inclusion strategy, which was a wider organisational initiative. The main goals of this strategy were to make employment opportunities available to groups of people who are often socially excluded, such as women, single parents, young people and ethnic minorities, and to improve progression opportunities within the organisation. At the time of the interviews, this had involved working with a local family centre that supported single parents. While the partnership was viewed positively, the HR director highlighted several difficulties in actually being able to offer employment to people from this group. Often people would only have very limited availability due to childcare, and despite the image of flexibility portrayed by the organisation, this seemed to make it difficult to offer that person work: *"It can be quite tricky if someone's available to work between 13:00 and 15:00 for childcare, it's very difficult to find a role that you can do two hours a day, for continuity"* [interview 60]. Furthermore, the HR director mentioned that following a 'better off calculation', it was not always financially beneficial for someone to enter employment, as entering employment would reduce benefit entitlement and in some cases leave that person worse off financially. On a similar note, interviewees' in H1 and H2 mentioned that they had part time staff who did not want to work over 16 hours per week, as this would affect their benefit entitlement and leave them with less money. This situation was viewed as an issue for government, to improve the incentive for people to work, rather than as a failing to provide these employees with a sustainable income.

6.1.4 Approach to Managing Labour Costs

A distinctly hard approach to managing labour costs was found in both organisations. Both organisations were operating the flexible firm model in terms of staffing, and managers sought

to tightly control labour costs. The GM in H1 explained that staffing levels for permanent, contracted staff were determined using a minimum staffing structure, which was devised by calculating the staffing levels required for the quietest week of the year for the business in terms of customers, normally the second week of January. This staffing level then formed the basis for the numbers of staff that the hotel would employ on a contracted, permanent basis. Any additional staff required to supplement this staffing level were employed on a ZHC. Each organisation had core group of employees employed on a permanent basis, and a large number of workers employed on a ZHC, who were referred to as 'causals' in both organisations. H1 had 292 members of staff, with approximately half of the workforce employed on a ZHC. H2 had 260 members of staff, 90 of whom were employed on a ZHC. The GM of H1 argued that this way of working was viewed as the most viable way to operate and cope with varying levels of demand:

> The business goes up and down so frequently, you can't say we need a flat line of staff all the time, it's just not the case. When you look at restaurants, they're staffed on a ratio per cover… and they're just industry norms. You couldn't say, every day you put five team members on the rush hour regardless, because you'd go bust. The business would shut, everybody would be out of a job then. So, you need a minimum staffing level and then it's topped up with the casual staff in between. If I'm honest, you can understand why certain people maybe are grieved with that, because they feel it's a profitable business and people should be guaranteed work. Well, maybe it's just not the right industry for certain people to be working in. [Interview 14]

Therefore, it was very much accepted that this way of operating was an industry norm and is therefore an acceptable practice. Furthermore, any issue with the practice was viewed as a problem with the employee, rather than as a problem with the way employers operate. H1 claimed to review their casual contracts with the staff concerned at least twice a year, offering a permanent contract with a set number of hours to staff based on an average of what they had worked over the preceding 12 weeks. However, the GM stated that the majority of people who were offered contractors refused them, choosing instead to stay on a ZHC. It was argued that employees such as students and single parents preferred to be on a ZHC as it gave them the flexibility to turn down shifts when it suited them[13].

[13] No other interviews with staff could corroborate that this practice of offering contracts to casual staff had been carried out, with many casual staff stating that they would prefer a contract with a set number of hours.

Participants in H1 talked about a payroll meeting which happened once a week, involving the heads of departments, HR, and the financial controller, to discuss the staffing rotas of each department. At these meetings, the rotas were scrutinised to ensure that the staffing levels in each department were sufficient, that staff were not working excessive hours and that staff had two days off together. This was portrayed as a key way in which the hotel looked after the well-being of their employees, by ensuring that employees had a work-life balance,

> If we're having a payroll meeting and if somebody's working too many hours or has not got enough days off or their days off are separate, the financial controller or the HR manager will actually say, "have a look at this because there's no work-life balance here", or "you need to watch this person's hours, they're doing too much. [Interview 10]

While this was branded as a work-life initiative, and as something to improve employee well-being, again this practice had financial benefits for the organisation, as managing in this way allowed management to tightly control labour costs. As one manager noted: *"The biggest expense for the hotel is payroll. If you don't manage that effectively in line with your business, it gets completely out of control and your profit margins go and you lose your job. It's as simple as that. It's very aggressive"* [Interview 14].

6.1.5 Pay, Terms and Conditions, and Benefits

Entry level frontline, team leader and supervisory staff in both organisations were all paid below the LW. In both organisations, the minimum wage rate for 21-25 year olds was paid to all staff under the age of 25, and the NLW for employers aged 25 and over. Over and above pay, staff in H1 and H2 also had the opportunity to earn 'incentives' for their work. However, the opportunity to benefit` from incentives were not equally available to all employees. Reception staff appeared to have the greatest opportunity in both organisations to increase their monthly wage through 'upselling', by persuading customers at check in to join the corporate reward scheme, purchase breakfast, or upgrade their room, for which staff would receive a cash bonus on their pay. Other departments such as food and beverage would have gifts as incentives, such as a free meal or bottle of wine, but would rarely have an opportunity to have cash added on to their wage.

Within H2, there were some managers who thought that some roles at entry level required greater levels of skill, and therefore should be paid more than the minimum rate. For example,

in H2 the manager of the leisure club highlighted that most of the staff in her team, who were directly employed by the hotel, were required to have first aid, safety and personal training qualifications, however, these staff were still only paid the minimum rates. Another manager highlighted that sales roles within the hotel required more advanced digital and communication skills, but suggested that it was a struggle to attract staff with these skills given that the role still only pays the minimum rate: *"we haven't been able to get the right calibre of candidate on this pay scale"* [interview 64].

In H2, the view from management was that they could not offer more in terms of pay, but that pay was supplemented by high value benefits, such as free staff parking and a free staff canteen: *It really is highlighting the benefits to our associates, what else we can do to save them monies, as opposed to just giving them cash* [Interview 59]. Flexibility was also hailed as a key benefit offered by both organisations. The point was made by managers in both organisations that as they operate 24 hour businesses, there was a wide range of hours that were available to staff, and that they were able to be flexible with staff requests for days off.

6.1.6 Awareness of the Hardship Caused by Low Pay

Managers from both H1 and H2 were asked if they were aware of any of their staff experiencing financial hardship. Responses to this question were varied in each organisation, with varying degrees of awareness of any staff struggling financially. For example, one manager in H2 reported no inclination that staff experienced hardship:

> I wouldn't say that I've noticed anything that I'm concerned about [with staff]. I would just think, "Well yeah, I can see you're maybe trying to manage a budget and living within your means", but there's not anything that would concern me to say, "they've not enough money to feed themselves" or anything like that. [Interview 64]

Often where managers had noticed staff struggling financially, this was attributed to a failing of the employee, such as a lack of budgeting skills, poor decision making, or inexperience in dealing with financial matters, rather than as a result of low pay:

> It's not down to the wages being horrendously bad … it's quite a young team that I have got. They like to go out and party, they like to buy all their nice things, they don't really know how you make the sacrifices to be able to have the house and that kind of thing. [Interview 65]

In H1, several of the supervisors also attributed any financial hardship they saw amongst staff to a culture of socialising amongst staff, with a typical response to this question being: *"I know at the end of the month, everyone is quite, really skint. Then, they rely on their tips a lot. That is part of the culture, because everybody always ends up going out all the time"* [interview 17]. Furthermore, financial hardship was often attributed to personal circumstances, rather than the level of wages or that availability of hours: *"it wasn't down to how much they were getting paid. It was other things like debts"* [interview 5]. These accounts suggest that managers were keen to shift any blame or responsibility in causing financial hardship away from the organisation, onto other parties, and usually the employees themselves.

Other managers were more aware of financial hardship among staff. In H1, one senior manager talked about his own experience of seeing staff struggle financially, where he had witnessed staff struggling to afford the costs of attending work: *"There's been occasions when I've bought somebody a couple of new work shirts because they couldn't afford it"* [Interview 1]. Several managers mentioned the costs of attending work, such as clothing, transport and taxis home at night being a strain on the finances of staff. This was despite these costs being supplemented by each organisation, with a contribution to taxi fares and some items of uniform being provided. Another supervisor within H2 was more acutely aware of staff experiencing poverty. For example, she described how some staff that would come into work when they did not have a shift to use the staff canteen, as they were struggling to afford food. The same supervisor relayed an even more extreme example, which ultimately led to an employee losing their job:

> There literally was a lady that really used to struggle. But unfortunately, she lost her job for stealing. It does happen, and you can see it. She, unfortunately, lost her job for stealing bread and things, like bread, and teabags, and milk. Which is, when you think about it, she shouldn't have done it, it's stealing. But it's also really sad, in the fact that she felt that she had to, because she'd no money. [Interview 63]

This account from a supervisor indicates that financial hardship amongst staff is not an uncommon occurrence, with the suggestion that food poverty is a reality for some low paid workers.

Among the HR practitioners interviewed, there were also varying levels of awareness. The HR manager in H1 when asked if she was aware of staff experiencing hardship or poverty, did not seem to think that was a problem within the organisation:

> Not that I'm aware of. But if somebody was, then that's when we would refer them to that Hospitality in Action[14], because they can do quite a lot to help people with any financial problems… Not anything that's kind of made us worry because there is obviously some tell-tale signs, you'd maybe be able to tell and when it comes to grooming that would make you think, what's going on here? But no, not that I'm aware of here and not in any other place I've worked in the past. [interview 11]

HR staff who were more involved with the payroll budget had more awareness and involvement in dealing with staff facing financial difficulties:

> We've had people in the past who have come to our financial controller and basically asked for an advance on their wages and explained the situation. Our financial controller is really good. If the person's been here long enough, and they've got a bit of service, she does help them out and does give them that wage advance. [Interview 18]

Furthermore, the HR advisor from H1 noted that there were ten live wage arrestments within H1 at the time of the interviews. H2 also reported that they would usually have two or three wage arrestments at any given time.

The HR director in H2 was less sure about levels of in work poverty or financial hardship going on within the organisation. Similarly to H1, employees in H2 would occasionally look to their HR department for advice or help with their finances, and the usual practice was to signpost staff towards other sources of advice. She reported that their site had a greater awareness of issues of working poverty, through their partnerships with local organisations, but less so within the organisation itself:

[14] Hospitality in Action is a charitable organisation that provides advice financial assistance to employees in the sector.

> I think we're aware of it, but no, we don't really hear about it. Occasionally, it would be more along the lines of, we're paid every four or five weeks, it's the third Friday of the month. So sometimes, associates have to make their last five weeks... Sometimes, if something's not going right for someone's pay, for example, if they were on holiday, and their manager hasn't put in the system correctly and they've not been paid, that's when associates would mention. We'd always do what we could to make sure they were paid what they were due. But we don't offer any sort of short-term loans or pay advances or anything like that. We discourage it so to speak. [interview 60]

When discussing issues of financial hardship and poverty, the GM's in both hotels responded by highlighting that they upheld their side of the employment bargain by being transparent about the employment that was offered and fulfilling their side of the obligation. Both GM's also suggested that accepting the terms and conditions of the employment they were offered was very much the choice of the worker. In answer to the question of whether they sensed that staff struggled to get by on their wages, the GM from H2 suggested:

> No, no I don't, no. I've never seen that, actually. No. It's a short answer, I genuinely haven't. I think if I did as well-- I use the word transparent. When someone comes to work here, I like to think we deliver what we say, you know? If you want to come, here's the contract, here's the hours, here's you can expect to work. I would hate to think, I know it's never happened, we've never not fulfilled the contract to someone, you know? Or promise them something and then delivered something different, you know? [Interview 59]

This attitude was echoed in H1, who felt that the organisation was clear about what it offered to staff:

> I think we've got good people that really genuinely care about the people that work in the hotel. But you will always get people that have a completely different opinion to that, unfortunately. Now, you could directly target them to say, "Well, let me educate you." But some people, even when you do that, are not prepared to listen. They've just got their own agenda, or they've got their own view and they're not for changing, because they think they're underpaid and overworked. Well, we've never told you we're going to pay you any differently. We never told you that we're not going to give you the hours that we need to give you to run the business. We've not breached our side of the contract. You just need to maybe decide whether you're in the right job or not. For some people, it's not the right job for them and that's it." [Interview 14]

6.2 The Social Care Sector

This section outlines the findings from two social care providers operating in the charitable sector. SC1 operated in Scotland only, providing a range of different services such as adult care, supported living, residential services, homelessness services, youth services and family services, to name a few. SC2 operated in Scotland and England, providing a similar range of services as SC1. Given the recruitment challenges within the sector, both organisations were using an 'employer of choice' approach, in an attempt to differentiate from competitor employers in the sector, to attract and retain staff. However, the driving force behind such approaches appears to be driven by a need to make 'efficiencies', and any investment into staff needed to provide more in terms of cost savings to the organisation.

6.2.1 Management Strategy and Philosophy

In some respects, the management philosophy underpinning the strategy within SC1 and SC2 was not entirely dissimilar to that found in the hospitality sector. Within both organisations, the underpinning view was that to provide excellent standards of customer care, you had to look after and invest in your staff. However, as both SC1 and SC2 were charitable organisations, the overall aim of this strategy was sustainability rather than profitability. Each organisation placed a strong emphasis on delivering a high-quality service. Having the best staff was seen as paramount in terms of service quality, due to the close proximity of staff and their customer. Unlike hospitality, where service quality was less dependent on any one employee or department with the organisation, individual social care workers were seen as having the most significant impact on service quality. The HR director of SC2 compared the nature of the service provided, to an experience in a retailer:

> If you go to Tesco's on your way home this evening for a sandwich, you may go into Tesco's, find a sandwich that you really like at a really good price. You'll go down to checkouts, meet Betty on the checkout, and you might receive the most horrendous service ever. And you'll walk out that store thinking, that was horrendous. I can't believe the way I've just been treated. However, there's a chance that you still might go back to Tesco's tomorrow for your sandwich because you know what? You really enjoyed your sandwich, and it was at a good price. You just might choose to go to a different checkout operator. In our organization, if one of our colleagues is having a really bad day, there is nothing in between that [colleague] and the service that we provide. So, the quality of care is so dependent on people doing the right thing, and going over and above to make the people that we support feel loved, valued, cherished, every single day. [Interview 33]

The thinking behind this approach was very similar to the service-profit chain model found in the hospitality case.

> I don't believe you can ever really give the best customer experience if you are not given the best employee experience. I think one is solely predicated on the other, that's particularly true in an organisation like ours. Because for me, in a service delivery organisation like this, there is literally nothing else within that transaction between me as a support worker, and you as a person being supported, except that relationship between the two of us. [Interview 31]

This ideology was firmly embedded into the language of each organisation. In SC2, these ideas were integrated into their mission statement: "*To change lives by delivering world-class support to people with care needs, and by being a leading employer of exceptional people*." The mission of SC1 was: "*Transforming lives: enabling the people we support to realise their true potential*", and while this didn't explicitly mention the role of staff in achieving this mission, this idea was reflected in one of the organisational strategic aims: "*We aim to be the employer of choice and invest in our values-driven workforce*". In SC2, their mission statement also reflected a shift in thinking within the organisation with regards to staff. Their mission statement had not always including the role of staff, as the Internal Communications Manager described:

> Our previous mission statement was all around the people we support. Whereas our mission statement now, is about employing exceptional people, and delivering exceptional support. So, it puts staff and people supported 50-50 in that mission statement, and we'd never had that before. [Interview 31]

The change to this mission statement had come about alongside the introduction of a new strategic plan, which was put in place following the recruitment of a new director of HR into the organisation in 2017. SC1 had also made a similar shift within their new strategic plan, which placed greater emphasis on staff, whereas as previously, the main focus had been on the customer: *"I think you have to value staff the same as you value the guys we support"* [Interview 46].

This ideology was also underpinned by the values of each organisation. Both SC1 and SC2 had a set of organisational values. As shown in table four, the values of each organisation closely mirrored each other in terms of the purpose and the language used, with the exception of one value from SC1 (*Honest and open*) which was not reflected in the values of SC2. Both organisations were keen to stress that their values applied to stakeholders beyond the service

users. In SC2, this principle was embedded into the language of some of their values (such as Deliver and Include). SC1 stated in their values statement that their values did not just apply to service users, but also extended to employees, trustees, volunteers, carers and families. Within SC1, these values were integrated into the induction, training, appraisal procedures, organisational policies, and more recently, the recruitment process. SC2 had embedded these values into the delivery of their strategic plan.

Table Four: Organisational Values in SC1 and SC2

SC1	SC2
Enable: we strive to enable individuals to meet their needs and fulfil their aspirations, respect.	Enable others to fulfil their needs and achieve their aspirations.
Excellence: we will continually develop a workforce with the necessary enhanced skills to deliver the highest level of person-centred support.	Aspire to be the best at what we do.
Outcomes-focused: Listening and working with people to achieve what they want and need.	Deliver the best possible outcomes for the people we support, our colleagues and the people we work with.
Dignity: We respect the unique worth of every person: people we support, families, carers, employees and volunteers.	Include the people we support, our colleagues, partners and the communities we work in.
Respect: We respect individual choice and promote inclusion, rights, and independence	Respect individual choice and promote inclusion rights and independence.
Honest and open: we believe being honest and open is the basis of trust.	

6.2.2 The Approach to Managing Well-being

Similar to the hospitality cases, both SC1 and SC2 described a recent renewed focus on well-being: *"We're really trying to push our agenda about well-being. It's one thing to say that you care and you value your staff, but it's actually to evidence that"* [Interview 41]. The directors of HR in each organisation cited the driving force behind this approach to be the need to improve the financial sustainability of the organisation. In contrast to the hospitality, the well-being approach was more formalised and appeared to be integrated into the strategic plan of each organisation, enacted through recruitment, retention and L&D strategies. In both

organisations, the approach to well-being was viewed as having both formal and informal components. SC1 described some "high level" practices that formed part of their approach to well-being to try and improve absence levels:

> We have an occupational health doctor, so we can refer staff who are often unwell... We have a physiotherapist that we can refer people to. So, until very recently musculoskeletal injuries were the most common injuries for care workers. It's now stress, anxiety and depression. So, if somebody hurts their back or hurts their arm, we can send them to a physio, that's something you can fix quite quickly. So that has had a big bonus and we can refer people, if the manager phones me today, the chances are that I can get the person seen tomorrow or the next day, so it's really quick... We've also got our counselling service, an employee assistance program that staff can phone 24/7… We have got a mental well-being in the workplace policy, but we think we can probably do with updating that… Then we've got all sorts of flexible working stuff… We've got flexi-time policies, time off of leiu, I think our annual leave is quite generous. [Interview 41]

In addition to these high level practices, well-being was also viewed as something that happened "locally", at the level of the individual service, and was a responsibility of line managers. This seemed to encompass various initiatives and activities, as one senior manager described:

> [Managers] were talking yesterday about coming into January, it's a hard time for staff. They're last getting paid on the 21st of December, they've got to go till the end of the month. And we were talking about some well-being things that we're doing locally. We've engaged with an aromatherapist, and we've set up 10-minute massages. A five-pound voucher to go and get a coffee. We'll give a voucher, just come and say to us, "Look I need to go for a walk for 15 minutes," and the managers will step in and oversee the service to let them do that. [Interview 46]

At this local level, the initiatives and activities that went on were at the discretion of the service manager, and so created some inconsistency across the organisation. In recognition of this, a well-being working group had been set up within SC1, tasked with ironing out some of these problems: *"We've got a lot of good stuff in place at the moment, but it's all going on independently… What we need to do is bring that all together so that we've got a proper strategy and a proper approach to looking at well-being"* [Interview 50]. In addition to these activities, the HR director also emphasised that flexibility and discretion from line managers was part of this local approach:

> I'm trying to get my managers just to see that, make your mindset, if a staff member asks you for something, if you can give them it, just give them it, rather than don't give them it. If people need to get away an hour earlier or come in an hour-- so just trying to build the confidence of managers to be flexible and allow people to do things like that. [Interview 41]

At both the high and local level, several tensions were highlighted around the approach to well-being. While there was a desire to improve employee well-being, there was recognition from senior managers that decisions were financially motivated, and the sustainability of the organisation had to be prioritised: *"Do we make organisational decisions that would adversely affect people's well-being? Yes, but a lot of those for me are financially driven because of the dire state of affairs that we are in around finances"* [Interview 31]. At the local level, the pressures caused by short staffing often did not allow for well-being to be prioritised. Line managers in both organisations often commented that they had certain workers in their service who would always want additional overtime. This was viewed positively by managers as they needed workers like this who could cover hours where the service was short, to avoid the use of agency staff. There was no formal mechanism within either organisation to protect staff from working excessive overtime.

As mentioned earlier, both SC1 and SC2 saw the well-being agenda as a means of achieving efficiencies that would improve their financial sustainability. Reducing absence costs was viewed as key to this plan: *"If we were to get* [absence and retention rates] *better in our organisation, that could put £1.6million into the surplus pot"* [interview 33]. In SC1, making efficiencies in the area of absence was part of the strategy that allowed the organisation to become an accredited LW employer:

> About two to three years ago we were about 7.5% absence. We're now at 3.5%, so the savings that you make in that, the savings you make in [staff] turnover, the savings you make in agency staff, have allowed us to then in turn reinvest into wages… we get funding which helps us to get Scottish Living Wage. The other part is we had to make use of efficiencies. So, that's the main driver in terms of well-being. [Interview 41]

In terms of managing absence, some similar practices and trends to the hospitality case were observed in social care. Each organisation had a well-developed absence management policy, which treated absence as a performance issue. Absence was closely monitored, with HR processes focused on KPIs: *"It is very much focused on that, we have a body missing, how many days are lost?"* [Interview 50]. Again, like the hospitality case, the most common causes

of absence in each organisation were mental health and musculoskeletal related illness. However, in contrast to the hospitality case, both SC1 and SC2 reported higher levels of long-term absence, with short term absences less of a problem:

> Any absence survey you look at will tell you that most staff take short term and intermittent absences, and we're something like 75% of our absences are long-term, serious health issues. So, that tells me that we generally don't have a problem with people waking up in the morning and saying, "I can't even bother going into work today." [Interview 41]

A tension that was highlighted was in discussions with senior and line managers within SC1 was that because HR policies and processes for managing absence were performance focused, they often did not address the true causes of absence:

> We've got lots of stuff around capability and disciplinary, but we've not quite got that in relation to how we better support people to stay in work. We've got sickness protocols that if you're off sick. We've got managing attendance, it will trigger first stage, second stage then we've got lots of performance and practice capabilities. So, we focus a lot on what we can do if people underperform… I just think we could invest a wee bit more in why people are underperforming, why people are constantly off sick and staff retention and all the other areas, because I don't think there's anywhere near enough there with the organisation. [Interview 49]

This was an issue raised by several managers, who felt that the approach to managing absence was reactive rather than proactive. The Health and Safety Manager within SC1 gave the example of absence related to manual handling, which was a common cause of absence. At times the risk assessment would not be sufficient to protect the worker, however, this issue was not identified early enough, and was therefore not addressed until the situation led to an absence. The absence was then dealt with via the HR process, which treated the absence as a performance issue, rather than as a health and safety issue:

> There is a bit of an assumption out there, that if you've got safer handling training and you've done a safer handling assessment that talks about the handling of the person you support, that that is sufficient. The trouble is, what it doesn't do is it doesn't focus on the employee doing the handling… So, the risk assessment process isn't working quite the way it should…
>
> When it's dealt with through HR, they never used to let Health and Safety know when people were off with stress related, musculoskeletal related health conditions… because they tend to be chronic conditions and seeing the sickness rather than accident or incident, they don't get notified to us… So that's where it's being more managed as an absence thing.

> As opposed to an occupational health direction, where health and safety is having some input and going, well, we can support on this, and before somebody goes off, when maybe they first complain about it or once they've gone off and we're looking to get them off, a, for as short period as possible, and b, back into work, and there can be a variety of ways that we do that…. rather than just putting people on a [absence] plan and saying, "Well, if you go off again within the next however many days, you won't get sick pay or whatever." It's supportive rather than punitive. [Interview 50]

This example highlights that a proactive approach that addresses the structural demands of work is required if well-being is to be improved, rather than reactive absence management processes.

6.2.3 HR Practices

SC1 and SC2 were operating a three-year and five-year strategic plan respectively. There appeared to be a close integration between the strategic plan and the HR strategy, with a general sense that one could not happen without the other. Both organisations recognised that they were in highly competitive markets in terms of winning business and attracting the best labour. Therefore, the HR strategy was viewed as an integral part of the strategic plan. In a similar vein to the hospitality case, SC1 and SC2 were keen to position themselves as 'employers of choice', through various HR practices.

SC1 was in the middle of their three-year strategy, which contained ten strategic objectives in relation to staff. The priorities for the Head of HR within SC1 included engagement, reward, employee well-being, recruitment, onboarding and retention. A strong focus had been placed on recruitment in SC1, as a means of addressing staff shortages in various services across the organisation. In response to recruitment challenges and to position itself as an 'employer of choice', SC1 has attempted to differentiate itself from other employers and make itself more attractive to potential employees through the employer brand, as described by the HR director:

> I think there's only two providers that are now paying more than [SC1]. So, we always had a good name for the training we delivered. Our training is perceived as, if not the best, one of the best in the market. So, we are now able to offer training and wages which is at the top end. Hopefully, with the way we're trying to market ourselves, and the way we're genuinely trying to treat individuals, our reputation will get better, and we will become an organisation that people actively seek out and want to come and work for. [Interview 41]

As part of this focus of recruitment, SC1 also changed the way in which they recruited, moving to a values-based approach. This move was based on the recognition that they did not need to recruit people with experience, and that it was more effective to recruit people who strongly associated with their values. In their job adverts, they sought to attract people with values similar to the organisational values, making it clear that experience in the job was not necessary. This was another way that SC1 attempted to differentiate itself from competitor employers, as the Head of HR describes:

> We did something quite bold in terms of our recruitment campaign, because we set out to be different from the 200 other care providers that are also recruiting at the same time. So, all we did is, we used images to try and show what care workers look like, and what our care workers look like. And it was to try to get people in. And on our radio advert for example, we actually said you don't need experience. As long as you match our values, we can give you the training. So, if you've got people, and I'm thinking particularly about maybe people that haven't worked because they've been raising families or people that maybe weren't actually thinking about working in care or even thinking about moving. If they have got basic values of respect and dignity and their open to treating people on an individual basis, we can give them all the technical stuff that they need. [Interview 41]

SC1 also integrated this values-based approach into their style of interviewing, moving from a competency-based approach to a values-based approach, whereby the recruitment parameters were set in alignment with the organisational values: "*it has been really successful… if we find people that match our values, then we can bring them in and provide them all the training, health and safety, medication, all that kind of thing"* [Interview 41]. There was a high response rate to this recruitment campaign, with SC1 receiving approximately 650 applications for vacancies, and making approximately 120 offers of employment as a result. Furthermore, this strategy was also starting to impact on retention levels:

> It's early days yet. What I can say is that our turnover has improved immeasurably. At the worst of our problems our turnover was at 36%. That's setting the scene of an organisational average in Scotland of a ballpark of about 25%. When I did the quarter two figures at the end of September, we were 14%. So, people are not leaving in the numbers that they were. For two or three years our recruitment team might have been bringing 600 or 700 new people into the business but 600 or 700 people were leaving, so all this work was being expended just to stay still. What we're hoping now is, if we maintain a turnover of about 14% or 15%, and I know there's about 70 or 80 people in the system to join us, it starts to tip things in the right direction. Our staff numbers go up, it gives us more bodies on the ground, we use agency less, people don't need to work as many hours, so that the whole hamster wheel starts to slow down and become better for our frontline staff. [Interview 41]

SC2 had also embarked on a new organisational strategy. This strategy included six strategic projects, two of which fall under the HR remit: culture and L&D. While SC2 did not have a specific focus around recruitment, the director of HR commented, *"We could have so easily picked recruitment and with hindsight, I think maybe we should have… But I think, softly, recruitment's in there as a bit of a seventh project anyway"* [Interview 33]. SC2 were also using their organisational values in the recruitment process, using a values-based interviewing style. However, there was a recognition within SC2 that the organisational values were not fully embedded, which was something they aimed to address through their culture project:

> We've got some work to do with the culture and with the values, ensuring everybody does live and breathe them. I think a lot of that is to do with the attraction piece and who we attract to the organisation because as much as, I say, we have got them within our recruitment, we still have a lot of work. Which is why we've got one of the strategic projects, is the culture project because we know that we need to look at the culture. We also know that getting people who have come here through TUPE rather than through choice, getting them to live and breathe our values is completely different than somebody that's looked us on the internet and chosen to apply for a job. [Interview 34]

In practice, this project had involved various activities, but the main goal of this project was to develop an employee value proposition (EVP) for the purpose of engagement. Initially, a colleague representative forum was set up, to encourage participation from staff in shaping the project. Following this, an external research agency was commissioned to find out from staff what the existing culture of the organisation was like, and how staff would like the culture of the organisation to change. From this, an EVP describing the employee experience was developed, based around the values of the organisation. Additionally, the practical HR activities used to create this experience were then mapped against the employee lifecycle, as a way of showing how employees would experience the culture at each stage of employment, from attracting the candidate to someone exiting the organisation:

> Well [the EVP is] about us starting from the very beginning, right the way through to someone leaving us, and what that employee experience should be. And then we've defined, like at every stage, what should that feel like for people. So, when people are even looking to join here… we should be saying to them, "this is one kind of organization, you'll work with really special people, you'll have a chance to make a big difference." And equally an applicant should be like, "Wow, this seems like a really great place to work in. I want to apply now." [Interview 31]

This EVP was then communicated to every service manager within the organisation through a one-day workshop with the senior management team, to embed this EVP across the

organisation. This project seems to be reflective of the shift in thinking mentioned in the previous section, around valuing the experience of staff as well as the experience of the service user.

Within SC1, the HR director also described a need for a change in the organisational culture. However, the motivation behind this change in culture has been driven by the need to put in place more formal processes, as the sector becomes more tightly regulated and monitored. That said, a similar need to engage staff in the process of changing the culture was described:

> Underpinning [the strategic plan] is really a change in our culture. A number of years ago when the present management team came in, they found that the organisation was maybe a little bit laissez-faire. We had our monitoring processes in place, but if you asked a senior manager, has that person had supervision, they would say yes. If you ask them how they knew that, they would say, "Billy the manager told me." We weren't in a mindset of actually going and checking, and we couldn't always evidence things. So, we had to go on a little bit of a journey to get to where we are now. Not everybody bought into that and not everybody accepted that. And at one point, we did find ourselves in more formal processes than we would have liked. But that was very much about taking us forward and getting a level. Because we're also highly regulated, it's not enough for us to tell regulators or commissioners, "yeah we're doing these things" unless we can be absolutely sure that we are doing them. So, we've really been at the centre of driving that culture forward, but very much doing that at the same time as trying to engage with the staff, because without staff you can't really deliver services. [Interview 41]

6.2.4 Approach to Managing Labour Costs

A key difference from the hospitality case was that labour costs were not as tightly monitored at the level of the individual worker, unlike the hospitality cases which restricted individual's working hours through closely monitored casual contracts. Social care used far fewer casual contracts in comparison to hospitality. Given that SC1 and SC2 were more able to reliably predict what their labour requirements were, they were able to offer contracts with a set number of hours. In SC1, there was limited use of ZHCs within the organisation. Workers on ZHCs were referred to as 'relief workers', and these contracts were only used at the request of the employee. Instead, it was more common for managers to report that their services were understaffed due to vacancies. SC1 and SC2 both had difficulties recruiting enough staff to fill vacant hours, and therefore did not need to be restrictive with staff as to their individual working hours.

Labour costs within SC1 and SC2 were closely monitored and controlled. However, the approach to managing labour costs did not appear on the surface to be as hard as the hospitality case. Each organisation stressed their need to create efficiencies in their wage bill, however this coincided with both organisations taking steps to improve pay, terms and conditions for staff. The attitude was that making efficiencies through improved retention of staff, reducing recruitment costs and reducing absence is what would allow to pay to be improved longer term. Therefore, the overall purpose of creating efficiencies was not to extract profit, but to improve the overall sustainability of the organisations. However, as will be seen in the following section, this need to create efficiencies did lead to a hardening of the approach to managing labour costs.

6.2.5 Pay, Terms and Conditions, and Benefits

Both SC1 and SC2 paid the LW rate to their care staff within Scotland. At the time of the interviews, SC1 had just become accredited as a Scottish Living Wage employer. When asked how this increase in wages had been funded, the HR director highlighted that while some funds had come from the Scottish Government, this had not been enough to cover the total increase to their wage bill:

> The pot starts at maybe £10 million … £9 million arrives in the local authorities and £6 million gets passed on to the social care charities… So, we might get 4% bonus if you like, from Glasgow, but Inverclyde give us 2%, North Lanarkshire give us 1.8%. We get different funds from there. So, let me not be churlish, we get funding which helps us to get Scottish Living Wage. The other part is we had to make use of efficiencies. [Interview 41]

So, while some funding had been received to support the wage increase, it was still necessary for SC1 to make 'efficiencies' in order to pay this increase, and this was done in several ways. Firstly, SC1 were able to make a saving on the cost of agency staff by negotiating an exclusive contract with one agency. Previously, several different agencies had supplied SC1 with staff to cover shortages, however each agency charged a different hourly rate for staff, with some considerably higher than others. SC1 had recently been able to negotiate a new agreement with one single agency that would provide staff at a consistent and lower hourly rate. A notable saving had been made through reducing the absence rates with the organisation, from 7.5% to 3.5% over the previous three years. Additionally, pay rises were also withheld from back office staff, to allow frontline staff to receive an increase.

SC2 also paid the LW rate care staff in Scotland but continued to pay the minimum wage rate for their staff in their operations based in England. Additionally, non-care staff in Scotland (domestic and housekeeping staff) continued to receive the minimum wage. However, as part of their strategic plan, £1 million from the organisation's surplus was set aside for investment in staff, and SC2 had recently upgraded and re-instated a number of terms and conditions using these funds. The selection of the terms and conditions to be upgraded were agreed in conjunction with the organisation's staff forum. The staff forum was made up of representatives from the frontline in each region, which meant that frontline staff had some voice in which terms were a priority to upgrade. Upgraded terms included: re-instatement of long service awards, upgrading the pay of staff under 25 to the same rate of pay as over 25s; the introduction a death in service benefit; and, maintaining the wage differential between support workers and senior support workers in line with NMW increase. When asked why the surplus was not used to increase wages, the director of HR felt that it was not sustainable to increase wages:

> I think it's about sustainability of the organisation, to be frank… At some point, when we do increase the surplus… our aspiration and ambition is absolutely to be able to pay more than the minimum wage… But right now, we are not in a position financially to be able to do that. We're trying to work with the local MPs, and the local authorities who really, again, are trying to obviously cut the cloth accordingly when they've got financial stretches. We've got to work together to be able to lobby, to say, we need to do something really, really different here. Because actually there's going to be more organisations that crumble through this challenging time if we don't do something different. [Interview 33]

SC2 had the strategic goal of achieving an annual surplus of £10 million that could be invested into their staff, customers and communities. So, while efficiencies were made with the view of improving sustainability, SC1 and SC2 still sought to control labour costs by means other than casual contracts, and these approaches were harder in nature. This was particularly true to the approach to managing absence. In each organisation there were close monitoring and control of the processes involved in managing absence, with employees only eligible for statutory sick pay. Additionally, this can be seen in the tight control of agency staff within SC1. While not explicitly stated, there seemed to be a culture of avoiding the use of agency staff wherever possible, with labour costs controlled through the use of overtime and more part time workers instead.

Several tensions in pay were also highlighted. There was a general consensus among line managers that even with the increase in Scotland to the LW, the pay for frontline workers was still not enough for the responsibility associated with the job. Managers regularly compared the work that staff did to other better paying professions, such as social work, nursing, and other similar roles within the NHS. One service manager in SC1 described how he felt the level of skill required and the complexity of the role for support workers was not reflected in the level of pay:

> People don't really understand how much work actually needs to go into supporting somebody… you need to know about different conditions, and different medicines, and different behaviours, and different parts of Autism, for our project, for example, and ADHD. Then the medical stuff that comes along with some people like their catheters, they need to know how to drain and put clean catheters on. The clinical aspect-- and those other services within what is a lot more clinical that deal with people that are on chemo medicine and they have tracheostomies. They have nutrition through their PEGs. … a lot of people that we support do have behaviour that's considered challenging, and that can involve people being punched and kicked and hit and bit and scratched and scarred, and just total exhaustion. So, I don't think staff get paid what they should be getting paid for the work that they do. [Interview 51]

A further tension in pay was raised around the pay of senior support workers and line managers. Managers in both SC1 and SC2 highlighted that the narrowing of the pay differential between support workers and service managers, and the opportunity for support workers to work sleepovers and overtime meant that they could end up being paid more than supervisors:

> The gap is narrowing between the low level managers and the people that they are managing, to the extent now that if a support worker works one or two sleepovers per week they are making more money than the people that are managing them. And sleepovers aren't optional… there is an expectation that they do them. [Interview 43]

So, while improvements had been made to the wage levels of frontline staff, the narrowing of the pay differential between frontline workers and senior support workers made the role of a senior support worker less attractive, particularly where remaining a support worker had the potential for higher wages.

Although ZHCs were not as prevalent in social care, both organisations saw flexibility as a key benefit they could offer staff. The use of formal flexible working arrangements was high, with almost every manager mentioning that they had staff on a flexible agreement. The statutory

minimum service an employee must have before they can make a flexible working request is 26 weeks; however, recognising that waiting period could be a barrier for some people to enter the organisation, SC1 had a policy of offering flexible agreements from the start of employment. However, senior managers and line managers in both organisations highlighted difficulties that being flexible with staff could cause, and there was a sense that managers felt that flexible working arrangements were inflexible with regards to the needs of organisation:

> We try to be as flexible as we can, but there comes a point you can only be flexible to a certain part… We did have at one point when I moved here, somebody that had had a flexible working pattern for 17 years, and her children have left home. And so, it was a right to have this, and I'm saying, actually it's not, it's a request, and there's no need for it now, so we had to do that. [Interview 46]

L&D was also viewed by the management of each organisation as one of the key benefits that they offered staff, and were using this to differentiate themselves from other employers. In the strategic plans of both SC1 and SC2, there were specific goals or projects in relation to L&D. The focus on L&D was underpinned by the ideology that offering better training would create long term efficiencies, as the L&D manager of SC2 described:

> Becoming one of the top employers of choice, that very much will hinge around that L&D offering. Because we can't necessarily offer competitive rates of pay in the sector but we can offer that as an alternative. And hopefully retain people that way and show them that they're worthy of that development. [Interview 32]

In SC2, there had been a specific focus on improving the quality of the training offered during the induction period, in order to combat the high levels of turnover from the organisation within the first three to six months of employment. Both organisations also had a high expectation on staff in terms of the volume of training that was expected, and an increased focus on L&D was also attributed to increasing levels of monitoring and regulation within the sector. Staff required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council had a large number of mandatory training courses to complete within the first six months of employment. Both organisations had made a move towards an e-learning approach for the majority of the training that they offered, to make it easier for staff to keep up to date with mandatory compliance training.

6.2.6 Awareness of the Hardship Caused by Low Pay

Both SC1 and SC2 argued that the levels of pay within the organisation were constrained by the funding available. As such, senior management were more willing to be critical of their pay rates for the frontline, as they did not consider it their fault. In SC1, the director of HR gave the following response when asked if the organisation had any awareness of in-work poverty:

> I'd probably be honest and say no. We know that £9 an hour- working it out at 39 hours, £9, four weeks, that's what people take home. I know that that probably equates to £1400-£1500 a month take home pay. You could probably easily have a £500 mortgage, a £200 car loan. You don't need to be a genius. I think we're all very proud that we've got the salary, as I say, from £7 up to £9. We on a journey and we'll try to get better. I've never really had anybody coming to me to say, "I can't afford this or I can't afford that." People must have other ways of dealing with it. But at the same time, that's a fair question to ask, and our people must struggle. [Interview 41]

Recognising the financial hardship faced by their staff, SC2 had taken steps to provide financial support to staff in their current strategic plan. SC2 set aside £100,000 as a charitable fund that employees in financial difficulties could apply to in situations of hardship, named the "Well-being Fund". The HR director of SC2 explained the thinking behind why the fund was set up:

> Somebody said, "We're doing really great stuff now for the people we support, but what about our own colleagues who are facing any form of hardship?" That really resonated with [the CEO] and I, and there'd been a couple of things that come to our attention, where people had been in some quite life-changing situations. Example being, a lady whose house had set on fire and burned down. She couldn't afford to pay any insurance, so she'd been left homeless. Other examples where people's husbands or wives had died extremely suddenly, with no savings, there was no way of paying funerals. We just thought what could we do that would really make a difference that we could really help the people of the organisation when they are in a life changing situation? … we've given various sums of money out from £250 up to £3,000. To date, we've awarded 20 colleagues money to just shy of £35,000. [Interview 33]

SC2 were clear that the fund was only to be used for situations of exceptional life changing circumstances, rather than living expenses that staff may be struggling to afford, such as car maintenance. However, some provision for these circumstances had still be arranged through a partnership with the Care Workers Charity for these situations. SC2 made a donation of £15,000 to the Care Workers Charity, and where their in-house fund could not help, staff were referred on to the Care Workers Charity, who provide support with living expenses. However,

it was recognised that this in-house fund was needed, as wages did not provide employees with enough of a financial buffer to be able to cope unexpected circumstances:

> Every application that we see in the well-being fund is about struggling. The employees are struggling. I think because people live from month-to-month, there isn't a pot that they can rely upon if something doesn't go to plan. So, if they end up ill, or if their partner ends up ill, they don't have that kind of pots out there that can support them in that circumstance… If there's a pay error, people will want the money paid as a manual payment. It's not like, "Oh, I can wait until next month." They need that money now, because quite often, every penny is accounted for isn't it? There isn't any leeway with that. They need that money. So, obviously, financial issues are a big thing within our organisation. [Interview 34]

In a similar way to managers within the hospitality sector, blame was also placed on the government for not providing better incentives for people to work more hours:

> Where I have noticed is some individuals can only commit to a 15 or a 16 hour contract because if they take more hours than that, it affects their benefit… I think one of the things our government could and should do is make it more than worthwhile for people to get off benefits and get into the workplace. Whether that's giving them one off grants to help them or maybe topping up wages for a period of time. I think they could do more to stimulate and motivate people. [Interview 41]

As was found in the hospitality cases, both SC1 and SC2 had staff who were subject to wage arrestments, suggesting that some employees were experiencing problem debt. Both SC1 and SC2 offered Employee Assistance Programmes, which included debt counselling services. Managers regularly mentioned that they would refer employees to this service if they became aware of someone struggling financially; however, there was no data to show what the uptake of these programmes from staff was like. Furthermore, both SC1 and SC2 were considering partnering with financial institutions at the time of the interviews, that would allow staff to be offered low interest rate loans, recognising that it may be difficult for employees to access mainstream credit options.

Similar to the hospitality cases, line managers awareness of the financial difficulties of their staff varied. Some managers had little or no awareness of any employees who might be experiencing financial hardship, a typical response being: *"I'm not aware of anybody at the moment currently that is struggling day-to-day. If I did, we would support them in that. But at*

the moment, no" [Interview 55]. There was also a general perception amongst line managers that most staff were able to manage financially due to the availability of overtime:

> [Staff] could take on additional relief work through other projects within SC1. They have the opportunity to take on work at weekends if they wanted to… They've got access to the internal vacancy list, they've got access to other jobs as they come through from other organisations that we'll make them aware of as well… there's been nobody came to say "I've a massive debt, I'm in a mess and I don't know what to do with that." [Interview 38]

Recent changes to pay for sleepovers from a flat fee to an hourly rate were also cited as a means to boost wages of frontline workers struggling financially:

> So, staff are now being paid an hourly rate for their sleepovers. … They were going from £30-32 per sleepover to now getting £72 per sleepover. So that's helping a lot of staff, but they're only just starting to see the benefit of that. I would like to see them in six months and hope that actually, that's making a big difference to them. [Interview 42]

Other managers were more acutely aware of the difficulties that staff faced in paying for basic living costs:

> Even us as managers, there are sometimes where you sitting waiting to get paid at the end of the month. That can actually just be by paying your bills, and people have kids and stuff as well. They've got mortgages, bills, kids, schools and then everything that happens outside the work, it's money for this, this, and this. Then your kids need this, this, and this. And just your general life. You've got a car to pay for, you've got everything. [Interview 51]

Some managers commented that aside from pay, staff needed more recognition for their work, with one noting that *"I don't think it's all about pay, I think it's just saying thanks to staff … of course, staff want more pay, but actually underneath that, just being recognised for what they do"* [Interview 46].

6.3 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has provided an analysis of the HR practices and underpinning philosophies found in four organisations positioning themselves as 'employers of choice' within the hospitality and social care sectors. All four organisations argued that the level of pay they could offer was constrained by the nature of their sector, and therefore sought to improve their offering to employees in other ways. A similar service-profit chain philosophy was shared among all four organisations, taking the view that by looking after their staff, the staff will better serve

customers, and revenues from customers will increase as a result. The key difference between the case studies was that in hospitality, the overall aim of this strategy was to produce profits for their owners, whereas the social care organisations aimed for financial sustainability and surpluses which could be re-invested into the organisation and its stakeholders.

That said, when it came to managing labour costs, ultimately both the hospitality and social care cases took a hard approach, and there was a need to closely monitor labour costs in all four organisations. However, the ways in which labour costs were controlled manifested in very different ways. In the case of hospitality, labour costs were tightly controlled at the level of the individual employee, where working time was kept to a minimum through high levels of numerical flexibility. In the social care sector, savings in labour costs were sought through what might be considered a high-road approach, with the aim of making longer term efficiencies through retention of staff and reducing absence levels. There were varying levels of recognition of the hardship caused to employees as a result of low pay. However, the issue of low wages were more often attributed market forces, rather than recognising low wages as an unsustainable or irresponsible practice. This consideration of employer approaches sets the scene for the next chapter, which will explore the experience of low wage workers in their work and home lives.

7. Data Chapter Two: The Employee Experience of Low Paid Work

The aim of this chapter is present the findings in relation to the following research questions:

> *What is the experience of low paid employees of managing job demands and resources across the work-home interface?*
>
> *How do HR practices influence the employee experience of well-being across the work-home interface in low wage work?*
>
> *How do these experiences compare across hospitality and social care sectors?*

To answer these questions, this chapter will explore the experiences of the participants in low wage work. The experiences of participants were explored using the conceptual model, looking at the resources, demands and outcomes at play. The data revealed that participants were exposed to various demands that they attempted to balance with very limited resources. Job demands and resources emerged as a result of HR practices which shaped the experience of well-being. As will be seen, these experiences were highly complex. The experiences described by participants were often multi-dimensional in nature, discussing various resources, demands and outcomes in the one experience. Therefore, the chapter is structured thematically, with the model used to explore each theme. In keeping with the Pragmatist framing of the research, the themes were generated abductively, through an iterative process of open coding of the data, and reference back to the conceptual model found in the literature, continually asking the all-important qualitative question: what is going on here? As such, themes in this chapter represent groups of associated data found in both cases that had a theoretical commonality. The common themes across the hospitality and social care sectors included: workloads and staffing levels; working hours and overtime; relationships with line managers; relationships with colleagues; relationships with customers; training and progression; managing money on a low income; and, perceptions of pay and reward.

7.1 The Hospitality Sector

7.1.1 Workloads and Staffing Levels

Participants in both H1 and H2 often described their jobs as stressful. High workloads and inadequate staffing levels within hospitality were frequently cited by participants as demands of the job that led to stress. The volume of work was at times unpredictable and could increase for participants during busy seasonal periods where there were a high volume of customers (such as Christmas), or when workers had to take on extra responsibilities. For example, one worker from H2 described how busy periods created extra demands in his role in the leisure facility:

> If there's a lot of guests in the hotel and there's a lot of people on the poolside. Obviously, we have a capacity and if it's reaching capacity - maybe a lot of children and families, their parents aren't quite strict - it can be stressful because, obviously, it's a safety hazard. [Interview 62]

Closely connected to the workload issue was understaffing, which was one of the most commonly cited causes of stress for participants. The demands placed on staff due to regular understaffing could be significant, as one worker describes:

> It's days where there's like 400 people in the ballroom and we have like three staff, and you're thinking, "how are we meant to do this?" [chuckles]. The manager doesn't even try to get staff, he doesn't get agency, refuses to use agency, and it's really stressful. [Interview 8]

One interviewee described how she worked in a café which served not just hotel customers but also members of the public, and was expected to manage with just two members of staff:

> It can be quite a struggle sometimes… You're trying to do all these things, so you can't serve-- like taking their order, doing a coffee and food all at one time with two people-- and clear tables. So, it can get quite stressful and quite annoying. [Interview 15]

While understaffing was often built into the rota, it was also often something that was unpredictable. This was blamed on causal contracts of employment which created a culture of last minute 'sick calls', creating stress for the remaining staff:

> P: Quite a lot of the time here you feel like you're doing a lot of work if you're understaffed and stuff like that. Quite a lot of people, because you're not contractually obliged to come, quite a lot of the time you just get a lot of sick calls and stuff like that as well. So, a lot of the time it's stressful…there are shifts when you come in here and its terrible…
>
> I: What would make a shift terrible?
>
> P: More when it's just absolutely heaving, and you don't have enough staff members. I'd probably say that's what it comes down to mostly, just when you have too much work to do, when you just can't cope. [Interview 3]

What emerged from several interviews was the perception that it was a specific strategy of H1 to understaff, in order to keep a tight control of the wage bill:

> A lot of the time, we're understaffed as well, because [H1] want to save money on payroll, and stuff. Once they've saved the money, they're like, "Oh, we should maybe have had more staff." You're like, well, next time take in more staff. But, generally, just understaffing, and that's one of the main issues that cause a lot of stress. [Interview 17]

Additionally, supervisors from H2 reported how during their shifts they would often have to take on the role of duty manager, over and above their normal responsibilities. H2 had a policy of having a supervisor take on the role of 'duty manager' on each shift, to deal with customers who ask to speak to a manager:

> I would say it was pretty difficult, though, because when we are a duty manager, we are also in our normal [supervisor] roles. So obviously, I'm a food and beverage supervisor but as well, I'll also be a duty manager. So, it's quite hard to find the balance, because it could be absolutely heaving on breakfast and I'll get called away on a duty manager call, and it's pandemonium [laughs]. [Interview 63]

Taking on this additional responsibility was an area of contention for these supervisors. This was a mandatory responsibility of their job, however, they were not given any additional pay during shifts where they were duty manager. However, a high level of demands were not always hindrances, and could also act as challenges:

> I'm a supervisor, I could be appointed to the restaurant today so I'm on breakfast today but also I've got to look after the bar as well as exec, as well as room service. If you're the supervisor on shift that day you've got to look after everywhere in F&B. And it can be challenging, but I wouldn't be here if I didn't like a challenge [laughs]. [Interview 63]

Aside from feeling stressed, one of the main effects that the participants felt that their workloads had on their well-being was tiredness, with nine of the participants describing feeling tired or exhausted at the end of a shift. A further cause of this was the high physical element to the job. This was found to be the case in almost every position held among the participants, and not just roles typically known for being highly physical, such as housekeeping. Both H1 and H2 were large hotel properties, and most participants reported that they had to move around the property frequently during their shift. For example, as one participant who worked the breakfast shift described: '*I like to track what I do, steps-wise. It can hit 20,000 steps in a day'* [Interview 16].

7.1.2 Working Hours and Overtime

The working hours of participants across H1 and H2 varied greatly depending on their role and the departments they worked in. As both organisations operated 24 hours a day, there was a wide range of shift patterns available, including early starts and late finishes. Working antisocial hours and longer travel commutes into work were further cause of tiredness:

> I'd be getting up at 05:00 each morning and in work for 06:00 or 07:00, finish at 14:00, 15:00, on the train home, I'd feel like I was falling asleep. I'd literally be in my bed by 20:00 just because I was so knackered. [Interview 3]

Shifts would tend to last approximately eight hours. However, working hours tended to intensify during seasonal periods and busy weekends, were staff were expected to work long shifts:

> December was hard. Christmas period is a really busy period for my department. There were Christmas parties every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, which means the bar was open every single day until 02:00 and then you have to clean the room and reset for the next day, for the next party. So, there were shifts lasting 16, 17, 18 hours. Then do the same the next day and then the next day and then the next day. After December, we actually had a team meeting and we just said that we all look like we aged 10 years in the last month [chuckles]. [Interview 67]

There was also some evidence that some participants did not receive the statutory daily rest break between their shifts[15]. For example, in H2, several workers described situations where an eleven-hour rest break between shifts was not adhered to:

> We start twenty minutes before each hour. So, in the morning it's 6:40 until 15:00 or late shift is 14:40 until 23:00. And then some days you'll finish at 23:00 then start again at 6:40 in the morning. So, that's just the more difficult part of it.[Interview 66]

On at least three occasions, this situation had happened on the very day that the participants were interviewed. One participant, who was more aware of the illegal nature of the working practice, described how it shaped their perception the level of concern that the management had for their well-being:

> I: In terms of your own well-being, do you feel as if that's something that the hotel care about?
>
> **P:** Yes and no… I think the shifts are absolutely brutal. I think it's actually below the legal requirement for resting break between the shifts in my job… for example, I finished at 23:00 last night, I was back in a 06:40 this morning. Between eight-hour shifts. I'm pretty sure the rest break is ten hours or something like that. [Interview 68]

Another participant described how in his department, early shifts ran from 5:45 to 14:15, and late shifts ran from 13:45 to 22:15. Again, he was often asked to work a late shift, followed by an early shift the next morning, giving only a seven hour rest break:

> I: Do you find that your work ever affects your health, either mentally or physically?
>
> P: It just means I get home at 23:00 and then I have food. So, I'm in bed maybe about 00:00, and then I get up at 03:00 or 04:00, go back to work. Which is okay. Sometimes I can manage, sometimes I get zero sleep… It happens every other week. [Interview 62]

This account shows the practicalities of having just a seven-and-a-half-hour rest break between shifts, and the potentially harmful consequences for their well-being. Often this practice was tolerated by participants, provided it was not a regular occurrence, or if they were able to negotiate the flexibility they wanted in exchange, as the following quote demonstrates:

[15] The UK Working Time Regulations 1998 entitles workers to a rest period of eleven consecutive hours per 24 hour period.

> I: Do you ever have to go from a late shift where you're closing on to an early shift?
>
> P: Today [laughs]… Today I'm actually in a double, because it shows that it's flexible. I wanted three days off, so I was off Friday, Saturday, Sunday. They wanted me to work Saturday but I said no, so today I'm on a double. Today I'm working from 07:00 till 23:00. Then tomorrow I'm back at 7:00. It's going to be a little-- [laughs] But they don't do that- it doesn't get worse than that. So if you're on a close and you're here until 04:00 in the morning, you would never be the person that's back at 07:00 in the morning. That would never happen. I would say the worst that happens is today, which is still all right.
>
> I: The worst would be finishing at 23:00 and then starting at 7:00?
>
> P: 23:00 or midnight, 01:00, and then starting at 7:00. Again, if that's something that would bother me, I could say, but it doesn't really [chuckles]. Also, I know this was my idea instead of working on Saturday, I offered to do this. So, it's up to me as well. I'm not forced into doing it. [Interview 67]

While this participant appears happy to agree to these working hours in exchange for flexibility, the conditions under which this flexibility is negotiated still benefits the employer significantly, with potentially harmful consequences for the employee, as the only way to actually access the 'benefit' of flexibility is to exchange a statutory right.

The issue of flexibility of working time was particularly important for participants with childcare responsibilities. From the sample of participants from H1 and H2, only three had young dependants. These participants were female and childcare was a particular demand for them. Two of these participants had children with a serious health condition, which placed additional caring demands of these workers. A participant from H1 had a child with Down's Syndrome, who discussed how negotiating her working hours helped her to juggle her caring commitments. As seen is the following extract, being available to ensure her son got and from school safely was critical to her being able to fulfil her caring obligations whilst remaining in work. However, the nature of this flexibility also came at a cost, as the job required her two work split shifts, creating further demands on her time and increasing the cost of transport:

P: I'm in the housekeeping department. I'll be 19 years here this year… my son has Downs Syndrome, and so I kind of work around him. He goes in a wee taxi [to school], and I just come straight to work… I don't really start till 09:30 but I'm in at 08:45. And I don't want to change my time because the wee fellow's taxi doesn't turn up, and I've got to sort that, so I've got time to play with, to get to my work on time… I also come back at night to clean two rooms.

I: … So, you do 09:30 till 13:00, and then 18:30 to 19:30?... How does that suit you because that's quite a big gap?

P: It doesn't. But then that's due to the kind of work we do… It's fine because my priority is to work round about the wee fellow. And I put it in writing so that's how I only do Monday to Friday. Because then I need to put him on his taxi and take him off and be at home at the weekend.

I: So, have they been quite flexible that way then?

P: That way, aye. Yeah, definitely. I just don't like coming back at night. Nobody does, but we do it.

I: So, would you go home in the middle of the day?

P: Aye because I have to pick the wee fellow up… I'd like to do away with nights but that's just never going to happen, but then that's just what comes in the business. Aye but it's fine, aye. And I'm grateful for them to work around the wee fellow, that's my main criteria. [Interview 69]

Additionally, the account from this participant contradicted claims from the GM, who stated *"There's no split shifts in our hotel, now, I'm really pleased to say. There hasn't been for many years"* [Interview 59]. However, because these working hours alleviated the stress of her greatest demand in the home domain (making sure her son got to school), this situation was tolerated for a substantive period of time.

7.1.3 Relationships with Line Managers

Relationships with line managers were an important aspect of how the participants perceived their own well-being. However, perceptions of the quality of that relationship were quite variable in both H1 and H2. For the participants who described their manager as supportive, this was perceived as someone who would help the participant to cope with the demands of the job, particularly during busy periods: *"My manager will just step in and help straight away*" [Interview 16]. Additionally, flexibility in working hours, and a manager who was accommodating to the needs of staff, were generally viewed as supportive of well-being:

> [My manager is] decent at working around shift patterns if you need days off or stuff like that.... With the assistant manager, she's been filling in for the past four or five months while we've been looking for a new manager, but she is also dead caring for your needs. If you want days off, if you want holidays… They're always asking how you're doing, if you need any help, that sort of stuff. It's fairly positive. [Interview 3]

When the participants were asked if they felt that management cared about the well-being of staff, often the response was along the lines of '*to an extent'*. Participants often felt that their line manager did have genuine concern for their well-being but that there was little that that line managers could do to improve well-being, due to highly constrained resources: "*They do care, but, I don't think they've really got time to do anything about it. We're all stressed, especially, recently, with being understaffed"* [Interview 15]. A common view among the participants was that while their own manager had concern for their well-being, more senior managers were performance driven:

> I'd say mainly your heads of departments that you know quite personally, they are [concerned for your well-being]. If you're feeling ill or whatever, but you don't feel ill enough to go home, they'll be like, go can take half an hour, and go sort yourself out, and come back. Say if you've got reason to go home, you want to go home. Maybe not the more senior levels of staff. They're are quite money driven and quite like, "We need to meet these targets." [Interview 17]

Some participants reported that they currently or had previously had a poor relationship with a line manager, describing this as stressful and detrimental to their well-being. For example, one participant described how a difficult relationship with her line manager had caused her extreme stress, that led to her hair falling out:

> When I started to lose my hair, I didn't actually think it was work. It just didn't enter my head at all, until I went to the doctor and she asked me to describe a day or describe my relationship with my manager and stuff. And doctor said, "Yes, it's stress related." [Interview 8]

Attempts to repair this relationship by the participant were unsuccessful, and eventually the only way that the participant could resolve the situation was by finding a new position within a different department. Two other participants described similar situations, where a poor relationship with their manager had affected their well-being so negatively that they had to move to a different department.

A less supportive relationship with their line manager also had some more serious consequences for the longer-term well-being of the participants. One participant who worked in the kitchen described how the fans in the kitchen were not working properly and had not been fixed, and recently there had been two occasions were staff had fainted due to the temperature of the kitchen: "[Managers] *just look at, the business is still going ahead, so everything's fine. It may seem like a small problem, the heat in the kitchen. If they were in it for eight and 10 hours a day, then it would be a different issue"* [Interview 6]. Ever increasing demands in the job also reinforced the perception that performance was more of a priority than the well-being of staff:

> I: Do you feel as though the management here care about your well-being?
>
> P: Honestly? No… They always say we're the hardest working department [housekeeping], but then we always get this added and that added. And I think "oh God". No, I don't honestly, I don't. Maybe. They're not great at it…
>
> I: Do you feel as if your workload is just constantly increasing?
>
> P: Aye, sometimes it does [Interview 69]

In the following quote, this participant described the long-term physical impact of having previously worked in the hotel bar:

> I've got serious issues with my feet from working at the bar. That bar down there, it has a marble floor, so my feet were destroyed after a shift… Any shoes you wear, it doesn't matter. I've got basically all the nerves coming up here [points to right foot], they're all wrecked on this foot quite badly. I need to go and see a podiatrist all the time… This was the arm that I used to carry a tray on [right arm]. This shoulder has never been right since… I know it's from carrying a tray… It was never something that was put out there at team meetings. For example, "How are you guys? Has anyone hurt themselves?" It was only just your initial risk assessments. If anyone burnt themselves, straight away you would fill out the form, be sent to a hospital. Long-term aches and pains and things like that, we never felt welcome to raise an issue about it or anything [Interview 5].

This participant did not feel like she could approach her line manager with these issues, and this quote also illustrates how the approach of line managers in taking care of the well-being of staff was reactive rather than proactive. Serious and immediate accidents would be dealt with, but little preventative action would be taken to safeguard physical well-being.

7.1.4 Relationships with Colleagues

Relationships with colleagues was a resource that was highly valued by the hospitality participants. Across both H1 and H2, when asked what they enjoyed about their jobs or what the benefits of the job were, the participants frequently cited their relationships and friendships with their colleagues. A majority of participants viewed social support from their colleagues as one of the main benefits of their jobs, with participants often stating that their friendships with colleagues was their main reason for remaining in the job:

> [What I enjoy about the job] is, the people I work with. I've never known a more down to earth yet hardworking team at the same time. Everyone has this weird kind of, call it banter, everyone's on the same wavelength when it comes to professional work, but we also know how to have a bit of fun and a bit of laughter during service as well. [Interview 16]

In comparison to how social care participants described their jobs, what was noticeable was that hospitality participants never described their work as rewarding. When asked what kept participants in their jobs, or what they enjoyed most about their jobs, it was more likely that participants would mention their relationship with their colleagues as the main benefit of the job, rather than any reward scheme or other intrinsic reward:

> I think it's the staff that, you know, keep us all coming back to our jobs, day to day. We are, and we do seem to be, quite a close team. We're all friends. As well as inside the hotel, we're also friends on the outside of hotel. [Interview 63]

Having a good team was perceived as a vital resource for participants in H1, and this resource seemed to help them to cope better with other demands, particularly high volumes of work. It also made the job more enjoyable:

> I would say I enjoyed most the constant interaction with people. You were never at any point left on your own and not talking to someone. Which really suited me. Obviously, that wasn't always plain sailing because it's not always a positive conversation. Okay, you've got complaints and things like that as well, but for me, it was the busy weekend, the completely overrun, but your team, it's like that [crosses fingers]. It's the excitement of a busy weekend, that's what I really, really love about bar work. The registers are ringing, it's like-- I can't even describe the feeling, it's brilliant. [Interview 5]

There was an intensity to these relationships. This appeared to be influenced by the close proximity of the working environment, and also the anti-social nature of working hours, which meant that staff tended to socialise more with their colleagues. It was not uncommon for participants to describe their colleagues as family. As one employee noted:

> Your social life is with the people you work with because you maybe finish here 22:00, 22:30. They'll say, "Do you want to go for a beer?" They become your family. That's what it's like. It's just like one big family in a kitchen. [Interview 6]

Social support from colleagues also helped workers to cope better with the demands of the job, with positive spillover effects into their home life:

> It's quite good though when you get on really well with someone outside work. You feel comfortable enough to be able to just chat to them normally in work. We are a very, very close team… Even if it's just like if you've had a horrible shift, and you're like, "Right, okay. I finish at such and such time. I'm going to go home, get changed, and we'll go out for dinner." It's just like, as if, not a massive thing, like, do you want to go out this time. It's just, we're going to do that because we're that close. [Interview 17]

Good working relationships with colleagues provided staff with the necessary resources which enabled staff to cope better with the high demands of the job. One participant described how citizenship behaviours from other staff helped him to manage during busy periods and understaffing. This support from colleagues gives this interviewee the resource he needs to do his job well, and appears to add a sense of meaningfulness to work:

> You can have up to say 200 covers in one morning... It can get to a point where it's chaos, especially if you've not got enough staff, it's just a total, total, nightmare. But you get through it. Everyone helps each other out, its one team, that's one of our values, one of our behaviours. We all just muck in together no matter who you are, if you're a supervisor, if you're the bottom of the chain, top of the chain. Everyone does their bit to make sure that, the customers at the end of the day get the best experience that they can. [Interview 16]

However, colleagues were also a source of demands for participants. Where participants perceived there to be a lack of social support from their colleagues, this placed significant demands on participants and intensified the effects of other demands. One worker described how when working on New Year's Eve, she walked out of her shift due to excessive demands:

> I wasn't well, I had such a bad cold, but I was the only day shift person in until 15:00, and I started at 07:00. I thought, if I phone in, no-one's there, and they are not going to get anybody. So, I thought, I'll go, I'll push through, I'll tell the manager I don't feel well and maybe get somebody in, or I'll just leave when people start coming in. Some people were late, some people didn't come in. I was meant to finish at 15:00, and I was still there at 17:00. Then I seen some people that came in just sitting on their phones and I thought, "Do you know what? No, this is not happening." I left. I literally just walked out.[Interview 8]

While there were a number of demands at play in this situation - busy workload, understaffing, ill health - it appears to be the perceived lack of social support that brought the situation to a tipping point. The same participant explained why she eventually moved department, as a lack of support from her colleagues made the demands of the job unbearable. In this excerpt, she describes what her working day used to be like before moving departments:

> It's just chaos most of the time, because the night staff don't set up anything for us, which is quite annoying, which I actually had arguments with my manager about. [chuckles]. I don't see why I should set up all day for them at night, if they don't set up for us, and we have no time in the morning. That's actually part of why I moved to Reservations. It was just too stressful [chuckles] [Interview8]

The role of support from colleagues therefore add to the explanation of why understaffing is so stressful for participants, as it represents a significant resource loss for participants. The tight control of labour has significant consequences for the well-being of participants, not only because it increases demands such as workloads, but because it also depletes one of the participants most valuable resource from within the workplace.

7.1.5 Relationships with Customers

Relationships with customers were also a source of resources and demands for the participants. The level of resources provided by customers was not to the same extent as what colleagues provided, but nonetheless, appeared to be present. As alluded to in the previous theme, working with customers provided participants with a greater sense of meaning to their job:

> I'm quite an outgoing person, so the main reason I've stuck being a concierge in my last three [workplaces] is just due to communicating with guests. I like meeting people and making new friends and stuff, so I think I've got the best kind of job for that I can find, especially with foreigners and tourists… I like mixing with people and meeting people from different countries and cultures… I travel a lot myself… I feel like I'm just getting paid to talk to people and be friends with people, finding out interesting stories. [Interview 68]

This participant describes how experiences from the home domain enrich his experience in the work domain. Furthermore, an alignment between interests from the home domain in his job also seems to provide the participant with greater enjoyment and meaning in his work. Being able to connect with customers over something that they valued, even if only for a brief time, seemed to help participants attach greater meaning to their jobs, and added to the enjoyment of the job. Another example of this was found in a participant who worked as a personal trainer in the leisure facility of H2, *"I like being able to help people improve themselves. So, let them reach their goals, things like that"* [Interview 62]. This could also be seen where participants felt that the values of the organisation were authentic, and could connect these with their own personal values:

> The interaction with customers. It's probably maybe a bit clichéd but they say, 'People make Glasgow'[16], and I've never known a truer statement in my whole entire life for a place. No matter where you are and who you speak to. I feel that slogan works for here as well because we're a very-- one of the values we have at the hotel is local at heart, and I think that does nothing but oooz, the hotel does nothing but oooz local at heart. It is the interaction with people and people who've never been here before. We've got a surprising number of people actually come so often as well. When I started, there was a couple who said they come three times a year or something just to the same hotel, same place. Nothing changes. They just come regularly, which is nice. I like that, getting to know regulars.[Interview 16]

Therefore, aside from simply the social support that interactions with customers could provide to participants, being able to align their personal values with their work life was important and seemed to give participants a greater sense of harmony.

However, the extent of the social support received from customers was limited and was not nearly as common or as powerful as what was reported by participants from the social care

[16] The phrase 'People make Glasgow' stems from a tourism marketing campaign run by Glasgow City Council, which plays on the fact that the city is regularly voted as most friendly in the UK.

sectors. Instead, customers were more likely to be a source of demands for hospitality workers. Participants described how customers would engage in particular behaviours that increased the emotional demands of their workload. Often when participants referred to tiredness or exhaustion after a shift, this was described as emotional tiredness, as a result of dealing with stressful situations such as difficult customers: '*It's really emotionally draining because, just the way so many people speak to you'* [Interview 66]. As previously mentioned, the Christmas period was described by many staff as a stressful time due to the increased workload. However, as seen in the following example, demands were particularly exacerbated for workers when the demands were social in nature:

> Just because [the working environment] is so fast-paced, and there's always guests, and stuff, and it is the needs of the guests. And sometimes people can be absolutely lovely, but there's been so many occasions where people have been so nasty. Literally shouting at staff over stuff like, their drinks are taking too long or something. It's really not the end of the world. I know quite a lot of staff have, myself included, cry in the back at Christmas. [Interview 17]

Dealing with customer complaints was a particular demand that workers highlighted that led to stress. As seen in this example, when dealing with complaints, it is not necessarily the increase in workload that places unbearable demands on workers, but rather it is the behaviours of customers that causes the most stress. The next quote describes the complex balance of demands that workers faced working in the bar of H1:

> Your typical shift was at least 10 hours. Usually when you get to this kinda time of the year [November], 12-hour shifts. Sometimes, more than that if we're understaffed. But you get used to that, you tend to find after I've done that 10 hours I just really might as well just keep going. It was probably the fact that there was never an easy day. There was always a complaint, there was always something that went wrong that meant you were quite overwhelmed by something, or upset by someone's behaviour, or a guest is shouting at you because they're complaining. Things like that, so it was more kind of emotional exhaustion than anything. [Interview 5]

In this example, while there are the additional demands of workload, working hours and understaffing, it is the specific social demands created by customers that led to the participant feeling emotionally exhausted. Several participants in both H1 and H2 reported what amounted to abusive behaviours, particularly in the form of being shouted at by customers:

I: Is there anything that you don't enjoy about the job?

P: Getting shouted at by random people, like members of the public. That we can't stand up for ourselves when we're being spoken to. It's not the brand standard, so, we can't say anything back to anyone. We can't say anything to defend ourselves. We just have to stand there, and take it, and smile…. Not always shouted at but just being like, spoken down to. Like, people having an attitude towards you. You've done nothing but nice to them. You know you're the first point of contact for people, so you know it's going to-- Even then, sometimes you're a bit taken aback like how people speak to you like that. [Interview 66]

Incidents of verbal abuse were common, and participants found it difficult to understand, rationalise or excuse these behaviours from customers. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the previous quote, participants were required to respond in a way that was in line with the company image, which was very much in conflict with their own perception of how they should be treated. So, while customers could act as a resource, at times customers placed the largest demands on the well-being of participants.

7.1.6 Training and Progression

Participants did perceive there to be some opportunities to progress within both H1 and H2. However, accessing progression was not always straight forward. The opportunity to progress was often perceived to be dependent on the department the participants worked in. This could be because some departments did not regularly have roles available for staff to progress into. One supervisor from H2 who had been with the company for eight years, who had started as a casual worker and progressed eventually to supervisor, commented on the limited progression available:

They do try and progress you through H2. … They've got H2-run programs that you can do and qualification programs that you can do. But to be honest, in terms of stepping up, I suppose, it just depends on what department that you're really in. A lot of the positions are always filled. So usually, if you do step up and you're in that role for a long time. You do start to think, I need to move on to somewhere else, because you need to move on and move up sort of thing. But here, there is only so far you can go until you go, there's nowhere else I can really go from here. [Interview 63]

Another participant described how she had been trying to progress to the position of team leader for some time and had recently interviewed for a team leader position. She had been unsuccessful because a lack of available public transport meant that she was unable to work

late nights; however, late night working was a necessity of the team leader role within that particular department, making progression within that department a struggle:

> I: Do you feel like there is opportunity for you to progress here?
>
> P: In the hotel, yes. Not in [the] department [I used to work in], no. I can't really do evening shifts. I can't get home after like 22:00, because of the last train [home]. They've tried- like when he told me, "Well, you've not got [the team leader position]. This is why," I said, "Well, that I can't do anything about that, unless you can get me an account taxi home, because I can't stay". Then [the manager] put me in for a shift and it was like a 17:00 to finish. I'm like, "No." [chuckles] I had to go to his office and say, "You can't put me on for finish, finishes can be like three in the morning, how am I going to get home? I'm just going to have to wait when the station opens on six o'clock." He's like, "I thought you wanted to do them." I'm like, "No, I don't want to. I just want the job."
>
> I: How about this department that you're in now, is there more opportunity there?
>
> P: Yeah. I'm kinda in the training bit still. I didn't have any experience in Reservations before, or like, computers or talking on the phone or anything [chuckles]. But I've heard a lot of people training and even moving up in the office though different departments, or even people getting better jobs in other places and stuff, so I'm sticking with it [chuckles]. [Interview 8]

For some interviewees, even if they did perceive there to be opportunities, progression was not wanted. This was particularly the case when participants did not view hospitality as a long-term career option:

> This job is a filler [laughs]… for how long, I don't know… It's been what I've needed, and it's been what I've looked for. I do enjoy the job and I do enjoy the hospitality, but after a certain period of time, I'm just like, I've got a degree, I've got my masters, I've got a distinction in my masters, I got a university medal. I'm clearly good at what I enjoy, so I do at some point want to pursue that. But how long will it take to get the job I want, that's where I'm not sure. [Interview 16]

In some of the interviews with line management and HR, several of these participants had progressed into their roles from entry level positions on ZHCs. These participants reported positive experiences of casual contracts acting as a resource in their career progression.

> I just started line level and I then progressed up to team leader level, while still being on a casual contract. It did get me somewhere, because I'm still with the company and I now work in the people development office, as I studied HR, so I managed to get full time in the office there. Which was amazing and I know the fact that I've already worked in the hotel, that I had done for four years, was a big advantage for me to get into that job. [Interview 5]

These participants also reported more positive experiences of casual contracts, particularly where they had the flexibility to increase and reduce their hours when necessary: *"The whole flexibility with having zero hours was fantastic. When I wasn't in University, I could do like 40 hours a week and then when I was, I could bring it back down again"* [Interview 5]. However, it should be noted that these were all past rather than current experiences that were being recounted. Additionally, typically these participants were able to access progression due to other resources that they acquired out with the workplace - i.e. an undergraduate degree - recognising that the experience gained from being a casual worker, while useful in gaining initial entry into the organisation, did not actually provide these workers with the resources needed to progress into better paying work. Additionally, often the training that needed for participants who were progressing from entry level to team leader roles was not available. These participants described a lack of training in the skills required at a supervisory level, particularly with regards to complaint handling and delegation, and at times in the basic operational tasks of the job:

> When I started doing my cashing-up, I wasn't trained. The [trainer] called in sick. Then, the second time, he had to go home early or something. So, I was closing twice, for the first two times on my own, having just read a bit of paper, and just being talked through it for 15 minutes. Then, I had to sign this standard procedure that's saying I know how to do this, when really, it's like a lot of money and stuff. If something went wrong, they would be like, "Oh, you signed it. [Interview 17]

7.1.7 Managing Money on a Low Income

Participants within H1 and H2 had particular concerns and strategies when it came to managing their money. Of the 12 participants, four were co-habiting (two had dependants) and eight were single (one had dependants). Of those who were single, three were living at home with their parents and were aged between 20 and 23. The experiences of managing money varied between the participants depending on their circumstances, such as the resources available and the level of financial demands that they had.

Particular issues were experienced by participants on ZHCs within H1 and H2. Six of the 12 participants interviewed were on a ZHC. Four of these participants struggled to get enough working hours each week and talked about how they managed the financial demands that were created when they did not get enough hours. In H1, these participants accrued annual leave entitlement for every hour worked, and often this accrued holiday was used up in weeks when the participants were not offered enough work. Additionally, holidays were also used to cover days when childcare commitments could not be covered. This meant that participants did not actually benefit from the rest period that annual leave should provide:

> With a quiet week, I've already discussed with my boss that, could you just put me down for a holiday day, so that if I'm only working four days, they're giving me a holiday day, to keep my wages at five days. So rather than going away for a two week holiday, I've decided just to use them on lean time. [Interview 12]

In H2, the approach to annual leave for workers on ZHCs was different; casual workers were paid a supplement on top of their hourly rate, to dispense with the obligation to pay annual leave. Only one participant interviewed from H2 was on a ZHC. This system of paying annual leave was viewed by this participant as a benefit, as it was perceived as an increased hourly rate of pay:

> The casual contract wage for me is a wee bit higher than the full-time wage for my other colleagues. But I don't get holidays, so it's kind of got some downs for both of them. I kind of like it because I can get any day off I want and I have a slightly bigger wage, so it kind of works out for me. But at the same time, I would like to have holiday pay and sick pay and stuff like that as well. [Interview 68]

However, this system also created problems for this worker in managing his money, as in his eyes, he did not get holiday pay, just a slightly high hourly rate. This meant that he felt he was unable to take annual leave, as this time off would not be paid. Another worker from H1 on a ZHC described how he found managing his finances particularly challenging as he was often not able to get the working hours he needed:

I: Do you find you're able to get enough hours to earn a sufficient amount of money?

P: Barely. Just. 30 hours is a bit stressful, because at the end of month you're not going to have a fair amount. Even with 40 hours a week in this job, you don't get much at the end of the month.

I: How do you manage when you may be at the lower end of the hours?

P: Well, I guess I've just been using savings really, just to get by if it's at a bad month.

I: …Would you rather be on a kind of guaranteed hours contract?

P: Yes, because then I know how much I've got every month.

I: Has there been any discussion that that might be a possibility or--?

P: A few people said just hang in there, I think we'll get that soon, but it hasn't materialised yet.

I: Why do you think they use that kind of contract then, if you're typically getting at least 30 hours a week?

P: They're very tight with the wages budget, to be honest, in the hotel, the accounts department watch that like a hawk. So, I don't quite know how they work it out, with how many people's rooms are being used at night would dictate how many hours my boss can give to the concierge, well me because everyone else is full time, but for a quiet week, then he might only be able to give me 30 hours, if we're very busy, I might have 48. I'm not sure how it works, but wages, they have wages meeting at least once a week too and keep the staff and wages down as much as possible. [Interview 12]

This account contradicts earlier claims made by the management in the previous chapter that casual contracts are regularly reviewed, and that staff typically did not want permanent contracts. Additionally, the proposed benefit of flexibility that comes with a ZHC did not work for this participant. Flexibility here represented a benefit for the employer, giving them financial and numerical flexibility. This kind of flexibility was not a benefit for the participant, and created both demands and restrictions on his income. For example, the participant would usually not get notice of his working hours for the week until the day before that week started. This meant that he could not look at the possibility of a second job to increase his income:

I think it would be quite hard with the hours to [work a second job]. I did work for an agency before this, but they wanted me to confirm a date I could work for them two or three weeks in advance. It's just not possible. [Interview 12]

In the meantime, this worker balanced the demands of low pay by relying on tips to supplement his income. This worker did not feel that the situation would be sustainable for him for a long period of time:

> I need the tips to get by… If I didn't get tips, I'd probably look for another job. I mean, there's not many this time of year though- it was through the summer- it's practically nothing at the moment… If it wasn't for Americans, it will there would be a lot of hotel staff would go hungry. They're very generous [Interview 12]

Two of the participants who were on ZHCs were still living with their parents. These participants recognised that they were only able to manage because they were still living with parents, highlighting that the job did not proved a sufficient wage to cover the basic cost of living, even with tips, particularly with the difficulties in securing enough working hours, as one participant noted:

> It's minimum wage and tips are very varied. You could do a Friday night and then get fairly decent tips but because of the amount of staff members that we have on, 10 or so each day, it gets split evenly across everyone. So, tips-wise, it doesn't keep you enough to be like, that's me sorted for that day. Again, with hours-wise, it's not something that I'd want to level off for a long time. Thankfully, for myself, I'm still at home. It's not something that I have to properly worry about, like, "Oh my God, I'm not getting enough hours this week." For other people, I know for a fact they struggle to make enough money for them to afford all the things that they want to… I was speaking to a colleague today and I asked him if he was getting a video game that was out today and he turned around and he said, "I barely have enough to eat let alone video games". Now he was doing it in a jokey way but at the same time, it just proved that point that I'm trying to make. [Interview 3]

Regardless of whether they were on a zero hour or permanent contract, there was a culture of relying on tips across all hospitality participants, to balance the demands created by low wages. Tips were viewed by participants as a benefit of the job, however it is interesting to note that this is not a resource provided by the employer, but rather from the customer; as such, it could be argued that tips forms part of the social support that customers provide to workers in this setting. Tips acted as a vital resource that enabled hospitality participants to remain in their jobs. Tips also provided the financial resource for workers to socialise with each other, which as discussed earlier, was a vital source of social support for participants: *"Our [wages] in our bank account, that's to pay rent and food and stuff. Your tips are where you can go and enjoy yourself"* [Interview 17].

That said, tips were by no means the answer to the difficulties posed by managing on a low wage, and in particular ZHCs. One issue that emerged but that could not be fully explored was the issue of transport home after a late finishing shift. The departments that were most likely to employee ZHC workers were departments that needed the flexibility to increase numbers of staff of evening functions. This meant that ZHC workers were more likely to finish after a time when public transport would not be available for their journey home. In H1, staff who finished late at night after public transport had ended would need to get a taxi home, and the cost of this was only partially covered by H1 to the amount of £4. There was a suggestion that tips helped cover transport costs for participants, such as taxis for participants who worked late nights: *"if you're finished at three in the morning, it's got to be a taxi, so a lot of staff will use their tips for their taxi."* [Interview 10]. However, in H2, only contracted staff were eligible to receive a supplement towards the cost of a taxi home: *"I would get a taxi because I'm full-time, whereas casuals don't… I think [H2] pay like half of the taxi fare or something, but only for full-time people as well, not for anyone else"* [Interview 67].

The matter of uniform costs was also raised by several participants within H1. The policy of H1 was to provide staff with uniforms free of charge. However, in practice, this did not appear to be the case:

> **P:** So, the advertising was, you get a free uniform, which you didn't get…
>
> **I:** No one's provided a uniform?
>
> **P:** No. Nothing was ever started for that. They've a couple of times taken measurements for chest and stuff like that. But they've literally given me tie, waistcoat. Everything else is mine.
>
> **I:** Do you notice that being something difficult for people to afford?
>
> **P:** Yes. I'd probably say more shirt-wise. It's just going home, washing, ironing shirts is a bit of a burden if you've had to pay for it. Owning two shirts will cost you like 20-30 quid. Still quite a lot of money compared to if they were to just give your shirt. [Interview 3]

Accounts from the participants varied, ranging from no uniform being provided, to being provided with a waistcoat and tie, and all had to buy shirts, trousers and shoes. Several participants noted this as a financial demand, in terms of the cost of purchasing and maintaining the upkeep of their uniforms.

Finally, participants who were not on a ZHC also reported some level of financial hardship. The participants who reported the most financial hardship were those who were single and living alone, or participants with dependants. Participant tended to describe how they could *"just pay their bills"* or *"get by"* on their wages, but it was often clear that participants struggled financially:

> I: Does your job enable you to afford to do the things you want to do outside of work?
>
> **P:** No, not really [laughs]. See, I have more coming out than I do coming in, being a single parent, so I don't get any help with my rent, or anything like that. Pay all council tax and my rent and looking after my 15-year-old, nearly 16, takes a lot of money. Trainers and clothes and bus money and dinners and, it's just constant [laughs]. Just need to try and keep on top of it at the end of the day. Then obviously Christmas coming up, and [the birth of my grandchild] is coming up, and [my children's] birthdays [are] coming up… I couldn't afford a mortgage. I can't afford a car, and I just sort of, get by, just, not even that sometimes. Like you go into your credit card or your overdraft, and that kind of stuff. [Interview 15]

This account was given by a participant employed on a full-time with a contract for 40 hours, demonstrating that even when full-time hours can be secured, the job still does not provide the level of income required to maintain even a basic standard of living.

7.1.8 Perceptions of Pay and Reward

There were some tensions in pay within H2. Some participants felt that their pay was unfair because their job required a higher level of skill and responsibility than other positions, but there was little or no differential in their wage to reflect this. For example, one participant working in the leisure facility of H2 felt his pay was unfair given that he was required to have qualifications in fitness, and take on additional health and safety responsibilities:

> I have my fitness instructor qualification, I have my first aid, my pool responder and I did go to college, I have my HND, and I get the same level of pay as someone who's tidying rooms. Whereas, it's not really competitive compared to, say if I was to work for the council gym, where they get maybe £9 an hour for the same job, maybe less responsibility. [Interview 62]

The differential in pay between frontline staff and first level supervisors in H2 was also tension that was highlighted:

> There's not much of a difference, between my wage and a normal associate's wage. There's like, 70 pence or something like that… And we do a lot more work than regular associates. In terms of, as well, duty manager shifts. We don't get given a choice. We just get told, "You're doing it whether you like it or not." There's no ifs, buts, maybes. It's, "You're doing that shift, if you like it or not. You need to be a duty manager." You don't any incentives to be a duty manager. You don't get anything extra in your wage. You don't get any more pay. [Interview 63]

A further tension in pay in H2 was the perception that casual staff were paid a higher hourly rate than supervisors. Rather than allowing casual staff to accrue holidays that could be taken, casual staff were paid a 12% premium on top of their hourly rate, to dispense with holiday entitlement. The effect of this premium on the basic hourly rate of casual staff meant that it was higher than the hourly rate of supervisors, which made supervisors feel undervalued for the extra responsibility that they took on:

> It's a [H2] thing as well that supervisors get paid less than the casuals, which is a little ludicrous if you think about it. If you have a giant dinner for 600, and my manager, my head of department would be here until the dinner finishes, but the function is on until 02:00 in the morning. So, from 23:00 till we finish I'm by myself. I'm responsible for everything. I'm in charge. And still I'm the person that makes the least money on the day, which I think is a bit unfair. [Interview 67]

Additionally, participants under the age of 25 felt that their pay was unfair, as their colleagues over the age of 25 received a higher rate of pay than they did. Paying these participants less for carrying out the same role had a devaluing and demotivating effect on these participants, with one such worker noting:

> There's a guy in here just turned 25 and he's the laziest guy in the world. It kills me that he gets more an hour than me. It just hurts. [laughs] I just feel like I work that much, and then I get my pay and I think, "I should have so much more than that for all the work I've done." It just doesn't feel like enough, to be honest." [Interview 8]

Participants did value some of the incentives and monetary rewards offered by H1 and H2. Discounted rates for stays at other hotels within the company and long service awards which included overnight stays, were among the most valued benefits, as well as smaller rewards such as vouchers or food and drink. Furthermore, as one interviewee noted, *"you've got [Employee of the Month] where they take you away for the weekend. I've had that twice… it was brilliant. It was like a free weekend away down in London"* [Interview 15]. However, at times, some incentives could have a devaluing effect on participants, particularly when they were used inconsistently, or promised but not received: *"We have an [employee of the month scheme], but hardly anyone in the bar ever gets nominated for it. It's more just housekeeping and stuff like that. I don't know if they don't really see the work that we do."* [Interview 3]

7.2 The Social Care Sector

7.2.1 Workloads and Staffing Levels

The nature of workloads in the social care sector were different to the workloads seen in the hospitality sector. Social care workers did not have the same unpredictable flow of work or high volumes of customers to deal with. However, high volumes of work could be seen in the variety of tasks that they were expected to carry out and the high level of responsibility:

> Every day's different. Some days, you go home and you're like, you're buzzing, that was such good fun, I really enjoyed that, and everything went quite smooth. That's your good days. Other days can just be a wee bit more stressful because you've got quite a lot to do in the day. It seems to be as if there's not enough hours. Even if I do a 24-hour shift, I still feel as if I've got, oh God, I still need to catch up doing my paperwork and then doing the logs at the end of the night report and what you've done with the people we support on that day. Then you need to count the money tins, the medicine and then go to groups. You've got doctor's appointments and prescriptions. You need to try and remember a lot. [Interview 40]

The participants commonly gave the description of their work as "*every day is different*", and for many this was one of the main contributing factors to why they enjoyed their jobs. The variety and volume of work could act as a resource for well-being, providing meaningfulness to work. Even where the volume and variety did create demands, these were not always hindrance demands, as challenge demands were also present. For example, as one interviewee noted, "*I love everything about my job. I love the aspect that not only are we Early Years Practitioners but we're also getting the chance to go and facilitate groups and engage with parents, I think that's a big thing*" [Interview 56].

That said, the demands of the role could be highly complex at times, with staff feeling the weight of responsibility for caring for their customers. One commonly mentioned demand was the volume of paperwork that participants were required to complete, which was a particular strain for participants as they felt this demand took them away from their main responsibility of caring. Additionally, the issues surrounding paperwork were also compounded by a general feeling of not having enough time to carry out all the various tasks and responsibilities of the job. When participants were asked what they did not enjoy about their jobs, paperwork was frequently cited as a particular demand on their time:

> Paperwork takes me away from [customers]. I understand obviously it needs to be done, whether it's just daily admin or monthly reports, bi-annual reports, everything needs to get done. I do understand it, but I just think there's checks for checks for checks. There's so much needing done, and it does take you away from support, that's what I've found … I do get the training, but once you've been through the training, you've still got so much paperwork to do every single day and it does take you away and your time management has got to be spot-on. [Interview 44]

As the quote illustrates, paperwork was not the only demand that placed a strain on workers time, and often staff were trying to balance this with other demands of the job, such as the volume of training that the participants were required to undergo. All of these demands had the potential to spillover into the home lives of participants. For many staff, the result of this volume meant they would take work home with them to catch up on:

> I: Do you feel you ever take work home with you?
>
> P: Oh yeah [chuckles] But then again, that's my choice again. Like I go home and then I sit down, I go right - because we do like supervisions once every six weeks, where your manager meets up with you. It's more like to discuss - it's supposed to be a positive thing, like this is what you're doing well, is there anything that you're struggling with, is there anything you're not sure about, that kind of thing. So, you get set goals. I've just had no time within my working hours to do my goals… My goal is to read policies. I've got three just now, I think it's administration of medication, adult protection and confidentiality. But it's quite thick. [chuckles] There's quite a lot of to get through. [Interview 40]

For some demands, it was the level of responsibility required for the task that created the demand. These types of demands had the potential to cause emotional spillover from work to home, with participants describing how they worried about work after they left. An example of this kind of demand that was commonly mentioned was administering medications, which could cause staff considerable worry and stress:

> "We've got a new [customer] that's come in and his medication, you've got to do your counts every day. He seems to have that much medication. I feel sometimes I go home at night and I'm thinking, have I done this right? I feel as though I worry about it, definitely… I wish I knew something that I could do to unwind. I go home like, "Have I done this? Have I done that?" But I think that's just me, that's just the type of person I am, I think. I feel my mind doesn't stop, you're thinking all the time. [Interview 47]

Similar to hospitality case, issues around workloads were closely connected with staffing levels. A significant number of the participants reported that the service they worked in was

currently, or had recently been, short-staffed, and that this intensified the impact of the demands of the job leading to stress.

> I think [the stress of the job is] down to numbers. So, if we haven't got enough staff. We've always enough in our ratio, say six [customers] to two staff. But sometimes you just need that extra member staff just for that extra support. But if there's only two of you and somebody's out [providing personal care], or, like that. So, it's just more support. Then our paperwork, that lacks as well. So, then we are behind on paperwork. So, you start stressing about your paperwork, you think, "Oh God, I haven't done paperwork for November and December." So, all of that just starts to go on top of you. [Interview 54]

During times of short staffing, the care of customers had to be prioritised over and above any other demands. The consequence of this, however, was that a backlog of paperwork could quickly build up, and it was difficult for participants to recover the time lost for these tasks during periods of short staffing:

> We are so busy within the [service]. We've got 18 [customers] and four staff members. And the ratio is one [member of staff] to five [customers]. But if you've got a staff member off, like Tuesday's my paperwork day, and if I've got a staff member off and you've got a relief standing in and people are going outdoors, it's trying to equalize that time that, well I'm not going to get paperwork done today, but it's trying to find another point in the week when you can get that. And everybody's got an allocated day, so it's quite hard to try and be like, if you've missed that Tuesday, it's quite hard to pick up elsewhere. And then you feel yourself overloaded with paperwork and not being able to get out the room, and able to do it. [Interview 56]

Similar to the hospitality case, a common effect that work had on the well-being of participants was tiredness, with 13 of the participants describing their roles as tiring. As the roles performed by participants happened in a variety of different services, the physical demands that participants experience varied. Not all of the participants felt their role was physically demanding, but where participants did have physically demanding roles, they described feeling exhausted at the end of a shift, having aches and pains, and in particular back pain:

> Physically, there's a lot for the moving and handling with SC1. I've had back problems… but SC1 sent me to a physio just recently… I've done three sessions and their discussing whether they would pay for another three. Then, I think six is your maximum and then you'd need to continue yourself… The physio helps when you're not on shift, but as soon as you go back on shift--it's just because you're continuously on your feet. Especially if you're doing a 24 hour shift, it can cause strain. [Interview 48]

As the above quote illustrates, while physiotherapy was offered by SC1, the participant did not feel that this fully addressed the impact of physical demands to her health, as it did not deal with the structural demands of the role which were actually causing the physical strain.

Overall, it was more common for participants to describe feeling mentally tired after their shift. One of the main reasons that participants gave for this having to be constantly alert when caring for the customer: "*It's just mentally draining more than physically… it's just you're concentrating for 10-12 hours at a time with no real break, and that's tiring"* [Interview 45]. A further reason for mental tiredness was when caring for customers with what they described as challenging behaviours, which included violence, repetitive behaviours, and refusal behaviours. A common scenario given by participants that left them feeling exhausted or stressed was when they experienced challenges in getting their customer to participate in their basic daily routine:

> I do tend to go home and have a wee kip for, even if it's just an hour, just to deflate a wee bit… you're absolutely knackered. It just, it plays up on you, that repetitive stuff, it's a mental thing. People say that's not challenging behaviour, but it is, it is in a different way. It's challenging to [the customer] and you, because you're trying to get him to do something you know he can do… you've done it with him a million times and sometimes he just does it, other days it's just-- It's a mental thing rather than physical. [Interview 25]

7.2.2 Working Hours and Overtime

The working hours and patterns of the participants in social care varied widely, due to the variety of services that staff worked in. There were some services in both SC1 and SC2 which only operated during the day Monday to Friday, which allowed staff to work standard office hours. Other services, particularly those providing one to one support or support in people's homes, operated 24 hours a day.

In some services, such as residential homes, participants would work 12-hour shift patterns. Whilst these were long shifts, several workers preferred this pattern, because working hours were compressed into fewer days, allowing for more substantial rest breaks between shifts. Compressed hours helped participants to juggle what were often complex home demands, as

did the flexibility of when shifts could be worked; one participant who was caring for a child with cancer described how the shift pattern had helped him juggle home demands:

> I roughly do three days a week. No, it suits me down to a tee. I don't feel you're overworked or too long days... If you enjoy doing what you're doing, then it kind of flies by anyway. And it lets me have days that I can spend with my son and I've not took day's off as holiday or days off sick or anything, because we do work it. Or, sometimes I say to [the manager], "Can I have the three shifts together?" Other times it's, "Can I split them up?", so I'm doing one on, one off, and it's just to try and suit my wife's rota at the time. So I believe it works well. [Interview 26]

One participant in SC2 described how a change by a previous employer from 12 hour shifts to more frequent, shorter shifts, caused him to leave his previous caring job, as overtime demands became too onerous:

> My [previous workplace] changed their shifts from 12-hour shifts to shorter shifts. I could have been like 14, 15 days in a row before I get a day off. And then they'll call and say, "We're really short-staffed, can you come in in the morning?" I was like, "It's my first and only day off, no." It really upset me. Whereas, [in SC2] you are back to long shifts. I mean, I've been off for the last two, three days. I'm in the fourth day and I'm in for two days then I'm off for another two days, so I get plenty of time off, which is ideal. [Interview 25]

This participant described how having longer shifts worked better for managing the staff rota. Furthermore, longer periods of rest between shifts meant that when there was a need for staff to take on additional hours, they were more willing:

> When it was the long shifts, the minute [my previous workplace was] stuck, somebody would say, "I'll cover it, I'll cover it," because they knew they'd be off for another few days after it. They kind of shot themselves in the foot up there, because people just went, "Argh", basically, "fuck you, I'm not doing it, because I'm not getting time off, so I'm not wanting to cover your shifts." [My previous workplace was] absolutely screaming for people, because they'd got nobody to cover them. And they were bringing in people from all sorts of places and it was just causing an absolute nightmare. [Interview 25]

For some care workers, particularly those in services providing one to one support, sleepovers were often an expectation of the job. Within SC1 and SC1, sleepover shifts actually meant that participants were at their work for a 24 hour period, as sleepovers were often combined with an extended long shift (approximately 15 hours), or with a long day shift and a shorter morning shift the following day. Two participants from SC2 [Interviews 23 and 24] described how their

sleepover shifts would start at 7:30am and normally finish at the same time the following morning; however, if short staffed, they would then work an additional day shift after the sleepover, therefore not finishing until 3pm the following day. However, when asked how they felt about this length of shift, these staff felt it was manageable, "*It's okay because you've got a break, because it's two separate days and you do get to sleep. It's not like it's a waking sleepover or anything*" [Interview 23]. Additionally, it helped that the demands of the work were more manageable within this service, due to the nature of the customers:

> I'm obviously paid to 22:30, but a lot of the time the [customers] go to their bed anyway. I'm just sort of chilling. I could be sitting in front of the telly with my feet up. Sometimes they're in their bed at 21:00, it all depends on how they feel. Sometimes I'm still sitting there at 23:00 and we're sitting watching a film… I could just be sitting cleaning and then just making lunch or making breakfast, things like that… [Interview 24]

However, these demands were manageable provided that there was enough rest time in between shifts. The impact of a service being short staffed, even if only for a short time, could have an acute effect for staff who worked 24 hour shifts:

> **I:** Do you find the role tiring?
>
> **P:** Not really. As long as the shifts are patterned out so that you've got a decent break. Quite often we get one day off say maybe on a Tuesday, and then, don't get another day off till Saturday. So, you've got quite a bit of wack, and if you've got three sleepovers back to back or something in that period, it can be a bit much. But that doesn't happen very often.
>
> I: Would that normally just be if you were short staffed, you'd say?
>
> P: Yeah, yeah. That would not come out in a normal rota that [the manager] put out saying you're going to do, because then you could go to him. But then, having said that, you could go to [the manager] and say, "You've given me that. Can you do something about it and change it?" And he would do it, so it's not really an issue. But it's if somebody's off sick and you end up having to do a cover, an extra shift or something, then yes. [Interview 23]

This occurrence was not an isolated incident, as several workers from both SC1 and SC2 mentioned that they would at times have to work extra hours or a full extra shift straight after a 24 hour sleepover shift, due to staff shortages. Participants could also have no notice that this overtime is going to be required until they were due to finish their shift, particularly if another staff member phones in sick at the last minute. The lengths of shifts and the unpredictability of required overtime very clearly spilled over into home life as a result. One

participant described how when planning activities in his time off, he was often mindful that his working day might be extended at the last minute:

> If I'm due to finish 7:30 the next morning after doing a day shift and sleepover, and the person that's due to come on phones in sick, I can't walk away. And if the manager or whoever can't get cover for me, then I'll be there stuck till they can get someone. [Interview 37]

The issues around being short staffed often required the participants to take on overtime so that the needs of the customers were met. In both SC1 and SC2, even where services where fully staffed, there was often the opportunity for staff to do overtime if they wanted it, either in the service where they worked or within another service in the organisation. Unlike the hospitality case, the participants did not perceive the reasons for a service being short of staff to a management strategy of intentionally under-resourcing to save money. Instead, short staffing was attributed to a high turnover of staff, cause by burnout in the job:

> It might be that 50 to 60 hours a week is doable if you're working in a different environment, but in that environment it's quite challenging. I think a lot of people tend to come in, take extra shifts, and then just burnout... It's a combination of the stress and the amount of time you might be working. I would say as well it's just the length of shifts as well, feed into the need for a level of down time just because-- well, I mean, so I've have been on since 9:00am yesterday morning, and until I left, you can't relax because you have to be always concentrating, looking around and things like that. And that's not stressful in itself, but it's very draining. [Interview 45]

As the previous quote illustrates, a vicious cycle could occur whereby short staffing placed a requirement on staff to do overtime, leading to burnout and stress, causing turnover, which in turn creates the issue of short staffing in the first place.

Twelve participants reported doing regular overtime over and above their contracted hours. Six of these participants were already contracted to full time hours, yet at times reported regularly working in the region of 10-15 hours of overtime in a week. There were also some instances of staff on part time contracts who worked regular overtime, that wanted more contracted hours. Unlike the hospitality case, these staff did not appear to struggle to get enough working hours, but still wanted the security of more working hours.

Additionally, two of the participants who were part time regularly did overtime that took them well above full time hours each week, stating that it was normal for them to work 45-50 hours a week. Several staff mentioned that they choose to work full time on a part time contract, as a way of coping with demands from the home domain. These staff felt that this gave them flexibility to work full time most weeks, but to cut down to their contracted part time hours at times when other demands, such as health or home related demands required it:

> [SC1] have offered me [a full time contract]. I declined, just because at that time, I was having mental health issues, and I felt that if I had the option to say, "Look, I'm only working my contract hours," then that would be more helpful." [Interview 45]

Participants rarely felt pressurised by their managers to take on additional overtime. Equally, those participants who chose not to take on overtime did not report any tension or conflict as a result of refusing. The reasons given by participants as to why they took on so much overtime were complex. Many participants stated that the reasons for taking on overtime was financial, a means of increasing their income to a sustainable level, and that without regular overtime, they would struggle to manage. However, this was rarely the only factor at play, and often the reasons were multi-dimensional, involving various demands. Often the participant's relationship with the customer had significant influence over the decision to work excessive overtime. These issues will be explored in further depth in the 'Relationships with customers' and 'Managing money on a low income' themes.

7.2.3 Relationships with Line Managers

Within SC1 and SC2, an overwhelming majority of participants described having a good relationship with their manager, often describing their line manager as supportive and approachable . The participants described how having a good relationship with the manager had a very positive effect on their well-being:

> We recently just got a new manager in a couple months ago, and I would say that my work-life in general, I feel happier because I know that I can approach my manager if I have a problem or if I have any concerns of the people that I look after, I can go and voice it without hesitating. I don't need to worry, she's very approachable. [Interview 27]

Unlike the hospitality case, the participants felt much more able to raise issues or problems with their line manager, which was beneficial for their well-being: "*It's taken a lot of pressure*

off me, as well. I think when you actually do raise issues, you do get that support from the manager" [Interview 54]. There was also a perception amongst participants that managers were generally supportive and would at least try to fix any problems that arose: "*if you do go to them with a problem, they will try their best to sort it out"* [interview 20].

These perceptions were usually given in relation to how well managers had supported participants with difficult situations in their personal lives: *"When my husband ended up in the hospital, the manager was very, very supportive. She really was good and gave me time off, she was brilliant*" [Interview 19]. Several participants in both SC1 and SC2 described how they had been well supported by their manager during times of bereavement, and this strongly influenced their perception of how managers cared for their well-being. At times, this extended beyond the initial requirement for time off, to supporting participants in dealing with the longer-term impact of loss:

> My husband passed away, unfortunately, three years ago. I had spoke to [the manager] to try and up my hours, obviously for financial reasons. So, they've given me another 15 hours… If I'm not having a good day I'll say, "I'm not having a good day." I think you've got to be honest and you've got to say, "I was thinking about my husband the other night and I was really upset about this." Because that does affect you. [My manager] understands completely. [Interview 57]

Participants also talked about how supervision meetings with their line manager were important for their well-being. These meetings were the participant's opportunity to raise issues:

> I had a supervision recently actually, and a few weeks ago as well. [The manager] just asked about how we're getting on, if we're happy and things when we're coming to work, so things like that. Aye, to answer your question, she does care about our well-being. She'll make sure that we are feeling all right as well, coming to work and that we're not stressed or anything. [Interview 58]

However, while some participants felt that supervision meetings were helpful for well-being, often supervision did not happen very regularly. Additionally, while the participants found it helpful to discuss problems, they also recognised that there was often little that their manager could do to reduce the demands of the role:

> I: What's your relationship with your manager like?
>
> **P:** I'd say that it was actually really good. One of my better working relationships with a manager.
>
> **I:** In terms of your ever-increasing workload, have you been able to speak to your manager about that?
>
> **P:** Yeah. So, we have supervisions every three months and I've brought that up in my supervision. At the moment, it's still pretty much the same. [chuckles] It's just, part of the job, I guess. It's unfortunately, just something you've got to get used to. [Interview 35]

Additionally, there were still tensions in how the participants perceived the actions of line managers, and limitations to the support that could be provided. A tension highlighted by participants was that the well-being of the people they cared for had to be prioritised over the well-being of staff, which was in contrast to the management rhetoric of *"valuing the staff the same as you value the people we support"* [Interview 46]. One example of this was the requirement for staff to work beyond the end of their shift if the next member of staff had not turned up:

> Yeah, [managers] care about your well-being to the point where they can. Then, when it gets to a stage where it's very important that the [customers] are supported, then they've got to look at that first. So, it's a case of, "Well, you're here so you can stay here." [Interview 23]

Having a supportive manager was therefore an important resource for employee's experience of well-being across the work-family interface.

7.2.4 Relationships with Customers

Unlike hospitality, participants from social care developed deep and long-term relationships with customers, due to the nature of the job. These relationships provided participants in both SC1 and SC2 with a wide range of resources. When asked what they enjoyed most about their jobs, every participant (including domestic staff) mentioned working with customers at some point during their interview. Customers made work meaningful for the participants, as they felt that they were "making a difference" through their work:

> It sounds very cliché, but I enjoy making a difference in people's lives. What we do is enabling people to do what they want to do, which they maybe couldn't do without support. [Interview 45]

> The rewards from [the customers], the benefits of seeing them happy. And I feel as if I'm giving a good support and I wouldn't like somebody to come in that doesn't care. I know when I'm there, they're getting the best support. [Interview 48]

These resources provided by customers to the participants could act as powerful resources in the well-being of the participants, with positive spillover effects in other areas of their lives. For example, one participant spoke about how caring for customers with mental ill health had helped her with her own mental health:

> Having suffered with different things in my past, I just feel it's quite cathartic in a way, that I feel that I'm helping other people with different things. I do suffer with depression myself quite badly, and it's well controlled with medication. I feel that it's a way of giving back and it helps me. It's quite a bit selfish I suppose. It helps me with mine because I can almost engross myself, or not totally worry about people because I am able to switch off when I go home, but I just feel it gives me with purpose. Yeah, that's the way to looking, it gives me purpose to help people. [Interview 39]

The relationships built with customers was likely to lead to spillover effects for the participants, mostly in the form of work to home, with some instances of home to work also observed. For some participants, being able to keep their work and home lives separate was a matter of professionalism:

> I think, you're a professional, and, as I say, you've got to leave your hat at the door. If you don't do that then you shouldn't be here. It doesn't make you inhumane, but you can't dwell on these things. It's just something that you've just got to deal with. I don't want to make that sound harsh, I don't mean it that way. I think for your own sanity, you just have to draw the line. [Interview 57]

Several other participants who felt they were able to keep the two domains separate, describing this as something they learned over time:

> I've been in the company for 10 years. I was 20, I'm now 30, so I think I'm more mature now. In the past, I would have allowed things to affect me. I would have been worried about things and take things home with me. Now, I'm at a stage of my life where I choose not to. I chose to when I go home, I'm at home. Work stays in work and vice versa. When I'm at work, whatever's going on in my personal life, then I leave that at the door. I think that just comes with age, wisdom, and learning and making mistakes in your work life to get to that point. [Interview 30]

For other participants, whilst they recognised the role of professionalism, they felt that the nature of the relationship developed with the customer meant that keeping the two domains separate was not always possible. This spillover could be positive or negative, leading to both

enrichment and conflict between the work and home domains. Several participants described how they struggled to not to let work spillover into their home life due to the emotional demands associated with caring for the customers:

> You're responsible for [the customer's] day-to-day, you also know what's going on in their family lives as well. If they're not having a good day, trying to get to the root of that issue. It's definitely quite an emotional job. It's quite hard to go home at times and leave your work life here. [Interview 52]

Some participants also acknowledged that the nature of the relationships developed with the customer meant that spillover was inevitable:

> The service I work in, you do take their woes and things home with you sometimes. Because you just treat them as part of the family really. You're supposed to have that gap between professional and personal, but you do sometimes forget you're a support worker, and it's more like being a member of the family. [Interview 37]

Many participants also argued that it was developing this bond with the customers that enabled them to do their jobs well. Often support workers described customers as being like members of their family, or viewed the way they approached the care of customers as how they would care for their family:

> If I was in such a situation or friends and family were in a situation, I would hope that they would be supported in a good way. So, I support people like I would like myself or my friends or family to be supported. [Interview 39]

This description of caring for customers in the same way that they would for family, represents a form of spillover between the home and work domains; associating the level of care that they would provide to a family member with how they should provide care at work, representing a form of enrichment from home to work. Relationships with customers also allowed participants to use resources from their home lives for enrichment at work. One participant who went to a weight loss class outside of work, described how he encouraged his customer to also get involved:

> I've lost 10 stone with Slimming World. One of the guys I support, he was putting on a bit of weight, so what we did last year, I enlisted him with Slimming World as well, and he's now lost two stone. He looks really well for it. [Interview 37]

Building a relationship with that customer allowed the participant to involve the customer in an aspect of his home life, that ultimately lead to positive outcomes for the participant and customer.

Customers also created various demands for the participants in their roles. The exact demands would depend on the type of service they were in, but challenging behaviours from customers was a common theme. For some participants, this involved very physical demands, where the participants were exposed to violent behaviours from their customers.

> P: I would say it's quite a demanding job. You've always got your guard up and looking out for anything that could happen in here. So, you never really get a moment to stop and maybe have your lunch or something, you're constantly on the go. There's no such thing as breaks [chuckles].
>
> I: If you're constantly looking out then, what sorts of things come up that you need to deal with?
>
> P: … One of the people we support can eat the smallest of things, so we are constantly having to scan rooms making sure, if they're in somewhere, that they don't get hold of stuff. Anything that could trigger a challenging behaviour, so you're constantly scanning everything in here. That's why this room's quite empty as well [chuckles]. [Interview room was in a residential children's home and was quite bare, just a sofa and table]
>
> I: What kinds of challenging behaviour can come up?
>
> P: A lot of physical behaviour, like putting their heads through the walls, hitting themselves, and a lot of self-injurious behaviours. Hitting staff as well. [Interview 52]

Dealing with challenging behaviours was more difficult when services were short staffed:

> If we're short-staffed then [challenging behaviour is] more difficult because there's nobody to come give you a wee hand. And a lot of kids with autism, they need a change of face or something in some situations, because I think it gets too much for them, the one person all the time. So that's definitely challenging when there's not enough staff and you need somebody to come and support you with an incident or whatever. [Interview 53]

For other participants, they talked about the demands from other types of challenging behaviours associated with physical and mental ill health:

> One of the people I support is extremely repetitive in terms of questioning, and she has a lot of anxiety problems as well. And so that level of repetitive thing can be difficult to deal with, but that's just part of the job. It doesn't bother me when I'm at work, it's just very draining. [Interview 45]

Several participants talked about the need to keep their customers safe physically, but that there were challenges in doing so because of the nature of adult social care:

> What I find most stressful is just you have a duty of care towards the people you're supporting, and they can sometimes really want to do things which are really not going to be good for them. I find that quite stressful because obviously, you can't just ban them from doing things. You have to explain to someone why. So that balance from keeping someone safe and respecting their rights and their independence. That balance is quite stressful. [Interview 45]

Demands created from their relationships with customers could also be more subtle in nature. This was particularly evident in the decisions made by the participants around overtime. As previously discussed, decisions around taking on overtime were often multi-dimensional in nature; additionally, participants rarely described being pressurised by managers to take on extra hours. Instead, participants would describe how they would feel under pressure from themselves to take on overtime, due to the relationship they had with the customer, and a perception that not doing overtime would negatively impact their customer:

> Sometimes you feel obliged [to do overtime], because you're not just letting down your colleagues, you're letting down the people that you're supporting and they're the important ones. They've got to be looked after. [Interview 23]

However, participants described difficulties in refusing overtime, due to the perceived impact their absence would have on the customer:

> I would say just in terms of staffing I think, one of the difficult things about it is it's not pressure from other people, it's pressure from yourself… like I always feel like I could say no to my line manager if she asked me to go in for a shift. I don't always feel like to myself, I could say, "No, no, I need time off." You always want to do more, because the alternative is getting agency workers who might not know the people you're supporting. So, again, that responsibility you feel towards people you're supporting, if you're running very short-staffed, can lead to you burning out. [Interview 45]

This participant also raises the reluctance to allow agency staff to care for their customers in the participant's absence. There was also a perception among participants that not doing overtime would mean that customers in some way would receive substandard care, either

because the customer would not be able to carry out their usual routine, or because the absence of the participant would result in agency staff or staff unfamiliar with the customer being called in to cover shifts:

> I: So, when you are short-staffed, do you feel under pressure to take overtime?
>
> P: No. I don't, personally. If I don't want to do it, then I'm not going to do it.
>
> I: So why do you do it then?
>
> P: … Just because I don't like to see them with no staff. It's like, who's going to look after [the customer]? … If we've not got a member of staff isn't in that team and -- maybe [the team members are] off on holiday and somebody's not well, that's isn't fair on [the customer]. Because it isn't fair on [the customer], I don't think it's fair, and if you put somebody in there that [the customer] doesn't know, you're just going to make her worse, it's not fair. She'll end up in the [hospital]. Because if she escalates, she escalates that much that she ends up in a the [hospital], and that isn't fair. And she's been great. She's been great. She's not been in the royal since last year.
>
> **I:** So, it's your commitment to the people you support that motivates you to take on extra hours.
>
> **P:** Oh aye. Without a doubt. Without a doubt. [Interview 24]

In this scenario, the participant was reluctant to refuse overtime where it would mean that staff who were unfamiliar to the customer would be called in, as doing so could risk the health of the customer (these tensions will be explored further in the theme, 'Relationships with colleagues').

At times, taking on additional overtime involved great personal sacrifice in some area of the participant's home life as a result. The following extract is from a participant in SC1 who was contracted for 22 hours per week, but who usually did 10 hours overtime a week, and illustrates the complexities and sacrifices involved in the decision to take on regular overtime. For this participant, there is a clear financial motivation for the participant to take on overtime. However, despite having various other demands, including significant childcare responsibilities, it is the emotional ties to customers in particular that cause the participant to engage in behaviours that were sacrificial to their well-being, so to prioritise the needs of customers, even when this in conflict with the demands of the home domain:

I: Why do you choose to do extra hours then?

P: Due to, needing the more pay. I stick to the 22 hours because, my wee boy, just due to winter and stuff like that, he's got a lung condition so generally he's in hospital. So, I've been offered to be contracted to more hours, but I'm scared of taking them… I know that I can cut my hours back down but through choice I'm doing [regular overtime] at the moment, but I know I can go back to my 22 if he's not well.

I: And when you say to your manager, "This week I can only do my 22 hours," do you ever feel under more pressure to take on more hours?

P: Again, not at the moment because we are of a staff, but before yeah. I don't like letting people down either so I'll come from the hospital and do a switch over with my partner and he'll go into the hospital, and I'll come from-- because I stay with [my son] all the time, so I'll come and do a shift because I don't want to let that person down for [attending a support group] because I was the only driver…

I: So, the pressure comes from yourself to take on over time?

P: Yes.

I: And is that because of the people that you support?

P: Yeah, I don't want to let them down. Especially the one with autism, because she's got set routines and goes to set places like support groups, and if I'm the only driver rota'd in that day-- I would like to follow out that, rather than let down and she misses it. I'd be like, that's a shame. Although I've got a million other things going on in life, but still, I just can't switch off. It's not just a job that you can go home, like an admin job and that's it done. You take it home with you. You can't just switch off [chuckles] and then go and do other things. You're always continuously thinking about people we support. [Interview 48]

This participant had specifically requested a part time contract so that she could cut down her working hours in times were her son had periods of ill health; however, despite this, she still found it difficult to refuse overtime during these times due to her relationships with the customers.

7.2.5 Relationships with Colleagues

Relationships with colleagues provided participants with a valuable pool of resources, and also had the potential to create significant demands. Participants regularly looked to colleagues for the necessary resources to carry out their roles and manage the demands of work.

> Everybody [that works for SC1] is so helpful or will point you in the direction to somebody who can help you… I will say this as well, everybody comes into the care sector - they are caring people. So, they do have the understanding and it's about supporting each other and your colleagues as well as the [customers]. [Interview 44]

Support from colleagues was a vital resource in helping participants carry out their roles and in managing their own well-being. Having colleagues to talk to could help in dealing with the emotional challenges of the jobs and was highly valued by the participants, particularly on days when these challenges were more intense. Additionally, being able to share the emotional demands of their workload also helped participants to manage their own well-being better, as one participant from a mental health service described:

> So, no two days are the same really because mental health can affect people in so many different ways. It can be quite draining sometimes. My colleague and I who work very closely together. So, she has a particular [customer] that can be quite draining on herself. [The customer is] in hospital at the minute because she is quite unwell. So, we do talk to each other quite a lot and I take the strain if there's a lot of phone calls, because sometimes [the customer] will phone and phone and phone. So, I may take the phone so that [my colleague] can just have a breather and vice versa. We share it in that way. [Interview 39]

As previously mentioned in the earlier theme, 'Working hours and overtime', short staffing was a particular demand for participants due to the overtime demands that arose as a result. However, short staffing also created a loss of support resources for the participants over and above simply the physical absence of staff. As such, the consequences of short staffing for participants were greater than having to take on additional overtime. In particular, the loss of social support from colleagues during periods of short staffing could lead to further resource losses for the participants, meaning that participants struggled to cope with the demands of the job which were previously manageable. For example, the normal responsibilities and demands of the job could become unmanageable for participants when there was not enough support from colleagues. This created stress for participants, causing negative spillover:

> When I was moved into [a service], I was the only full-time member of staff at the time. It was two part-timers and somebody was off sick, and relief staff. So, I was the one holding the [service] together. It was just a nightmare. I ended up having to go and speak to [my manager]… You go home and it's in your head. You don't stop, it's always there. You're thinking about it all the time. I was suffering from headaches and all that. I think it was just with everything that was going on in here. It was affecting me that way." [Interview 54]

Additionally, it was not enough to simply have more staff present; if these staff could not provide the participants with adequate support in caring for their customer, participants described how this could create more demands for them in the day-to-day responsibilities:

> Once you get to know [the customer] and you know what their likes and dislikes are, then [the job is] easier. It's a lot easier… You can get [a different member of staff] come in and doesn't know a dislike, and you come in after them and it's like "Boom. What's wrong with [the customer]?" You'll come in maybe behind, someone's just done something that's just slightly not what [the customer] likes… then you've got to bring her back down again, obviously the [customer] I'm talking about, she can be challenging. [Interview 24]

Where there was a perceived lack of sufficient support from colleagues in carrying out workloads, this could create additional demands and stress for participants. Therefore, it was not simply that understaffing created overtime demands for participants. Rather, short staffing also represented a loss of support resources for the participants to draw on to manage the day-to-day demands of their roles. A lack of social support from colleagues also meant that the participants perceived the responsibilities associated with the role to intensify, particularly when there was a lack of suitable colleagues to share workloads with. Therefore, some strategies to address short staffing (such as staff from other teams or agency staff) did not actually address the issues cause by short staffing, because these strategies did not provide the participants with adequate or comparable support resources, and could lead to spirals of resource loss.

Some participants worked in services where agency staff may be called in; however, despite agency staff being used to address issues of being short staffed, often these workers were viewed by participants as creating demands. Having agency staff cover periods of short staffing was at times described as more stressful for participants than working overtime, as agency workers could potentially create more demands for the participants, as one line manager explained:

> Sometimes [SC1 staff] want agency workers, sometimes they don't. Because they need to induct the agency workers, they need to take a lot of time showing them various things and sometimes they say, "Do you know what, I'd be as well just doing it myself." Or they'll maybe say, when they come in in the morning, there's been a lot of behavioural issues because the [customers] are unsettled because there's a stranger in the house, so I'll just do the shift myself. And that's not good either but I get where they're coming from because they've got to deal with the aftermath of it… [Agency staff] probably double the work in the long run, because you come in and things haven't been done, and there's been certain issues, certain things they need to deal with. There's one [customer] in particular who will pick at his skin. So, [SC1 staff] come in and staff will spend weeks and weeks getting skin intact, and all it takes is one agency worker, and he's picked all his skin off again. Things like that. [Interview 43]

Therefore, the depletion of resources caused by short staffing cannot be remedied simply by the physical presence of more staff alone, as it is not simply the absence of staff that cause issues, but rather the lack of support from colleagues. Where participants felt the support from agency staff was inadequate, this was perceived as an even greater demand than being short staffed and having to take on overtime, as inadequate support had the potential to greatly intensify the demands of work.

Finally, one difference that was observed among the social care participants in comparison with the hospitality participants was the way in which participants described the intensity of the relationships and friendships that staff had with each other. Social care workers would still describe their colleagues as friends and would at times mention socialising outside of work. These relationships with colleagues were still highly valued by the participants; however, it was mentioned far less often, and when it was, the frequency of socialising also appeared to be much less than what hospitality participants described with colleagues:

> I just love coming [to work] in the morning. I just like the routine and I like the people I work with. We're friends, we all go out together. We go to the pub quite a lot at the weekend. [laughs] Not all the time, but now and again. We try to make it a monthly thing. So, we're all great friends. [Interview 57]

By contrast, hospitality participants would describe a much higher level of socialising with colleagues. So, while hospitality participants depended more on their colleagues for social support outside of work, social care participants relied more on their colleagues for support inside of work. Additionally, while participants from the hospitality case would often describe

their colleagues as being like family, participants from social care rarely described their colleagues in this way.

7.2.6 Training and Progression

Participants in both SC1 and SC2 had extensive training programmes for their employees, including a highly structured induction, mandatory e-Learning courses, classroom training in specific skills for the job, and optional training that participants could undertake for their personal development. Participants had the opportunity to go on a wide range of training courses, which was highly valued by the participants. Many viewed training as one of the main benefits of their jobs:

> [The training has] been fantastic. SC1 offer a wide range of training. Even if you source training yourself, they're generally great at getting you on that as well. Even if it is at a cost, as long as you let them know beforehand. But I've been able to go on a lot of training since I've became an employed member of staff, as well as being a volunteer. There is quite a lot of training opportunities for us to attend. Just like further my skills and my development as well. [Interview 56]

> The training's been quite comprehensive. It's been quite in-depth and there's been all the e-learning and there's also been quite a lot of training days. Everything from first aid, medication, to filling in books for finance and things like that… I think it's actually picked out specifically and geared towards SC2. [Interview 23]

The volume of training that participants were required to do could act as both a resource and a demand. Many of the participants found it challenging to find time within work to do all of the training that was required, with several participants mentioning that they would complete their e-Learning at home on their days off:

> Sometimes we do e-learning, it's online. We need to get it done because it's up six months of every year. If you've not got time here then you need to sometimes do it at home so it gets done. [Interview 54]

In SC1, this was particularly the case for participants who had joined the organisation within the last 12 months, as they struggled to complete all the training necessary for new employees within the required timeframe: *"After my year probation I still hadn't completed all my training, so they had to extend it"* {Interview 53].

Furthermore, in both SC1 and SC2, some participants mentioned that while they were paid to attend training, if the training was held at somewhere other than their usual place of work, their travel costs were not reimbursed, which created financial demands:

> It depends on where [the training] is. The last one was in Manchester. So that would have meant, for me, driving all the way to Manchester, which you're not paid for-- a lot of people, they don't think about, but fuel costs, that's not paid for, parking costs, that wouldn't have been paid for. So, for me, just actually going to that training, even though you were being paid your normal wage for going, I still would have been down by about £30. So, whereas it could be a positive in some ways, financially it's a downfall. [Interview 35]

In terms of progression, the views among the participants were mixed. Some felt that there were lots of opportunities to either progress or move into different roles within the organisation:

> I: Do you feel as though there are opportunities for you to progress here?
>
> P: Definitely, yeah. 100%. Or even say, what I quite like about SC1, is it's got all different fields. It's got epilepsy, I think it's homeless in young people, drug and alcohol addiction, and then there's people with disabilities. So say you did this job, so say I did a job for three years, and then I wouldn't say when I got fed up of it, but I just mean when I came to a point within three to five years maybe that I feel I've got my experience doing this and I fancy a wee change, I can still stay with an organisation and go to a different factor, a different sector of the company, which I thinks great. [Interview 40]

Two participants were also in the process of progressing at the time of their interview, having recently been successful in interviewing for team leader positions. For one of these participants, he attributed this success directly to support from his manager, and the training and development he had received:

> I've done a lot of self-development. I've done a lot of courses, I've done a lot of online courses as well. … I'm a bit older, I needed to catch up, so I wanted to know everything. So, I went on an autism course, on a challenging behaviour course, in my own time, just for my own development and it's paid off. And that was through my team leader giving me direction, pushing me if you like. Not overly, but letting me know what this is about and if you do this you can maybe get to this. And I did, and I've had support from her 100%, all the way through. [Interview 44]

So, there was certainly opportunities and support available for participants to progress and develop in their roles. However, progression was not always wanted by participants. This was usually because the participants did not want the extra demands that would come with

progression, or did not feel the wage differential merited the additional responsibility that they would have to take on:

> I'd taken on [extra] responsibilities before we had a head housekeeper. And I was doing all the ordering and everything that comes with that. And then we found out we were getting [a head housekeeper], and I thought, yes [laughs]. So no, I'm quite happy now just coming in, doing what I have to do, and going away back out the door, and I've got no pressure. So, it's brilliant. [Interview 19]

Several participants also mentioned that they either felt there was no way for them to progress within the organisation, or that they were looking for progression outside of the organisation to increase their pay. This was particularly the case when there was perceived to be comparable better paying work with other employers:

> We've been asking for a wage rises and that's not been happening. I have been applying for other jobs… For everything we do, I feel we don't get enough credit for it sometimes. A lot of local [services], they won't go to social work meetings, that would be the manager that does that. Whereas, in here, we are expected to go do things like that… It's still the same job, but [a nearby] Council, [another nearby] Council, all the councils are so much more paid. [Interview 54]

7.2.7 Managing Money on a Low Income

The participants talked about how they managed the various demands of their home lives on a low income, including their financial demands. These experiences were varied, and the participants ability to cope with their financial and home demands very much depended on the resources available to them. The participants that mentioned difficulties in managing their money were usually either single and living alone, or participants who had financial dependants. For these participants, basic financial demands such as bills (rent, council tax and utilities), transport, food, clothing and childcare would frequently be mentioned.

Among the ten participants who were either single or widowed, five were living with their parents. These participants ranged in age from 20 to 33. These participants were less likely to mention financial difficulties, attributing their situation to having few financial demands:

> I live at home with my Mum, I've not got stuff to pay for. My Mum doesn't ask for any money off of me… But I know if I was older and I had children to care for or rent to pay, I'd definitely struggle. [Interview 53]

However, living with parents did not necessarily mean that participants did not have financial worries. One of these participants also had a child and had moved back in with her mother as she was unable to cope with the financial demands of having her own property. Her child had a serious health condition which meant she could only work part time, and she was therefore struggling to get by on her income. This participant relied heavily on working overtime when possible to top up her income; as a result, she was reluctant to take annual leave, as this would mean that she would only be paid her contractual hours for that time: "[Financial difficulties are] *the reasons why I don't take time off. I've got loads of annual leave. I'm in a situation, as in my 22 hours, because I work 32—so if I took a week off, I'm only getting paid for 22…"* [Interview 48].

The other participants who were single or widowed either owned their own property or lived in social housing. Again, experiences were varied depending on the level of resources available to them. For participants with more limited resources, overtime was heavily relied on to manage financially:

> I: Would you struggle if you didn't have the overtime every week? If it was just your contracted hours?
>
> P: Probably, yes. I would really actually quite struggle, because if I done my 32 hours, after tax, I think I'd walk away with about £900-950 a month. And straight away my rent is £550, rent and council tax. Then my car is £350, including the petrol and insurance and everything. So, what's that, five, six, seven, eight, it's near enough my whole wage, gone. That's not including food, gas, lecky, telly, all of that kind of stuff. So, I don't know if I'd be able to do 32 hours and get by. I could, but I'd be living on beans on toast probably [chuckles]. [Interview 40]

Instances of financial hardship were not limited to single income households. Participants from dual income households, particularly where the participant had dependants, were also likely to say that they struggled to get by on their wages. The following account was given by an administration worker in a care home based in England, who was working full time on the minimum wage:

> To be honest, my bills are paid, I can feed my family. But again, when it comes to food and things like that I've got to think a bit more carefully. I couldn't just go shopping and go and spend £100 on whatever I feel like. I have to really think about meal plans and things like that… We're very careful with money, so we don't have all the stuff like Sky and Virgin, we just have whatever, the Freeview type thing that's free, so there's not really much wiggle room in things like that. When it comes to Christmas, that's a struggle. And you find, unfortunately, you find yourself using a credit card to cover the cost of something and then that's another bill to add on… I budget right down to the penny, to be honest. [Interview 35]

Among the participants that reported struggling financially, a common trend with those who were also parents was that unlike the other participants, they were not able to increase their income through overtime or sleepover shifts. This was either due to these hours not being available in the service where they worked, or due to their childcare needs. This serves to highlight again that for most social care participants, overtime was still necessary to earn a sustainable wage, and the absence of overtime would likely lead to financial difficulties. Therefore, working a standard full time week of 37.5 hours per week, even at the level of the LW as many of the social care participants were, was often not a sustainable income for participants who had dependants, who were single with no other income, and even those from dual income households. Taking on overtime was a necessity for many participants to earn a sufficient income.

That said, it was not always the case that participants (either from single or dual income households) had limited financial resources. Some participants had come into social care after having had a long-standing career in a better paying sector, or had a partner working in a well-paid job, and were therefore more financially secure:

> I don't mean this to sound arrogant, but I'm in a privileged position because I don't do the job for the money, because I don't need the money per se. Because I used to be in a quite well paying job, and I've got mortgage free and all that sort of thing. It's not about desperately needing the money. I'm lucky I don't have to live week-to-week, but I know some members of staff, if they're not paid a half an hour, then it has an impact on them. [Interview 37, single]

> I: Does the wage that you get here allow you to have the quality of life that you would like?
>
> P: Yeah, I would say so, especially with the wage increase. I do, yes. If I was just doing my basic 39 hours a week, I don't think I probably would. I don't think I'd struggle, only because my girlfriend, she's on a good wage. I don't think we would struggle, but we maybe won't have many-- Enjoy the pleasures of life if you like as much as we would have if I was doing overtime. [Interview 44, co-habiting]

Interestingly, both of these participants still reported doing approximately 50+ hours of overtime a month due to the service being short staffed:

> To be fair to our service, we got one guy, he's on long-term sick with cancer, and it's not the service where we can bring bank staff in our agency staff, because the [customers] that we support need familiarity. They need people they're familiar with. [Interview 37]
>
> There is times where you may be needed to unexpectedly come in on a day off… maybe asked to work extra hours… I think my downfall at times is I find it difficult to say no. It's quite hard to do because I feel like I'm letting-- not letting the [customer] down but letting them maybe-- if I can't get in, then [the customer] maybe can't get to a group. I feel maybe I'm letting them down… But yeah, it's because you feel if you go in, they'll be able to go-- or it'll be less stressful for [another staff member], if there's only one [member of staff] going, but they need two people to go. [Interview 44]

This further illustrates that the decision to take on additional overtime was not purely a financial one for participants, but was also heavily influenced by the customer's needs, a need to provide colleagues with support, and a reluctance to allow care to be compromised.

Finally, managing childcare demands, was a particular concern for parents, both financially and logistically. Participants often described complex and precarious childcare arrangements which they juggled with their partners, relying heavily on their network of family and friends in order to balance childcare demands. The cost of formal childcare provisions (such as nurseries and childminders) was prohibitive for most participants, and even sending children to school breakfast clubs was described as a financial strain. Participants would often have to negotiate flexibility in their working hours week to week, and would often have to use annual leave, to cover childcare demands. This could create spillover of home demands into the work domain, as participants had to try and negotiate their working hours to suit their childcare demands. The following extract describes one such scenario:

> P: I pay £2 a day breakfast club, which works out to be £10 a week, and that's not cheap over the month. My son has just got eating issues and things, so he does go into school with a packed lunch, but I noticed that other day it was £2 for a school meal, and it's all advertised like, "Our school meals are only £2 a day," and I thought that would be another £2 a day, £10 a week for me. £20 a week to send my son to school for me to work… I don't get any help towards my childcare, so I'm also at an expense of £100 a month for after-school care, and that's only two days a week.
>
> I have my family in the area, but it's only my mum and she's ill so she just can't help out with my son… My partner gets one day off a week but that's not a set day, so I need to wait until a Friday and he'll message me from work and be like, "Right, my day's off Wednesday," because he's asked his manager to have his days off between Monday and Wednesday. On a Friday, I need to remember to message him and be like, "What's your day off?", "It's Tuesday." "That's great, I'll arrange a babysitter for the Monday and Wednesday." That might just be my friend or my brother that lives local, but again, they work as well so it's trying to link in with them a week prior and be like, "Could you get him Monday? Could you get him on Wednesday?" Right, that's my week sorted kind of thing.
>
> I: … What happens if there's a week where you just can't get childcare on a Monday to Wednesday? Do you have to take time off then?
>
> P: I would take time off, yeah. Hopefully, try to get holiday pay but again, if somebody else is off in that room it's like, having to ask your co-worker, "Are you off for a reason that day? I really need that day off." So, it's going in a bit personal, like, not being able to just call my work and be like-- it's in my mind that we'll be low on numbers, I'm needed for a ratio. [Interview 56]

The weekly ritual of arranging childcare described was a constant source of stress for this participant. This participant also described how financial concerns were affecting her decisions as to whether or not to have a second child:

> For the last couple of years my partner and I have been speaking about having another child, and I'm like, no, I need to work, I can't. I don't think I qualify for maternity pay now until I'm over this year, and things like that. Again, I'm not on a good enough salary to be considering another child… I'm in a dilemma, I want more children, but I don't have enough money for it. It's horrible thinking that I can't have a child because of the money aspect as well." [Interview 56]

7.2.8 Perceptions of Pay and Reward

In a similar vain to the hospitality case, tensions surrounding the levels of pay existed among social care participants. One tension that emerged at a Scottish-based service within SC2 was that the levels of pay for support roles had been uplifted to the LW, however the level of pay

for non-support roles (domestic, housekeeping and kitchen staff) remained at the NLW. These staff felt that although they did not directly provide care for customers, they did contribute towards the care of customers by carrying task that were essential for the customers and the running of the service:

> [Kitchen staff] never got [the LW]. And I think that makes everybody-- because our job in here is just as important than anybody's, because you need it to make it work, you know what I mean? Because I know the support workers do an awful lot, and they do deserve what they get and more, but it's like, they're better than what you are. And I think that's wrong, because if it wasn't for us, there would be no food. If it wasn't for the housekeeping, the place would be a mess. Everybody's got a role in running the home. [Interview 20]

In not being awarded the same pay uplift as the support staff, kitchen and housekeeping staff felt that the value of their work had not been recognised.

The main tension in pay that participants highlighted from across SC1 and SC2 was that they felt their pay did not reflect the level of responsibility that they undertook in the jobs:

> The wages aren't that great as you know as well. You've got an awful lot of responsibility for the money. You've got people lives in your hand with their medication and things like that. And a lot of personal care… [Interview 47]

> I do think the pay, I think we should be rewarded more, as in just a one set £9 per hour. I think if they're a certain time-- I know that other jobs do, like Royal Mail, if you are going to do a night shift after a certain time, the money goes up in and also if you do overtime, you get extra. There's none of that. [Interview 48]

Several participants mentioned how they were expected to take on additional and more senior responsibilities, such as attending meetings with social work, and that these additional duties were also not reflected in their pay. Additionally, staff often compared the level of their responsibilities and pay to retail or cleaning work, which they perceived as being paid at the same level but with far less responsibility. However, these tensions in pay where largely mitigated through social support resources. When asked what motivated staff to staff in their jobs, the responses almost exclusively related to customers, closely followed by colleagues, with a typical comment being: *"The people we support. The people I work with. It makes it worth it"* [Interview 52]. Furthermore, despite the tensions in pay and a lack of benefits, participants commonly described their roles as rewarding, due to the difference they felt they

could make to the lives of their customers: *"I just absolutely love working with [the customers]. It's lovely to see them grow, learn and grow. All that, it's great. I just love it [chuckles]. I think it's very rewarding as well, so it is."* [Interview 54]

7.3 Chapter Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to present the experiences of participants in low wage work, to explain these experiences using the conceptual model, and to highlight the differences found in these experiences from the hospitality and social care sectors. What has been shown through this chapter is that experiences of demands and resources and the associated outcomes are multi-dimensional and highly complex. Issues that may appear on the surface to be straightforward are often far more intricate in nature. Participants were at times managing delicately balanced web of resources and demands across the work and home domains, depending on their individual circumstances. However, despite a wide variety of experiences and outcomes for participants, through the themes explored in this chapter, commonalities in these experiences were found.

One common theme throughout the experiences of the participants was the role that support from customers and colleagues played in the well-being of participants. These relationships had the potential to both greatly enrich or severely determent the participants experience of well-being. One difference noted here between the hospitality and social care cases was the intensity of the relationships that participants had with their colleagues and customers. Hospitality participants described close and intense relationships with their colleagues, so much so that they described their colleagues as family, and these relationships provided hugely valuable social support resources to participants. These relationships were still important resources for social care participants, however the level of intensity differed. Social care workers less frequently described their colleagues as being like family; instead, they were far more likely to describe customers as family, and their relationships with customers were far more intense than that of hospitality participants. When asked what kept participants in their jobs despite the demands, social care workers would say their customers, whereas hospitality workers would say their colleagues.

Despite low wage jobs from these sectors being typically labelled as low skilled, participants from both sectors had high levels of demands which they had to cope with in their jobs, with often very limited resources that could be utilised. In both sectors, participants faced challenges created by a failure of the employer to provide a sufficient level of resources, particularly with regards to staffing levels. Given the value of support from colleagues to participants in both sectors, insufficient staff levels actually caused spirals of resource losses for participants. Losing such valuable contextual resources required participants to expend greater volumes of the personal and key resources (such as time and energy) to compensate.

8. Discussion and Conclusions

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings in relation to the existing literature and highlight that contribution that has been made through this research. This chapter will open by presenting the unique conceptual framework of this study, which is the main theoretical contribution. This will be followed by a brief summary of the empirical findings in relation to each research question. The sections that follow will outline the theoretical contributions that can be made in light of the empirical findings. The theoretical underpinning of well-being is expanded further by examining the role of the employer in shaping job demands and resources, and in the depletion of employee personal resources. Models of HRM in low paid work are then discussed and the concept of SIHRM is further developed. A contribution is made to the HRM-well-being debate, through a deeper explanation of how employees experience HR practices as demands and resources. The implications of low paid work for the employee are then discussed, and the case is made for the absolute measure of low pay in contrast to the more commonly adopted relative measure. Finally, the critical role of social support as a resource for the well-being of low paid workers is discussed. Throughout this chapter, a comparison of the findings of each sector will also be made[17]. Where the methodology of the study has enabled a contribution to be made, this will be highlighted. Finally, the chapter identifies some areas for further research.

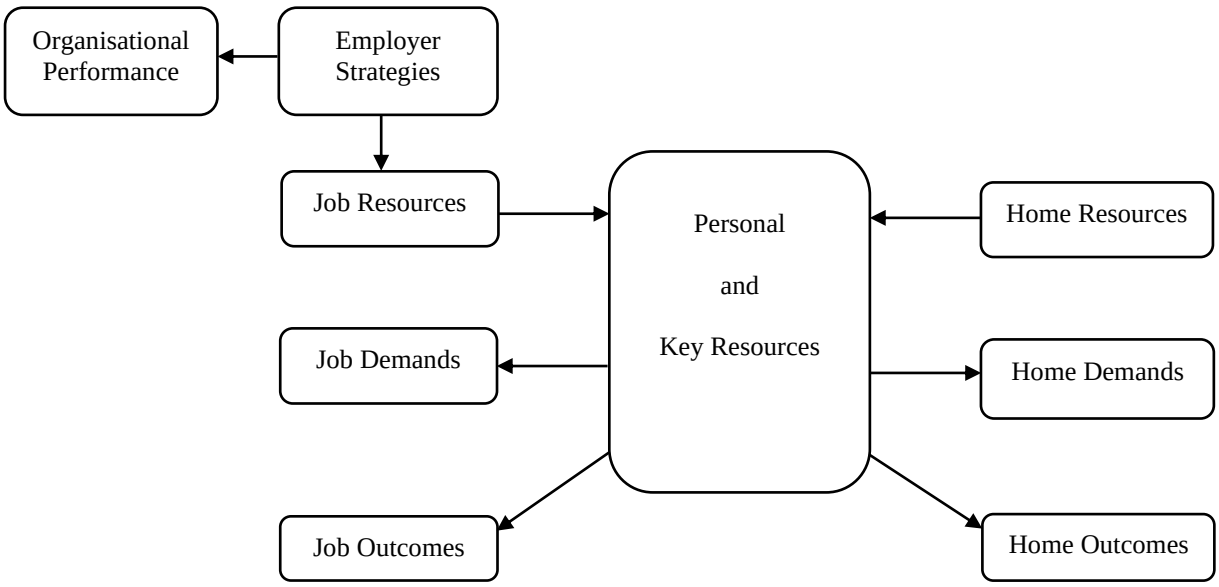
8.1 The Conceptual Framework

The main theoretical contribution of this thesis is the unique conceptual framework (see figure eight), which was initially proposed in chapter four. This is arguably the main contribution of this thesis, because the conceptual framework provided a new perspective through which to examine issues of low pay and well-being (which have individually been well researched) and allowed for further contributions to be made. The literature review identified that the consequences of low paid work for employee's well-being extend far beyond the work environment, yet studies in employee well-being tend to only examine within the context of the workplace. To address this gap, it was necessary to examine the work-home interface; as such, the WH-R conceptual model (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012) was selected as a basis, as it considered both the work and home domains. This model also integrated the spillover concepts of enrichment (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006) and conflict (Greenhaus and

[17] A brief summary of comparisons between the sectors can be found in appendix two and three.

Beutell, 1985), in an attempt to explain how the quality of experiences from one domain might affect the quality of the experience in the other domain. That said, while the WH-R model provided the conceptual basis for understanding the experience of work and home, the model did not consider the role of the employer in shaping the contextual job demands and resources. Employers used various HR strategies to elicit organisational performance and these strategies are enacted through HR practices, which consequently shape the job demands and job resources (Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013). Therefore, it was necessary to extend the WH-R model to include the role of the employer, and to show how the actions of employers shape the employee experience of both the work and home domains.

Figure Eight: The Conceptual Framework



This framework provided a unique perspective on the problem of low paid work, by combining theoretical concepts from these various fields including HRM, work psychology and work-family literatures, where the context of low pay is often overlooked. The research questions were generated as a result of the framework, and it is in answering these research questions that further contributions to these literatures have been made in the sections that follow in this chapter. Moreover, the conceptual framework has allowed the issues of low pay to be examined from a number of perspectives at different organisational levels. Namely, it has allowed for the identification and evaluation of the impact of underlying management

philosophies, and for the well-being of low paid workers to be explored across the work-family interface. This framework allowed the analysis to show how employer strategies, in the form of job demands and resources, both directly and indirectly affected employee's experience of work and their well-being, due to the effect that job demands and resources had on personal resources. This analysis would not have been possible without the conceptual framework, as this framework enabled the research to clarify the linkages between HRM and employee outcomes.

8.2 Revisiting the Research Questions: Key Empirical Findings

The overarching aim of this thesis was to voice the experiences of low paid workers, and to investigate the role of the employer in shaping that experience. The conceptual framework led to the specific research questions of the study, and it is argued that through answering these research questions, this thesis has met the overall aim. At this point, the research questions will be revisited, and a brief summary of the empirical findings will be given.

The first research question asked what management philosophies underpinned the choice of HR practices used in the hospitality and social care sectors in the context of low paid work. The data revealed a distinctly hard approach within each sector, and at times exposed an irresponsible and exploitative undercurrent. However, there were distinct differences between the approaches in each sector (a summary can be found in appendix two). The hospitality sector was characterised by a high level of control over labour costs, as a result of financialised pressures. The underlying aims behind HRM strategy were performance driven, with well-being very much an afterthought. At times, close monitoring of employee working hours was branded as a work-life balance policy, when in fact the true purpose of these practices was to keep tight control of labour costs. Despite some greater investment in staff within the social care sector, the high dependence on local authority funding meant that the organisations faced an increasingly marketized environment; as such, there was a strong drive for financial sustainability and efficiency. In both social care organisations, reducing absence and increasing retention were critical elements of this plan, with employee well-being viewed as a mechanism through which financial sustainability could be achieved. However, investment in practices that would improve well-being and the long-term sustainability of work for employees was still limited and highly constrained.

The second research question asked about the employee experience of the work-home interface in low wage work. This thesis uncovered that participants faced a highly precarious juggling act of balancing competing demands across the work-home interface, which at times were highly complex and intensified by low pay. Participants were faced with high work demands, in the form of increasing workloads, growing responsibilities, and customer demands. Financial hardship was a constant reality, which fuelled spirals of resource loss across the work-home interface. Using a resource-based perspective of well-being demonstrated how participants would often make decisions that would adversely affect their well-being in an attempt to secure an adequate income. The data also revealed was the role that social support resources played in helping the participants manage demands across the work-home interface. Participants experienced highly intense relationships, through which they gained valuable social support resources that enriched their experiences of both work and home. Participants were dependant on their employment to sustain these resources, which adds a further layer to the explanation of why some employees will withstand poor working conditions for extended periods of time. Additionally, both understaffing and short staffing threatened the availability of these resources, and a lack of social support resources appeared to intensify the experience of other demands.

The third research question asked how HR practices influenced the employee experience of well-being in low wage work. Using a resource-based model to examine the well-being of participants brought to light several practices that increased the demands of the participants and adversely affected their experience of well-being. While the case study organisations attempted to put in place some well-being initiatives, these rarely addressed the demands associated with work, which were the causes of stress. Little evidence emerged that any well-being initiatives put in place, such as employee assistance programmes or employee support funds, did anything to alleviate the day-to-day experience of employees, as they did not address the sources of stress. Furthermore, issues of well-being were often considered a failure on the part of the individual to manage their resources, rather than as a consequence of the employer's actions. Any meaningful attempt to address issues of well-being in low paid work will require a focus from employers to reduce the structural demands of the job and increase the resources available to workers.

The final research question asked how the experiences of employees in the hospitality and social care sectors compared (a summary of which can be found in appendix three). The data revealed that participants were in both sectors were subject to high demands and workloads which were intensified by staffing issues. In hospitality, high demands were caused by understaffing, whereas in social care, there was more of a problem of short staffing due to recruitment and retention issues. Participants in the hospitality sector were often underemployed and struggled to secure enough working hours, whereas participants in social care were overemployed and worked excessive volumes of overtime. In both sectors, social support was an important resource for the well-being of low paid employees, however this manifested in different ways. In hospitality, relationships with colleagues was the key source of social support and perceived as one of the main benefits of the job. Whereas in social care, relationships with customers provided their main source of social support and shaped the meaningfulness of work for the participants. However, in both sectors, these relationships also acted as a source of demands which affected well-being.

8.3 Expanding the Theory of Well-being

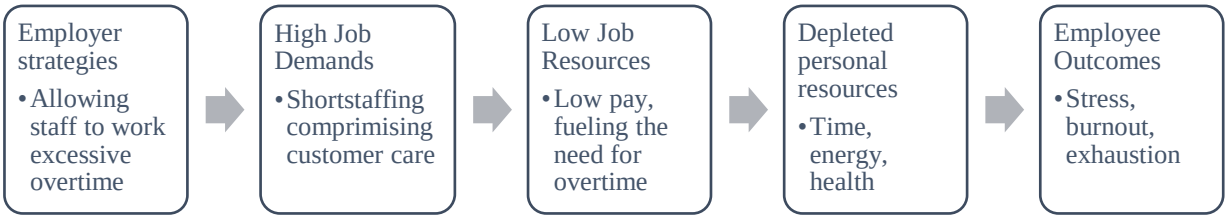
The use of qualitative data alongside the unique conceptual framework allowed this research to make a further contribution, by challenging some of the underlying principles and assumptions of the existing theory of well-being, which is firmly rooted in the field of psychology. Like similar resource based models of well-being (such as the JD-R), the WH-R model utilised Hobfoll's (1989) COR theory to explain well-being. While COR theory is helpful in explaining how cycles of resource gain and loss occur, it has not typically addressed the reasons *why* these cycles of gain and loss occur. The explanation offered by the literature is that well-being is determined by the level of personal and key resources that an individual possesses, as these are the resources that allow for the effective management of all other resources (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012). It is proposed that when a low level of personal resources is combined with low job resources and high job demands, employees are particularly at risk of poorer levels of well-being (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). Even where it is identified that employers have a role to play in reducing high job demands to prevent stress and burnout, the overwhelming message still emphasises that it is the individual's level of personal resources, in particular their self-efficacy, self-esteem and optimism, which will determine levels of well-being and resilience (Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007).

This literature fails to recognise how the various contextual job demands and resources designed by employers are what can cause the low level of personal resources in the individual, which ultimately lead to loss spirals and poor well-being, rather than an inadequacy of the worker. The increasing influence of psychology in the fields HRM and employment relations has been criticised, as this perspective tends to focus on individual differences and personality traits as explanations for performance, rather than examining the employment relationship or the actions of employers (Godard, 2014; Kaufman, 2020). The underpinning positivist paradigm has meant that the focus of research within these fields has been with the measurement of phenomenon, paying limited attention to how phenomenon are experienced. This has led to a narrow view and understanding of well-being, as there has been a preoccupation with the measurement of well-being, with limited focus on theoretical development (Peccei and Van De Voorde, 2019a). Additionally, this research rarely considers how the specific organisational and environmental context can influence well-being. Kaufman (2010, p. 49) argues that the problem with the "psychologization" of HRM is that research often reduces "macro- level HRM outcomes to individual-level psychological- behavioural factors and individual differences". Psychology based research has pinned poor levels of well-being on a lack of personal resources at the level of the individual worker (Xanthopoulou *et al.*, 2007; Demerouti and Bakker, 2011; ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012); as a result, the picture painted in this literature is that poor well-being follows as a result of an inadequacy of the employee.

In contrast, this thesis has looked at the broader organisational environment to explain how personal resources may become depleted. Examining the experience of low paid work through a pragmatist lens highlights a different explanation for poor well-being other than that expressed in the psychology-based literatures, as it has kept this research centred on the employee experience whilst still recognising that this experience is inseparable from, and in constant transaction with, the organisational context. The findings from this study suggest that it is actually the failure of the employer to address the problem of high job demands and provide a sufficient levels job resources that leads to the depletion of an individual's personal resources as they attempt to manage these situations. ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) argue that structural, chronic demands from the work or home domains require individuals to continually use their personal resources, which in the short term lead to depletions in the more volatile personal resources (such as time, energy, mood) and in the longer term deplete more durable

key resources (such as health). This research confirms these assertions, but further argues through the conceptual framework that the root causes of these structural demands stem from employer HRM strategies. HR practices such as low pay acted as a chronic and structural demand which affected well-being across the work-home interface. For example, contextual resources are required to build personal resources (ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012), but low pay limited the contextual resources of the home. Arguably it follows that extended periods of time in low paid work will have long term implications for well-being, as the resources available to the worker to improve their well-being are limited. In social care, frequent short staffing and a need to increase their pay caused staff to take on additional overtime. This overtime depleted the personal resources of the employee, such as time, energy and health, and over extended periods would result in burnout and stress, as figure nine shows:

Figure Nine: Example of Resource Loss in Social Care



In the hospitality sector, similar patterns were observed. A common example was the practice of understaffing by the employer. This both intensified the workloads of participants and reduced the availability of social support resources. To cope with higher demands and fewer resources, participants had to use more of their personal resources, leading to negative outcomes such as stress and emotional exhaustion, as shown in figure ten:

Figure Ten: Example of Resource Loss in Hospitality

As a result, the data from this study found more evidence in favour of the argument that it is the actions of employers that initiate the loss spirals that lead to poor well-being, rather than an inadequacy on the part of the worker to manage resources. Additionally, the findings of this study also support the notion that it is a direct and distinct strategy of employers to exploit and deplete the personal resources of the worker in their attempts to save on labour costs. In this study, it was evident of how hard HRM practices such as high workloads, understaffing, and low pay, led to poor outcomes for employees. These high job demands and low job resources were a result of management strategies which specifically benefited from the exploitation of an employee's personal resources. Taking the previous example of social care from figure nine, it is cheaper to have existing and experienced staff work overtime than it is to recruit and train new staff; therefore, the organisation benefits from depleting the personal resources of staff. A key conclusion here is that it is the failure of the employer to address the structural demands created by HRM strategy and practices which generate a chain reaction of events that ultimately lead to poor well-being and stress.

In close connection to the previous point, the findings of this study suggest that various employer-led health and well-being initiatives are superficial and are of little benefit to employees, because they fail to address the structural causes of stress. There was arguably a hidden philosophy sitting behind the well-being agenda in each organisation that placed the blame for poor well-being firmly with the employee. This was evident in the way employees were often blamed for failing to manage or protect their well-being, despite the employer having a clear role in shaping the environment that lead to poor well-being. In many cases, there was limited recognition from management as to the demands created for employees through their practices, particularly with regards to the financial hardship faced by staff as a result of low pay. An example of this was in interviews with managers from the hospitality sector, where often the blame for financial hardship among low paid staff was placed on the employee, citing poor budgeting skills or overspending rather than recognising levels of pay or working conditions as causes of hardship. This supports Foster's (2018) arguments that employer-led well-being strategies have too often focused on improving individual health or resilience, rather than addressing the causes of poor well-being, the result of which has been to ignore the role of working conditions in poor health and instead blame the individual. Using a resource-based model to examine the processes of stress and well-being for participants highlighted several common themes as causes of stress, with some of the key stressors

including: understaffing; lack of support from line managers or colleagues; and, customer demands. Often employer-led well-being initiatives (such as fitness or healthy eating) were superficial at best; they often failed to deal with the causes of stress, to replenish the specific personal resources that were depleted by job demands in the first place, or provide any additional job resources that would increase personal resources. An example of this was demonstrated in H2, where well-being initiatives (such as lunch time fitness activities) instigated by HR did not actually address any of the causes of stress for employees, with the suggestion that in some circumstances these so called well-being initiatives where actually a cause of stress, due to the additional time commitments and constraints involved in their implementation. Resultantly, it can be argued that in low paying work, meaningfully addressing issues of well-being requires action from the employer to reduce demands and increase the resources available to workers. Arguably, then, this situation points to the need to address the issues with basic, fundamental aspects of work, rather than necessarily implementing well-being initiatives which only deal with superficial elements of individual health.

8.4 Models of HRM in Low Wage Work: Low Road, or Irresponsible?

Various different models of HRM were discussed in the literature, including the early inceptions of soft, stakeholder perspectives (Beer, 1985) and hard, performance orientated models (Tichy, Fombrun and Devanna, 1982); high road and low road perspectives (Guest, 2002; Osterman, 2018), and more recently, the emergence of socially responsible (Shen, 2011; Shen and Benson, 2016) verses socially irresponsible HRM (Richards and Sang, 2019a). Typically, low paid work is associated with hard HRM and low road strategies, and the findings of this study are very much in keeping with this trend. However, the findings also reveal that HR practices had various outcomes for employees for their well-being. Conceptualisations of a high and road low tend to centre around the practices of organisations and do not take into account how these practices affect employees. As such, an organisation could be considered high road based on the practices used, even if these practices actually result in negative outcomes for employees. Therefore, it is argued that here that SR/SIHRM models are better placed to examine issues of well-being, as these models are employee centred and consider how HR practices impact employees. Additionally, this research builds on the work of Richards and Sang (2019a) by confirming the presence of SIHRM through the empirical data; expanding the HRM philosophies and practices involved in SIHRM; and, by further developing

the theory that connects HRM philosophises and practices to employee outcomes in the work-home interface through the unique conceptual framework.

Beginning with management philosophy, a similar rhetoric was found within each organisation in both sectors, following the general philosophy that taking care of staff would lead to better quality customer service. The thinking was that this strategy would lead to a more efficient service and financial sustainability within the social care sector, and higher returns for shareholders within the hospitality sector. Organisations in both sectors faced considerable challenges with turnover and recruitment; that said, the strategy of each organisation was to position themselves within competitive labour markets as desirable employers, despite at times only a minimal investment in employees. To improve this desirability, within each organisation there had been a renewed focus on employee well-being, underpinned by this general management philosophy. However, it was in the practice of managing labour that hard, low road, and arguably irresponsible approaches to HRM were uncovered, driven by the need to deliver desired levels of profits for shareholders in the hospitality sector and the need for financial sustainability within the social care sector. A comparison of the practices used in each sector uncovers interesting nuances (see appendix two for a brief comparison).

The social care firms did appear on the surface to have an approach more in line with a high road strategy. Osterman's (2018) definition of a high road approach within a low paying sector is one that is legally compliant, and that pays an "adequate" wage (above the market rate) which is funded through the use of HRM practices that create cost savings. Additionally, it is argued that the high road approach involves a HR strategy which takes a high skill, high wage approach, with a competitive strategy based on product/service quality and innovation rather than price (Osterman, 1994; Youndt *et al.*, 1996; Milkman, 1998). Several examples of high road approaches were identified in each social care organisation. SC1 had achieved LW accreditation, and SC2 also paid the LW rate, albeit only where funding permitted. Whilst SC2 were not in a position to pay all staff the LW, they did claim to have a longer-term strategy to improve the financial position of the organisation to allow for sustainable increases to wages in future. Both organisations were using more sophisticated HRM practices, such as values-based recruitment, enhanced training and development programmes, and absence management, to make cost efficiencies that would allow for increased wages in the longer term.

Despite evidence of greater investments in staff such as improved levels of pay and substantial training and development opportunities, the management approach found in the social care case also had similarities to the very hard nature found in hospitality. In both SC1 and SC2, the management approach was strongly driven by the need for financial sustainability, which again, like hospitality, was the main driving force behind HRM strategy and practice. In practice, this meant that wage levels were determined in line with the requirements of funders, and there was a strong focus on making substantial financial savings on staffing costs in the areas of recruitment, retention and absence. Whilst the LW is indicative of a high-road strategy, the emergence of the LW among social care staff is largely driven by Scottish Government policy and funding, rather than an explicit employer strategy. The presence of the LW alone therefore would not be sufficient to determine whether a high road approach was at play. Where the approach of social care did differ from the hospitality sector was rather than simply being seen as an added bonus, well-being strategies were viewed as a mechanism to achieving efficiencies and the ultimate goal of financial sustainability. One example of this was in SC1, were shortfalls in funding for the LW were made up for by improved absence figures and improving employee well-being was viewed as the pathway to achieving this goal. The approach is still hard in nature, as the overall goal was financial performance; however, this is more along the lines of the high road approach to HRM. Well-being is viewed as a mechanism by which financial sustainability can be found, but equally, the financial investment in doing so is constrained and limited.

The social care organisations in this study were not constrained by financialisation in the same way as the hospitality organisations, as both SC1 and SC2 were charitable bodies and not subject to the demands of shareholders. As a result, both SC1 and SC2 were more able to reinvest surpluses into their staff by improving pay, terms and conditions, and increased training. On this matter, Osterman (2018) is critical of case studies which present high road approaches in low paying industries, arguing that individual cases are often idiosyncratic and are usually organisations which are still in private ownership and not subject to the forces of the financial markets. Initially, it may appear like the social care cases presented in this research fall foul to the same folly, and the evidence from this study certainly supports the assertion that firms out with the control of shareholders are more able to follow a high road approach. However, while these social care firms were not as directly exposed to the forces of financialisation or constrained by the shareholder model, they were still very much subject to

market forces, particularly that of marketisation. Each social care organisation was heavily dependent on the local authority for funding, which ultimately constrained management decisions and strategy. In both organisations, paying the LW was only possible where funding from the local authorities covered the cost. In SC2, many staff were employed in roles or locations where funding only permitted the NLW to be paid; these staff ultimately experienced a lower road form of HRM in comparison to other staff within the organisation who were paid the LW. SC1 did manage to pay all staff the LW regardless of role; however, SC1 did not have services operating in England, and employed far fewer staff that were subject to such funding restrictions. Even still, the evidence suggested that SC1 had difficulties when it came to actually obtaining this funding from local authorities to pay the LW.

Nevertheless, despite being subjected to the forces of marketisation, the management of both SC1 and SC2 pursued a strategy of improving the financial sustainability of the organisation through efficiencies brought about by greater investments in staff. SC1 could have easily chosen instead to compensate for higher wages by tightening any other labour related costs, such as training. Additionally, while SC2 struggled to scale high-road approaches across the organisation, SC2 still had a long-term strategy geared towards financial sustainability through investment in HR, that would allow for higher wages to be sustained should market forces change in the future. Furthermore, SC2 still managed to improve some areas of job quality including training, and some terms and conditions, even if it cannot be said that a high road approach had been fully implemented. However, high dependency on local authority funding and limited alternative income streams ultimately meant that despite an absence of shareholders and private ownership, these organisations were still highly constrained in their choice of HRM due to market forces.

In contrast, the hospitality case was characterised by a high level of management control over labour costs. In the hospitality case, arguably both H1 and H2 were ideally placed to offer a high road strategy, as both were part of large, multi-national firms situated at the higher value end of the consumer market (Knox and Walsh, 2005). However, as other research in the hospitality sector has found, operating at the higher end of the consumer market does not necessarily lead to improved levels of pay or skill for staff (Lloyd, Warhurst and Dutton, 2013). Neither hospitality organisation in this study had a policy of paying an adequate wage to the

lowest levels of staff; furthermore, it was a specific management strategy to restrict the volume of labour to the absolute minimum level and to pay the minimum wage rate. At times, there was also evidence of non-compliance with employment legislation, particularly with regards to working time regulations. Additionally, often what was described as part of an approach to improving employee well-being was in actual fact simply minimal compliance with employment legislation or a very basic employment standard.

The performance orientation of each organisation was the driving force underpinning HRM strategy and practice. These practices included: minimal compliance with employment legislation with regards to pay; minimum staffing structures; and, a high dependency on contingent labour to provide numerical flexibility. This approach, as was seen in the employee experience, is what created the demands and lack of resources that most commonly led to employees experiencing stress. Well-being was viewed more as a way to enhance the employer brand and justify certain practices when they had an unintended beneficial consequence for well-being, rather than implementing practices specifically for the purpose of improving well-being. For example, in H1, management regularly claimed that ensuring the work life balance of employees was a key way that they prioritised the well-being of their staff. As a result, H1 had a policy of closely monitoring employee's working hours through a weekly payroll budget meeting, to ensure that working hours did not exceed a certain level and that employees had two consecutive days off per week. However, in practice it was clear that this policy was used by managers as a means of keeping labour costs to an absolute minimum and to justify a general approach of understaffing. The true nature of this policy was further evident during busy seasonal periods such as Christmas, when this work life balance policy was abandoned, and any sense of employee well-being was put on hold so that customer demands could be met. Ultimately, the underlying aims behind these practices were performance driven. The well-being of employees very much an afterthought; additionally, employee well-being was often used as a way to frame policies or practices which were actually intended as means of controlling labour costs or increasing revenues. These hidden, underlying management philosophies, and minimal or non-compliance with employment law echoed the model of SIHRM (Richards and Sang, 2019a).

The financialisation of these hotels considerably shaped and constrained the management teams of each hotel in terms of HRM strategy, as each hotel was required to deliver a certain level of profit for their shareholders. Expectations of required financial performance and profit were placed on each management team, with little intention that any of this profit would be reinvested into staff. Despite this, there were some efforts by the hospitality organisations to improve job quality for workers through the use of HR practices such as engagement strategies, incentives and progression opportunities. However, these efforts were limited in terms of financial investment, and usually only afforded to core, permanent employees. This is in keeping with various other studies, where practices that improve well-being may be applied to core staff but will often will not extend to periphery employees (Kalleberg, 2003; Greenwood, 2007; Zhang *et al.*, 2015). Even at the level of the low paid worker, a two-tier workforce existed whereby certain benefits (such as occupational sick pay) were only afforded to contracted staff, despite zero-hour workers effectively carrying out the same job.

When considering the two cases, on balance, it is questionable as to whether or not a high road approach can truly exist in low paying sectors, where profit margins are low and there is little alternative to tightly controlling labour costs (Osterman, 2018). An element of choice does appear to still exist for management in low wage sectors, but this choice is highly constrained by funding mechanisms. High constraints do not completely eliminate choice, but they are certainly limited to small matters of job quality. For example, in the hospitality sector, there was little scope for management to improve pay or terms, however they were able to offer smaller rewards and recognition to staff, such as sales incentives, vouchers and long service awards. In SC2, while management were not able to increase the wages of care workers about the minimum wage, investments were made in improving the quality of training on offer. However, it is important to recognise that even where a high road approach with higher wages is possible, this does not necessarily equate to job quality, as underlying management philosophies and strategies still have the capacity to limit job quality. For example, even in social care where LWs were possible, an examination of the employee experience uncovered that some practices used were still irresponsible in nature and exploited the financial vulnerability of workers. This was particularly evident in the instances of excessive overtime worked by employees. This may not have been forced on employees, but staff certainly were not sufficiently protected from working excessive hours, as it was in the employer's interest for willing employees to behave in this way, despite the risk that this posed to well-being.

In both sectors, where evidence of more socially irresponsible HRM practice did emerge was in the employee experience of the work-home interface. In particular, low levels of pay were found to adversely affect the well-being of participants in this study, as low pay limited the financial resources available in the home domain. Participants described the stress associated with not having enough working hours, as this left them struggling to meet their financial demands. Even where they did have enough working hours, participants described their difficulties in keeping up with bills, paying for and arranging childcare, and other day-to-day costs. Participants would at times make decisions that adversely affected their well-being because of low pay, such as not taking annual leave and working excessive amounts of overtime. Little evidence emerged that any well-being initiatives put in place, such as employee assistance programmes or employee support funds, did anything to alleviate employees' day-to-day experience. As mentioned earlier, some evidence emerged that these measures may provide employees relief in times of crisis, such as the well-being fund in SC2; however, these initiatives did nothing to improve the sustainability of low paid work for employees. Low wages in the hospitality sector were often justified by management by arguing that wages were supplemented by other benefits, such as free meals. However, this argument was shown to be feeble at best, as financial hardship amongst the participants was evident. Even at the level of the LW, it is questionable whether this represents a socially responsible approach, given that participants from the social care sector in this study still felt they had to work overtime to increase their wages to a sustainable level.

For this reason, current conceptualisations of HRM as high road or low road are perhaps not the most helpful, as these approaches focus on the practices of the employer, overlooking how employees are impacted by said practices. Characterisations between high and low road approaches really only serve to distinguish between hard and harder forms of HRM, as the underlying philosophies remain similar. In support of arguments made by Greenwood (2007), the evidence from this study demonstrated that the presence of high-road HRM practices alone do not necessarily ensure the responsible, ethical and moral treatment of workers, or result in better outcomes for workers. As such, the model of SR/SIHRM proposed by Richards and Sang (2019a) provides a stronger basis for assessing the nature of HRM within low paying organisations and the impact on employees. As argued later in this chapter, the extent to which an HR practice is a demand or a resource depends on how that practice is experience by employees. It follows that the extent to which a practice is deemed to be responsible or

irresponsible should be determined by the consequences and outcomes of that practice for the employee. On this basis, low paid work, particularly where the minimum wage is paid, cannot be considered a socially responsible approach to managing people, regardless of other benefits or initiatives offered by the employer. A low pay approach relies on the exploitation by the employer of the personal and home resources of the worker, to supplement a business model that profits by paying inadequate wages. As others have argued, the resources of wider society are exploited through this strategy, as the state is required to supplement unsustainable low wages via welfare benefits (Mason, Mayhew and Osborne, 2008; Lee and Sobeck, 2012). Pay is such a crucial resource in terms of well-being outcomes that it must be enough to provide an adequate standard of living for an HRM strategy to be considered socially responsible. A strategy which exploits the position of the most vulnerable in the labour market, and the resources of wider society in the process, simply fails to measure up.

8.5 The HRM-Well-being Debate: The Low Paid Context

The literature review identified a widely debated discourse surrounding the relationship between HRM and well-being. The central debate within the HRM literature regarding well-being can be categorised into mainstream arguments which claim that HRM is good for both organisations and employees, and critical labour process theory which argues that HRM is good for organisations, but harmful to employees (Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley, 2000; Legge, 2005; Keenoy, 1997; Godard, 2001). It has been argued that to better understand the relationship between HRM and well-being, theoretical development is needed to understand how HR strategies and practices transform into job demands and resources (Peccei, Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2013). Additionally, Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019a) raise concerns that there is little justification given in the literature for why practices are considered demands or resources, commenting that what is a resource in one study is a demand in another. This research asked a slightly different question about how HR practices are experienced by employees, and in doing so, makes a unique contribution to this discussion.

The findings demonstrated that the employee experience of well-being in both the work and home domains was directly and indirectly influenced and shaped by various HR practices and management strategies. One example of this was the level of staffing. In both sectors, inadequate staffing levels was shown to reduce the availability of social resources to

participants, which was an essential resource for them in dealing with work demands. In the hospitality sector, staffing levels were tightly controlled, erring on the side of understaffing, with staff rotas often only finalised at the last minute. In social care, inadequate staffing levels were blamed on challenges surrounding recruitment and retention of staff, which appeared to create vicious cycles. For many participants in the social care sector, inadequate staffing levels gave the opportunity to take up overtime, which was considered an acceptable trade off in terms of well-being to some extent, given that it would provide much needed financial resources in the home domain. However, the reality for many participants in both sectors was rather than being able to increase their pay through overtime, inadequate staffing levels meant that the demands of work intensified. Participants had to deal with higher volumes of work and increased social demands from customers, with less social resources from their colleagues in which to cope with these demands. This required participants to then deplete their valuable personal resources - such as time, energy and health - to compensate for the loss of social resources.

A further example of an HR practice that impacted the well-being of employees was flexibility. The practice of offering flexibility in working hours by the organisations in this study was often shown to represent a conflicting outcome which benefited the organisation, rather than a mutual gain for employees. In the social care case, where flexible working arrangements were widely used, this flexibility sometimes appeared to represent a win-win for both the employer and the employee, particularly were working arrangements allowed parents and guardians to make suitable childcare arrangements, enabling them to better manage the work-home interface. However, it was repeatedly seen that this usually came with a financial trade-off, such as not being able to work overtime, which reduced their financial resources in the home, with consequences for well-being. In hospitality, again as a result of staffing strategies, participants on zero-hour contracts often struggled to gain enough working hours each week. This combined with insecurity in working hours and minimal levels of pay placed significant demands on already limited resources. Typically, conflicting outcomes have been associated with physical well-being (Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012), however this study demonstrates that the negative financial impact that HR practices can have on employees in low paid work extends beyond just physical well-being.

Within both sectors, the management rhetoric was very much of the mutual gains perspective, whereby performance was driven through improvements in employee well-being, similar to that of Guest's (2017) proposed analytical framework of mutual gains. The reality, however, did not live up to this promise. In the hospitality cases, the evidence found this claim to be more of a soft rhetoric with a hard reality (Legge, 2005). Any mutual gains were almost happy accidents when they happened and were exploited for their employer branding potential. This could be seen in H1 where tight scrutiny of working hours was presented as attempts to ensure work-life balance for staff. In reality, this was used as a mechanism for reducing the wage bill, a practice which often left staff with insufficient working hours as a result. In social care, the management rhetoric of producing efficiencies through improvements in well-being did appear to be enacted through some practices. An example of this was investments in training and development, which were highly valued by staff and contributed to their job satisfaction and level of skill. However, the volume of training required led to the intensification of work and spillover into the home domain, and so trade-offs in well-being were still present.

Although there was more evidence of well-being approaches being used to drive performance in social care, when faced with the choice between compromising the well-being of staff and compromising levels of performance, ultimately performance won out, echoing the age old criticism that "People will only come first when it is economically advantageous to pursue such a strategy" (Keenoy, 1990, p. 9). The evidence from this study showed that poor well-being outcomes came as a result of the HRM practices that were specifically designed to improve performance, a finding very much in line with arguments from labour process theory (Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley, 2000; Godard, 2001; Legge, 2005). It should also be noted there was limited recognition from management as to the demands created for employees through their practices, particularly with regards to the financial hardship faced by staff as a result of low pay. From the various examples of HR practices discussed, it would appear that any mutual gains to be had effectively came at a cost to the employee by way of a trade-off. This leads one to question whether the notion of the mutual gains perspective really stands up for employees, particularly when any associated gains may also bring with them associated conflicts.

Therefore, speaking to relationship between HRM and well-being, the evidence from this study suggests that the extent to which HRM is beneficial or harmful to the well-being of employees depends on whether the practices used increase or decrease the personal resources of employees. By the same token, it is argued that whether a practice should be considered a demand or a resource will very much depend on how it is experienced by the employee. As shown in the data, the well-being outcomes described by the participants were dependant on how practices had built or depleted their personal resources, and at times, the HR practices used would build some key resources while simultaneously depleting others. This suggests that an HR practice has the capacity to act as either a job resource or a job demand; furthermore, it is entirely possible that the same practice may act as both a demand and a resource for the same individual, depending on how the practice builds or depletes the key resources.

The duality in the way that practices are experienced also adds to the explanation of why trade-offs in well-being are found. For example, the training programs within social care were highly valued, and built the personal resources of participants in a number of ways by improving levels of skill and confidence. However, the volume of training also acted as a demand which depleted other personal resources of some employees who found it difficult to complete training in their working hours. These participants therefore had to finish it at home, depleting their personal resources such as time and energy, which could be stressful for employees and cause work to home conflict. Thus, training acted as both a job resource and demand, with trade-offs for some employees. The literature highlights that even where management practices are designed to improve performance through improving well-being, this often leads to trade-offs between the different dimensions of well-being, as management practices that improve one type of well-being may consequently decrease another area of well-being (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007; Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012). Limited explanation is given in the literature to explain why these trade-offs occur, and is usually construed as a consequence of the multi-dimensional nature of both well-being and organisational performance, where improvement in one dimension causes unintended outcomes in others (Grant, Christianson and Price, 2007; Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012). This thesis goes a step further in this explanation, by arguing that it is the impact of a practice on personal resources that causes trade-offs between the different dimensions of well-being. From the evidence gathered in this study, these trade-offs appear to be dependent on the extent to which a resource can also act as a demand, building some

personal resources while simultaneously depleting others. It was also shown that these trade-offs in well-being are not restricted to the work domain but happen across the work-family interface.

These findings bring to light a methodological issue that exists within the current literature, which stem paradigmatic assumptions. In studies utilising a resource based perspective such as JD-R, researchers make an assumption in their research design as to whether an HR practice is considered a demand or a resource; this is commonly the approach in quantitative work (for examples see Bakker and Guerts, 2004; Bakker et al. 2011; Schaufeli, Bakker and Van Rhenen). Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019a) highlight that HR practices such as training are conceptualised in some studies as a demand, and in other studies as a resource, with little justification given by researchers as to why that is the case, and argue that a lack of theoretical development is the cause of this issue, which then hinders the understanding of the relationship between HRM and well-being. How HR practices translate into demands and resources is a theoretical question raised in the literature by Peccei, Van de Voorde and Van Veldhoven (2013); yet, in studies utilising the JD-R model which consider HR practices, often no reasoning is given for why that practice is considered a demand or resource. Occasionally some justification is provided, such as Conway et al. (2016) who provides reasoning as to why performance management should be considered a job demand and employee voice should be considered a job resource. However, this still assumes that the HR practice is experienced by every participant in that way. The findings of this study, which utilises a Pragmatic lens, suggests that to some extent, it arguably cannot be known at the point of research design whether an HR practice is experienced as a demand or a resource, and it certainly should not be assumed. This study made no assumption about how HR practices would be experienced, and instead looked to the employee experience to determine whether the practice was experienced as a demand or a resource. Therefore, closer examination suggests that these issues are not simply theoretical as Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019a) suggest, but are concerned with inherent paradigmatic assumptions made by researchers in this field.

Using Pragmatist constructs of experience and transaction underpinned this contribution. Well-being is continually referred to as a subjective experience in the literature, yet most of the concepts used to research well-being (such as demands and resources) are treated as objective

concepts to be measured and investigated, due to the predominately positivistic nature of the current literature. The Pragmatic framing of this study conceptualised demands and resources not only as objective constructs to be discovered, defined and measured, but also as subjective experiences that the participants interpret and attach meaning, recognising that these traits are inseparable. Participants experiences were located in the "living present", but also informed by how the past has been interpreted and anticipation about future (Elkjaer and Simpson, 2011). This way of understanding the experiences of participants is reflected in how they explained the ways in which HR practices were experienced and interpreted as demands or resources, and the associated outcomes as a consequence. This experience was subject to constant change and reinterpretation; what were considered demands yesterday may well be resources tomorrow. In that sense, it is argued here that the juxtaposition of these two jarring ideas is what has often resulted in criticisms by other scholars, in that the theory surrounding the HRM-well-being relationship is weak and underdeveloped (Wood and de Menezes, 2011; Wood *et al.*, 2012; Peccei and Van De Voorde, 2019a) . Looking at these concepts through the lens of a living philosophy, such as Pragmatism, which recognises that there is a duality in the nature of these concepts based on the way they are experienced, allows for a move away from the more absolutist, positivist, "thingification" of demands and resources, to an understanding that these concepts are more fluid structures that are lived and experienced in contexts which are subject to change and re-interpretation by the participants (Simpson, 2017).

8.6 The Reality of Life on Low Pay

Consistent with other findings, for many of the participants in this study, low wage work was not a temporary state or a starter job, but the reality of working life (Grimshaw, 2011; Hurrell, 2013; D'Arcy and Hurrell, 2014). Over three quarters of the participants had been employed with their organisation for over a year, with one third of participants in their position for over five years. This is in slight contrast to the notion of labour market churning and the "low pay, no pay" cycle suggested by other authors (Stewart, 2007; Cappellari and Jenkins, 2008; Shildrick *et al.*, 2012); however, it should be noted that no attempt was made in this study to examine the participant's employment history beyond their current position. The findings are however consistent with other quantitative evidence that many workers find themselves trapped in low wage work for significant periods of time (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017). Participants in the study often occupied a more vulnerable position in the labour market due to demographic characteristics, such as being female, young, students, and having part time availability

(Nickson, 2013). Working in the hospitality sector was rarely described by participants as a meaningful career choice, and was more likely to have been the result of necessity or convenience (Hay, 2015), usually driven by a weaker labour market position that left participants with few alternatives (Piasna *et al.*, 2013). In contrast, social care workers described their work as meaningful and intrinsically rewarding, with staff highly committed to their jobs even where the job demands were high, in keeping with other research (Nickson *et al.*, 2008; Baines and Cunningham, 2011).

The outcomes for participants in terms of managing financial demands and resources varied greatly throughout the study and were dependant on the specific circumstances of the individual. Managing financial demands and resources was at times a complex and precarious juggling act for participants in this study. While no measurement of poverty was undertaken in this study, there was substantial evidence from the testimonies of participants that many were facing financial hardship themselves; additionally, participants were aware of colleagues in such circumstances. Financial hardship was particularly acute for participants in the hospitality sector, where participants were paid the minimum wage and had difficulty in securing enough working hours. In line with resource-based definitions of poverty, participants often found themselves lacking the necessary resources to sustain a basic standard of living (McKendrick, 2016), and struggled to sustain the costs associated with attending work, such as transport, childcare, and uniforms. What these finding also demonstrates is the need to for measures of low pay not to be limited to relative measures, but to include absolute or 'needs based' measures which are determined based on the cost of living (Grimshaw, 2011; Cominetti, Henehan and Clarke, 2019). Had the more commonly used relative measure of low pay been applied as the threshold for low pay in this study, the majority of social care participants would have been excluded from the sample, as those paid at the level of the LW had an hourly rate exceeding 60% of median earnings. However, as highlighted in the social care case, even at the level of the LW, for many participants this only represented an adequate wage when working overtime in addition to a standard full-time working week. While participants in social care appeared to have more opportunity to increase their income through overtime than their counterparts in hospitality, this was also shown to have negative outcomes for workers in terms of well-being. A vicious cycle was described by the participants in terms of short staffing leading to excessive overtime being worked, with staff becoming burned out as a result and leaving their jobs, creating further staff shortages. Minimal protections were in place in

organisations to protect the well-being of workers from this scenario, and as will be discussed in 8.7, participants were not always able to protect their own well-being in the area of overtime.

In line with other recent research (Findlay *et al.*, 2019), there was limited awareness or recognition from management as to whether any of their employees were experiencing poverty and what the extent of this might be. In the hospitality cases, senior managers felt that they were transparent about the employment opportunity that was on offer and that they fulfilled their side of the employment bargain; therefore, it was the choice of the worker to accept those terms. Additionally, financial hardship was often perceived as a failure of the employee to manage their money, rather than a situation caused by inadequate pay. In social care, management appeared more willing to recognise that employees may be experiencing poverty, as they felt government were to blame for low wages in their sector. However, there was still limited awareness as to the extent of poverty among employees. At the level of the line manager, in both sectors there was varying awareness as to whether any of their staff were experiencing hardship. Additionally, each organisation was aware of a small number of staff who were currently subject to wage arrestments. While only very limited data could be collected on this matter, the presence of wage arrestments is an indicator that there were employees in each organisation that were experiencing problematic debt.

Finally, using a qualitative approach enabled the research to remain focused on the employee perspective, whilst gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of low paid work and furthering knowledge of how the different contexts of low paid work influence the employee experience of well-being. Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019b) define employee centred research as that which focuses on the impact of HRM on employee outcomes and experiences, rather than the relationship between HRM and organisational performance. Few studies give enough voice to the employee perspective and instead favour the employer perspectives, particularly in the field of HRM (Lloyd, Warhurst and Dutton, 2013; Beer, Boselie and Brewster, 2015; Guest, 2017; Richards, 2020). Using a qualitative approach, this research has diverged from the commonly investigated organisational perspective, to give voice to an under-represented group in the literature. Additionally, the qualitative approached allowed for the complexity of the employee experience to be captured, explored and unpicked in a way that a quantitative method could not have allowed. Employees' experiences were shown to be highly

complex, multi-dimensional, and context specific; this was particularly evident in the data regarding the management of demands and resources. The ways in which employees experienced resources and demands were also found to be non-linear in nature; the themes surrounding the resources and demands were often overlapping and intertwined. For example, overtime demands were shown to be highly complex, as they were relevant to the discussion in a number of themes that emerged from the data including workloads, working time, relationships with colleagues, relationships with customers and managing money on a low income. Each theme added another layer to the story of how overtime demands shaped the employee experience of well-being. Qualitative research is often described by scholars as 'messy' (Suddaby, 2006; Godard, 2014); however, this messiness represents the reality of the human experience, particularly in the context of work (Warhurst, Lloyd and Dutton, 2008; Sisson, 2010; Korte and Mercurio, 2017). Had the experiences of the participants of this study had be reduced simply to variables and measures, as the majority of studies do, this would have been a poor reflection of the reality of the work life interface in low paid work, and the richness of the findings would have been completely lost.

8.7 The Role of Social Support in Low Paid Work

This research concurs with other research that finds low paid work to be high in demands and limited in resources, despite recent efforts by the case study organisations to improve employee well-being. The findings from this study also confirm that social support from supervisors is a critical resource for low paid workers (Muse and Pichler, 2011; Hammer *et al.*, 2011; Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013), and adds to this literature by considering how social support from other sources (such as customers and colleagues) - is a valuable contextual resource in low paid work. Social resources from colleagues, customers and line managers appear to be among the most influential resources for participants in terms of their day-to-day well-being. As discussed in the literature review, only a small segment of the work-family literature considers the context of low paid work, despite a significant proportion of the workforce being paid at this level (Casper *et al.*, 2007; Griggs, Casper and Eby, 2013). The literature from the work-family discipline did highlight that job demands are typically high in low paying jobs, and that social support is an important resource for low paid workers. In addition to the work-family literature, the JD-R literature has highlighted how social support is important in reducing turnover intensions (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001), and further research has identified that social support from colleagues buffers the impact of high workloads, and indirectly influences turnover intentions

through job satisfaction (Pomaki *et al.*, 2010). Typically, the reason given for why social support is so important in low paid work is based on COR theory, as social support compensates for other lost resources (Hobfoll *et al.*, 1990).

The research design that this study took in comparing two large low paying sectors has allowed for a unique contribution to the literature on social support to be made. In both sectors, social support received from colleagues was a hugely valuable resource for participants, with various outcomes. Having adequate social support from their colleagues during their shift was fundamental in terms of coping with the workload they experience. One difference between the sectors with regards to relationships was the levels of intensity. In the hospitality sector in particular, the participants regularly cited their friendships with staff as the reason why they stayed in their jobs; these relationships therefore provided participants with a significant pool of resources that enabled them to withstand a high volume of demands. This further supports Mooney, Harris and Ryan's (2016) findings that workplace relationships are important for the well-being of hospitiality workers and the longevity of their careers, but that the use of causalised labour limits the opportunity for social connections to be made. These relationships were at times very intense, with many participants describing the colleagues as being "like family". These relationships also spilled over into participants' home domain, enriching their experiences outside the workplace, as they would regularly socialise with their colleagues from work. However, relationships with colleagues also represented a significant source of demands for participants. In both sectors, where social support from colleagues was perceived as inadequate, such as lack of citizenship behaviours, inferior quality standards, or simply not having enough staff, this created considerable stress for participants.

Relationships with customers also provided participants with valuable social resources. The work-family literature rarely considers the role of customers as a source of social support within the work-home interface; however, this was shown to be one of the most valuable resources for social care workers in terms of their well-being. In the social care sector this was particularly prevalent, where participants often reported close bonds with their customers. These relationships gave social care participants a strong sense of meaningfulness in their work. Many participants went as far as to say that they loved their jobs, in large part due to the relationships and strong bonds formed with customers. These relationships appeared to be

hugely valuable in terms of participants psychological well-being, providing participants with the necessary resources to withstand high demands for prolonged periods of time, indicating that these resources where critical in building and replenishing longer lasting personal resources. Instances of social support being provided by customers were still found in the hospitality case, but these appeared to be more limited and to have less of an enduring impact on participants, largely because the intensity of the relationship between the participant and the customer was far less than what was experienced in social care.

Relationships with customers were also a double-edged sword. Unsurprisingly, customers were not just a resource, but a source of demands for participants in each sector, creating significant emotional, physical and social demands on participants. Incidents of customer abuse were found in both sectors; most commonly mentioned were verbal abuse in the hospitality sector and physical abuse in the social care sector. However, abuse was not the only demand created by customers. In social care, some of the more significant demands caused by customers were subtle in nature. Demands emerged not necessarily from a direct action from the customer, but rather as a result of the very same relationship that provided participants with resources. Due to their strong bond with the customer, participants would often act in ways that endangered their own well-being to ensure that the needs of their customer were met. This was seen in the decisions made by participants around overtime, where time and time again they would deplete their own personal resources of time, energy, and to some extent health, to ensure that customer's quality of care was not compromised. These actions are in keeping with other studies which have found that care workers are highly committed to the well-being of service users, which in turn leads a number of self-sacrificial behaviours to ensure that care is not comprised, such as tolerating poor working conditions, working unpaid overtime, withstanding violent behaviours, and sacrificing time with family (Baines, 2004; Baines, 2006; Baines and Cunningham, 2011; Nickson *et al.*, 2008). This study also supports the findings of Bakker and Geurts (2004) where high workloads and demanding interactions with customers create more negative spillover and conflict from work to family conflict. However, this research brings a unique perspective from the social care sector which shows how relationships with the customers can both provide workers with valuable social support, while at the same time acting as a demand that causes work-family conflict.

When comparing the two sectors, there were differences in the ways that hospitality and social care workers experienced social support resources from customers and colleagues. The comparison revealed differences in the ways the participants described their relationships with customers and colleagues, and the effect that these relationships had on their overall well-being. In the hospitality sector, participants regularly described their colleagues as being "like family", whereas in social care, participants often described their customers as being "like family". The description of these relationships is not an insignificant finding, nor should it be dismissed as semantic, as it reveals something important about the participants experience of well-being. The social care sector is well known for attracting a highly committed workforce, motivated by work that is in line with their personal values (Cunningham, 2010). Other research has observed similar findings of social care staff building family-like relationships with customers (Baines, Cunningham and Fraser, 2010). Venter et al. (2019, p. 248) argues that care workers experience "usually intense" relationships with their service users, which like familial relationships, are less easy for workers to withdraw from due to the emotional ties that develop; as such workers become "…tied to contradictory situations despite their potentially negative outcomes." In a similar vein to this research, participants highlighted in the interviews their dissatisfaction around pay and recognition, and that they could find other work that was either paid better or had less demands, but that they chose to remain in their jobs due to their emotional ties to the customer.

Interestingly, a similar scenario appears to exist in the relationship between hospitality workers and their colleagues. Hospitality workers regularly referred to their relationships with their colleagues as the reason why they tolerated poor working conditions, often for extended periods of time. This study therefore confirms the findings of Venter et al. (2019), but adds to this research by suggesting that the concept of relationship intensity may apply in other low paid contexts of work such as hospitality, and additionally to other relationships over and above service users, such as colleagues. The inescapabilty of these unusually intense relationships provides further explanation of why social care workers tolerate poor working conditions for lengthy periods, but also adds to the explanation of why so many other workers find themselves "stuck" in low paid service jobs. Relationships with customers and colleagues provided participants with valuable resources, and participants were very committed to these relationships; subsequently, continuing these relationships meant staying in their jobs. This

suggests, as indeed other research has indicated, that progression from low paid work is not simply a matter of improving skill or opportunity for workers (Shildrick *et al.*, 2012).

8.8 Areas for Further Research

In closing, some further research areas have been identified. Firstly, sectoral comparisons of low paid work proved to be a fruitful line of inquiry in this study, and the field would benefit from further research of this nature. Comparisons of other large low paying sectors such as retail, and some more in-depth analysis of sub sectors within the wider hospitality industry, which consider how well-being is operationalised would be of particular benefit. International comparisons of low paid work could also provide useful insights.

Secondly, while this thesis has made theoretical contributions, the relationship between well-being, performance and HRM is still not well understood. Further theoretical development is still required to better understand the role that well-being and HRM play in organisational performance, and there remains a question as to the extent to which improvements in well-being lead to profit generation. Without a strong evidence base for this relationship, it is likely that employers will continue to pursue profit generating activities regardless of the associated harm they bring. A move towards multiple stakeholder perspectives, and other conceptualisations such sustainable HRM, may provide a more ethical framework for researchers, provided the literature can move away from a corporate profitability agenda towards an employee-centred approach (Richards, 2020). An additional limitation of this research is that it was cross-sectional, as is a common criticism of studies in the HRM and employment relations fields. While it was not possible for this study, longitudinal research which examines well-being in low paid work would be of value to literature, particularly with regards to theory development.

Finally, the recent global Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the hospitality and social care sectors and will continue to do so for some time. This thesis has not touched on the impact of the pandemic, as this was not the context at the time the research took place. However, this will be the context for research moving forward, and the effects of the pandemic on low paid work and workers are likely to be long lasting. Early analysis of the effects of the

pandemic on employment in these sectors makes for grim reading. The hospitality sector, which is embedded and dependent upon the wider tourism sector (Baum *et al.*, 2016), has been particularly hard hit by travel restrictions, national and local lockdowns, and social distancing measures, and it is speculated that around 300,000 jobs will be lost within the sector (Davies, 2020). Workers in the hospitality sector, who were among the most vulnerable in the labour market to begin with, have found themselves subjected amplified levels of precarity, financial and otherwise, with businesses closing their doors and the demand for services significantly reduced (Baum *et al.*, 2020). Some employer responses have been highly irresponsible; workers have been dismissed with no notice, and this has left some workers homeless where their employer provided accommodation (Brooks, 2020). In social care, the impact of the pandemic on the well-being of workers is likely to be significant. Many care homes have been heavily exposed to the virus. Workers have faced even higher demands and limited resources, in light of visiting restrictions, shortages in PPE, staff shortages and bereavement, to name a few.

Of course, the pandemic has had an impact on low paid work more generally not just affected the hospitality and social care sectors. In several low paying sectors, many workers who have typically been considered low skilled (such as cleaners, food retailing staff and delivery drivers) have found new status as key workers during the pandemic, given the critical role played by these workers in delivering essential services (Jacobs, 2020). However, it is estimated that a third of these key worker employees earn less than £10 per hour (Farquharson, Sibieta and Rasul, 2020). Key workers are usually unable to work from home due to the nature of the employment and are therefore more vulnerable to catching the virus (Wallace-Stephens and Grimond, 2020). This increased risk, alongside labour market vulnerability and other health and social inequalities, have been cited as reasons for why BAME groups have been disproportionately affected by the virus in the UK (El-Khatib *et al.*, 2020). Clearly, the well-being of employees in low paying sectors will be severely affected, and there is a plethora of avenues for future research. The conceptual framework from this study provides the foundation for future research to build upon in these areas, as the pandemic will have far reaching consequences for low paid workers in their working and home lives.

8.9 Chapter Conclusion

It has been argued in this chapter that the overall aim of this thesis has been met. The findings of this study have been discussed in relation to the literature and the key contributions made by the research have been identified. This chapter has argued that the main theoretical contribution of this study has been the conceptual framework, as this allowed for a unique perspective to be taken on the long-standing issues of low pay and well-being. It is through this conceptual framework that the research questions were formed, and the empirical data gathered to answers these questions has allowed for several key contributions to be made. The has included contributions to the literatures on low pay, well-being, SRHRM, the HRM-well-being debate and the work-family literature. Central to the contributions made by this study has also been the choice of Pragmatism as a philosophical position. This divergence from the paradigms commonly associated with both well-being and low pay enabled a deeper level of theorising, as the research was able to move away from the task of measuring these constructs to examining how these constructs are experienced.

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Appendices

Appendix One: The Interview Schedules

Interview Guide for HR / Senior Managers

Introductory questions

Tell me a bit about yourself and your role within the organisation.

Probes: Time in the role, responsibilities

Can you give me an overview of the organisation?

Probes: Background, ownership, management structure, size, products and services, corporate strategy

Management philosophy and HRM Strategy

In relation to corporate strategy, how would you describe the underlying values and principles that guide management decisions in the organisation?

How do these values and principles feed into your HR strategy? Can you talk me through your HR strategy and approach to managing people?

Probes: And more specifically in relation to your lowest paid workers? Who is involved in setting the HR strategy? What internal and external factors influence this?

Have you undertaking any restructuring over the last three years?

What policies do you have for supporting and managing employee health, well-being and engagement?

What policies do you have to promote the work-life balance of your workers?

Probes: Are you aware of any job characteristics that restrict the work-life balance of your workers? Are there any measures in place to support this?

How do these policies fit in with the HR strategy and values?

HRM Policies and Practices

How is the performance of frontline staff monitored and evaluated? How are KPIs and targets used?

Over and above the statutory requirements, what training and development opportunities are there for frontline staff?

Probes: What opportunities are there for progression for frontline staff and supervisors?

Who is likely to progress within the organisation? What prevents others from progressing?

In planning staff rotas, do you use any of the following types of contracts: permanent F/T, permanent P/T; split shifts, zero hours, minimum hours, agency staff, term time only, annualised?

Probes: What is the benefit of managing staff in this way? Do staff have set or flexible hours? Who decides the rota and the allocation of hours? Why is the rota managed in this way?

How is stress managed within the organisation? What policies do you have for managing stress?

How is ill health managed?

What is the absence rate like?

Probes: What are the reasons that employees give for their absences? Do you think there might be any other factors that influence absences? Are you aware of any financial reasons which might cause employees to be absent?

What are your pay policies with regards to absence or leave? Do you have 'waiting days'?

Pay and Economic Stress

What has been the impact of the new NLW (retail and hospitality) or RLW (social care) on your organisation?

Probes: How have these policies affected pay differentials between frontline staff and supervisors?

Social care: Has the RLW helped you to retain staff?

Retail/hospitality: Has the adoption of the RLW in social care affected your pay policies?

Aside from pay, what benefits do you offer employees?

Probes: flexi-time, childcare vouchers, EAP, counselling, discounts, meals etc.

Are you aware of any of your staff experiencing financial difficulties/hardship? If so, do you think this affects their work?

Probes: Do employees come to you with financial problems? If so, what kinds of problems?

How do you support these employees? What support is available to employees who may be experiencing financial difficulties?

Have any of your employees been affected by the welfare reforms over recent years? Has this cause you to change any HR policies/practices?

Is working poverty something that the organisation has an awareness of?

Probes: Are you aware of any of your employees experiencing in-work poverty? Do you think employers have a role to play in addressing in-work poverty?

Interview Guide for Employees

Introductory Questions

Can you begin by telling me a little bit about yourself and your role?

Probes: Length of time in role, responsibilities

About the job

What would be a typical day be like for you at work?

Probes: What do you enjoy about your job? What do you not enjoy about your job?

What areas of your job cause you to feel stressed?

Probes: Why do these things cause stress? What would alleviate this stress? Do any areas of our job cause you to feel stress outside of work? Are you able to decide how you carry out your work, or is the way you have to work tightly managed?

What is your relationship with your manager like?

Probes: How supported do you feel by your manager? Is there anything that your manager does that causes you stress?

What is your relationship like with your colleagues/team? How well supported do you feel by your team?

What skills does this job equip you with?

Probes: Do you feel like you are developing your skills in the job? What does your employer do to develop your skills?

How is your performance managed?

Probes: Do you have KPIs or targets to meet? Are these achievable and do you receive support to achieve these targets? What happens when targets are not met?

How important is your work to you?

Home Domain

Can you tell me a bit about your home life?

Probe: Ask about household composition – marital status, dependants, caring responsibilities, housing status, security of housing

On a typical work day when you go home, what is your usual routine?

What kind of support do you have outside of work that helps you to remain in work?
Probes: What household support do you have, family and friends, childcare, etc. Would it be difficult for you to remain in work without this support?

Do any areas of your home life cause you stress or cause you problems at work?

How do you like to spend your time when you are not at work?

Probes: How much time are you able to spend with your family? What do you do that improves your well-being? Do any of your leisure activities help you to do your job better?

Does your job enable you to afford to do the things you want to do?

How do you manage your work and home life? What challenges do you face in managing work and home life?

Probes: Does your work ever affect your home life? How? Do you feel like you take your work home with you? Does work limit the time you can spend with your family? Are there any tensions or contradictions between your work life and home life? Have you had personal problems which you feel have affected you while you were at work?

Does your work ever affect your health, mentally or physically?

Probs: Do you suffer from any long-term health conditions? How does this affect your working or home life? If you are off ill from work, do you still get paid? Do you ever come to work sick? Why? What happens if your children/dependants are ill? What is the impact on your pay?

Economic Questions

In this role, are you able to secure enough hours to make work pay?

Probes: If not, why? Would you like to work more hours? What type of contract do you have? Do you feel you have job security? Do you ever work any over time? Do you ever have to work any unpaid hours?

What is your holiday entitlement? Do you take it? Do you actually get away on holiday?

How has the introduction of the NLW/LW affected you? Has it put more money in your pocket? Has it affected your benefits?

Is this your only job or do you have a second job?

Probes: Are you looking for other work? Are you the sole or main earner in your household? What other sources of income do you have? Does anyone else support your financially?

Are you aware of any of your colleagues or friends struggling to get by? What causes or aggravates this?

How does the level of your pay affect your quality of life?

Probes: Do you struggle to pay for the essentials? Does your level of pay cause you any financial difficulties? Have you experienced any financial distress/hardship while in this job? How did you cope with this? Was there any support available from your employer? Do you ever struggle to afford the costs of attending work? Travel, childcare, food, clothing etc.

What do you think you employer could do to alleviate financial strain in the workplace? Aside from increasing wages, are there any policy changes your employer could make that would improve your financial situation?

It would be helpful to have a rough idea of your earnings. Can you identify which range from the following options your hourly rate of pay and annual salary? [use demographic range card]

<u>Progression</u>

Have you considered trying to move into better paying work?

Probes: Is there training available? What barriers do you face in moving into better paying work? (home barriers, work barriers, personal barriers, etc). What support do you have to move into better paying work? (From home, work, personal etc). Do you have internet access at home? Are you comfortable using a computer and the internet?

Employer Strategies

Are there any policies or practices within the organisation that cause you stress?

Are there any polices or practices within the organisation that are beneficial to you?

Demographic Information

(To be collected during the interview)

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Marital status: _____

Housing status: _____

Children: _____

Other caring responsibilities: _____

Education/qualifications: _____

School leaving age: _____

Rate of pay: _____

Benefits claimed: _____

Secondary job or income: _____

Interview Guide for Supervisors

Introductory questions

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and your role in the organisation?

Probes: Were you recruited into the role or were you promoted? Length of service? Time in role?

About the job

What are your main responsibilities and what is the size of your team?

How has the span of your role changed over time?

Could you describe what a typical day at work is like for you?

Probes: What do you enjoy about your job? What do you not enjoy about your job?

How much are you able to decide how your job is done? Do you feel like you have autonomy in your role, or is your role tightly managed?

How important is your work to you?

Employer strategies

What polices are there to support the well-being of staff?

Probes: Do these policies work in practice?

Do you feel that the management care about the well-being of staff?

Are there any policies or practices within the organisation that cause you or your staff stress?

Are there any polices or practices within the organisation that are beneficial to you or your staff?

Questions about staff

What do you think your staff value most about their jobs?

Do you feel that staff are given enough resources in order to do their jobs? (Training, Support, Time, Autonomy)

Probes: How do you support staff in their roles? How do employees develop skills within their jobs?

What demands are your staff faced with?

What are your KPIs or targets?

How do you manage the KPIs of your staff?

Has there been a lot of turnover in your team?

Probes: What is causing this turnover? How does this affect the team? If not, why not? Is there adequate staffing in your team or are you understaffed?

What opportunities are there for progression?

Probes: Who is likely to progress within the organisation? What prevents others from progressing? Is there training available?

Do your staff ever face difficulties in managing their work and home lives?

Probes: What causes these difficulties? What policies are there to support staff and are these effective?

What is the absence rate amongst your staff like?

Probes: What are the reasons that employees give for their absences? Do you think there might be any other factors that influence absences? Are you aware of any financial reasons which might cause employees to be absent?

Are you involved in managing the staff rota?

Probes: How does this work? Are there difficulties or challenges involved in this?

Economic Stress

Do you get a sense that staff are able to get enough hours?

Probes: Do staff regularly ask you for overtime? Do any of your staff work a second job?

Do you think your staff are adequately rewarded for the work they do?

How has the introduction of the NLW/LW affected your staff? Do you think it has it put more money in their pockets?

Are you aware of the NLW/LW affecting any of your staff that claim welfare benefits? Or of welfare reforms in general affecting your staff?

Are you aware of any of your staff struggling to get by? What causes or aggravates this?

Do staff ever come to you with financial problems?

Probes: Are you aware of staff ever struggling to afford the essentials, or the costs of attending work? Travel, childcare, food, clothing etc.

What do you think you employer could do to alleviate financial strain in the workplace? Aside from increasing wages, are there any policy changes your employer could make that would improve your financial situation?

Appendix Two: Summary of Sectoral Comparison: The Management Perspective

Data Theme	Hospitality	Social Care
Management strategy	Service-profit chain rhetoric of staff, customer, profit Well-being viewed as a 'nice to have' extra, but not a strategic tool.	Service-profit chain rhetoric of staff, customer, financial sustainability Well-being integrated into strategic plan, viewed as a strategic tool.
The Approach to Managing Well-being	Some well-being programs and initiatives in place Emphasis on work-life balance Absence managed as a performance issue	Well-being viewed as a strategic tool to make efficiencies Some integration of well-being strategies with the strategic plan. Some high level initiatives and devolved line manager responsibilities Absence managed as a performance issue
HR practices	Claim to differentiate from competitor employers by using an 'employer of choice' retention strategy Investment in HR practices including engagement and training minimal, and only used were they were perceived as cost efficient by improving staff retention levels or customer service levels.	Claim to differentiate from competitor employers by using an 'employer of choice' retention strategy Greater financial investment in HR practices, particularly training and development.
Approach to managing labour costs	Hard approach to HRM Payroll budget tightly controlled using minimum staffing levels, with a strong focus on reducing the wage bill High use of zero hours contracts with minimal number of staff contracted with guaranteed hours	Hard approach to HRM Payroll budget closely monitored, with a greater focus on creating efficiencies in absence and recruitment costs to reduce the wage bill Greater use of contracted full and part time staff, with more limited use of zero hours contracts

Pay, terms and conditions, and benefits	NMW and statutory terms and conditions to deliver desired profit margins Minimal or no extra compensation for staff with additional responsibilities or qualifications Financial incentive schemes and perks perceived as the main benefits, but only available to some staff Flexibility perceived as a key benefit	LW for some staff with some improved terms and conditions where funding permitted. Level of pay perceived as low for the level of skill and responsibility of the role Training perceived as one of the main benefits, available to most staff Flexibility perceived as a key benefit
Awareness of the hardship caused by low pay	Varying levels of awareness of in-work poverty among senior and line managers HR awareness of signposting services and EAP Financial hardship often perceived as a failure to budget on the part of the employee	Varying levels of awareness of in-work poverty among senior and line managers Some organisational initiatives available to staff in financial hardship. HR awareness of signposting services and EAP in place Financial hardship perceived as a funding issue for government to address

Appendix Three: Summary of Sectoral Comparisons: The Employee Perspective

Data Theme	Hospitality	Social Care
Workloads and staffing levels	High workloads demands often caused by understaffing	High workload demands often caused by short staffing
Working hours and overtime	Some evidence of workers not receiving statutory rest breaks. Flexibility in working hours for workers usually required some other trade off. Overtime often wanted by not available	Participants who wanted overtime did not struggle to get it. Complex reasons associated with participant decisions surrounding overtime, including financial reasons and their relationships with customers.
Relationships with Line Managers	Line managers act as a source of resources and demands for well-being. Quality of relationship varied among the participants	Line managers tend to act as a source of resources for well-being Relationships generally described as good and supportive
Relationships with colleagues	Highly valued resource, perceived as a main benefit of the job, and often cited as a reason for remaining in the job despite poor terms and conditions. Socialising with colleagues outside of work an important form of social support. Also a source of demands in situations of understaffing, or where there is a perceived lack of social support from colleagues.	Highly valued resource, which helped participants to cope with the high job demands and emotional demands. Limited mention of socialising with colleagues outside of work. Also a source of demands in situations of short staffing, or where there is a perceived lack of social support from agency colleagues.
Relationships with customers	Some social support received from customers, which contributed to a sense of meaningfulness with work, but overall this was limited due to the nature of relationships with customer. Customers likely to be a source of demands, through complaints and abusive behaviours.	Long term relationships developed with customers, which provided participants with meaningful work and various resources. Customers also a source of demands, due to challenging behaviours from customers. Close relationships with customers created demands for participants to take on overtime, due to the perceived impact on the customer in their absence.

Training and Progression	Some opportunity for progression, but high dependant on circumstances of individual worker. Training often insufficient for current role and in allowing progression to better paying work.	High volume of training available to participants, perceived as both a resource and a demand. Opportunities available for progression, but not always wanted due to the increased level of responsibility or lack of pay.
Managing money on a low income	Participants on ZHCs struggled to get enough hours to meet financial demands. Participants struggled to get by on their wages, with limited options for increasing their income. Participants relied on tips to supplement wages. Increased transport costs due to non-standard working hours	Participants paid at both the NMW and LW appeared to struggle to get by on their wages Overtime widely available to most participants. Participated relied on overtime to supplement wages.
Perceptions of Pay and Reward	Tensions in pay between workers due to age, perceptions of skill, and differentials for higher responsibilities. Work rarely described as rewarding.	Tensions in pay described by non-caring staff in Scotland based services receiving NLW, compared to caring staff receiving LW. Work often described as rewarding, as participants felt they were making a difference in the lives of the customers.