# ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between leadership styles (e.g., task-oriented, relationship-oriented and participative leadership style), perceived control, psychological ownership of the job and several volunteers' work attitudes. Particular attention is given to turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and senses of responsibility.

Research participants were 162 volunteer workers from diverse occupational groups across 19 non profit organizations. Results of Persons correlations and mediated regression analyses demonstrated that (a) psychological ownership did not have relationships with turnover intentions and sense of responsibility but was significantly related to psychological withdrawal; (b) task-oriented, relationship-oriented and participative leadership style were positively related to perceived control, (c) perceived control was positively related to psychological ownership; (d) psychological ownership did not have mediating effects between perceived control and the volunteers' work attitudes; (e) perceived control only had a mediating effect between task-oriented leadership and psychological ownership.

Recommendations for further research and implications for management are discussed in the final chapter.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

Concern with the successful management of non-profit organizations (NPOs) has become an issue of growing concern to organizations and managers in recent decades (Dabbs, 1991; Herman and Heimovics, 1990; Kotler, 1979; Wortman, 1979). According to Statistics New Zealand (2007), the number of NPOs identified at October 2005 was 97,000. Forty-five percent of these were engaged in arts, cultural, sport or recreation activities and, for the year ended March 2004, NPOs contributed 3.64 billion New Zealand dollars to GDP. This was 2.6 percent of New Zealand's total GDP. At the same time, the number of people who volunteered for one or more NPOs as at 31 March 2004 was estimated to be 1,011,600. Drucker (1989) emphasized that leaders of for-profit organizations need to learn from their NPOs counterparts, especially in the areas of motivation and productivity of knowledge workers. However, rigorous empirical research exploring management of volunteers working in NPOs has been surprisingly sparse (Pearce, 1993). One of the reasons for this might be that we did not have coherent, well-established frameworks for understanding what drives volunteer behaviour in NPOs, notably the level of participation or withdrawal from the organization (Farmer & Fedor, 1999). The present study applied a psychological ownership approach (Pierce, Rubenfeld, & Morgan, 1991) to understanding volunteer behaviour in NPOs. To the researcher's knowledge, little research has explored psychological ownership from volunteers.

Therefore, the present study is the first study to examine the association between psychological ownership and volunteers' working attitudes.

Over the last decade, management scholars, practitioners, and consultants have focused their attention on ownership as a psychological phenomenon. An increasing number of organizational scholars have suggested that, under certain circumstances, organizational members develop possessive feelings for their job and for their employing organization (Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001; Pierce, O'Driscoll, & Coghlan, 2004; Pierce, Rubenfeld, & Morgan, 1991). Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks (2001) built up a theory of psychological ownership that suggests that controlling, intimately knowing the target, and the investment of self into the target, are three major 'routes' through which feelings of ownership for a particular object emerge. Dirks, Cummings, and Pierce (1996) emphasize that psychological ownership measures an employee's psychological and emotional investment in the target of ownership. Brown (1989) suggested that psychological ownership will be the key to organizational competitiveness during the 21st century. The first purpose of the present research is to explore the concept of psychological ownership and the association between psychological ownership and a number of variables (e.g., turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility) among volunteer workers. The construct of employee withdrawal behaviours has been a focus of investigation related to organizational phenomena by many disciplines for many years. However, little research has been focused on volunteer withdrawal behaviours. The second purpose of the present study is to explore the relationship

between psychological ownership and volunteer withdrawal behaviours.

Additionally, individual control is a variable that has been shown to play a significant role in human behaviour (Spector, 1986; O'Driscoll & Beehr, 2000). Some researchers (i.e., Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997; Spector, 1986; Yoon, Han, & Seo, 1996) have argued that the extent to which employees believe they have control is a major determinant of their affective responses (e.g., job satisfaction and commitment) (O'Driscoll & Beehr, 2000). Pierce et al. (1991) further noted that control is an important component contributing to the development of the experienced state of ownership. Therefore this thesis explores a control-ownership relationship, as well as seeking to determine how perceived control influences volunteers' work attitudes through psychological ownership.

Leadership is another subject that has long motivated interest among academic scholars. Research on leadership behaviour was carried out by researchers at the University of Michigan in the 1950s. The focus of this research was the identification of relationships among leader behaviour, group processes, and measures of group performance. The research found that there are three types of leadership behaviour: task-oriented, relationship-oriented and participative. Different leadership styles directly influence levels of control and job autonomy in an organization.

Less explanation focused on the relationship between leadership styles and psychological ownership. Because it is perceived that control has a correlation with both variables (e.g., leadership styles and psychological ownership), the present study explores whether leadership styles might affect volunteers' feelings about their jobs

and organizations through the levels of experienced control. The theoretical model developed for this research is provided below (Figure 1). It is expected that the results of this research will further inform researchers on how volunteers' feelings of ownership can be enhanced through a manager/supervisor's behaviour in NPOs.

The introduction is organized into five sections. The first section examines the conceptual definition of psychological ownership. Related variables (e.g., turnover intention, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility) are discussed in the second section. Perceived control and three leadership styles are discussed in the third and fourth sections respectively. The mediating effects of perceived control and psychological ownership will be discussed in the final section.

Figure 1. Research Model
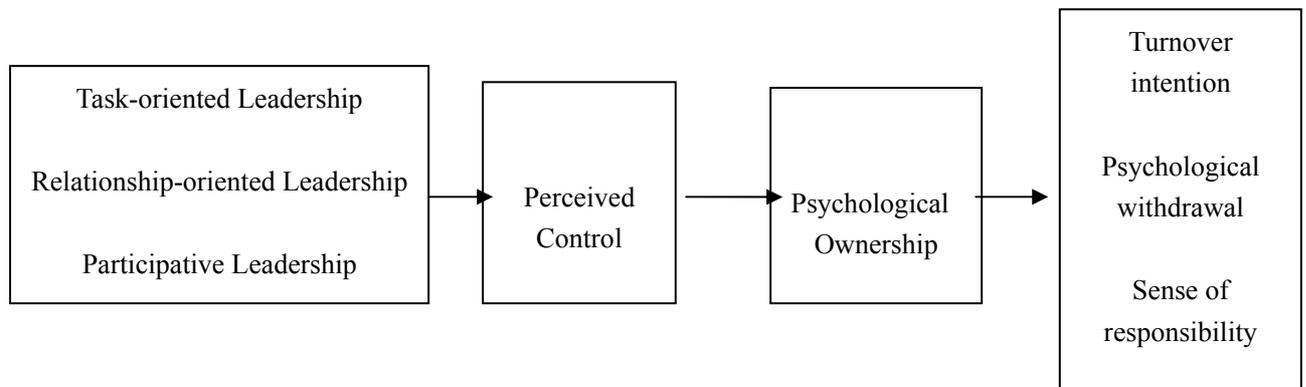


**Psychological Ownership Theories**

Etzioni observed that ownership is a "dual creation, part attitude, part in the mind, part 'real'" (1991, p.466). Reviews of the employee ownership literature (e.g., Klein, 1987; Pierce, et al., 1991) suggest the psychology of possession is well rooted in people. Dittmar (1992) observes that people usually have some psychological

experience about the connection between self and various targets of possession, such as homes, families and other people. Similarly, an article published in a major news magazine in the U.S. during the mid-1970s suggested that "when a worker is given a piece of the action, he will be motivated to work harder, gripe less. Turnover, absenteeism, and grievances all might diminish" ('Stocks for Works', 1976, p.68). As a result of such arguments, there are many positive individual (e.g., commitment and satisfaction) and organizational (e.g., productivity and profitability) effects associated with employee ownership (Pendleton, Wilson, & Wright, 1998). In addition, the employee ownership literature clearly suggests that the ownership construct is multidimensional and that ownership appears to operate as a formal state, as well as a psychologically experienced phenomenon. Pierce et al. (2003, p.87) wrote:

> Although possibly related, legal and psychological ownership differ in some significant ways. For example, legal ownership is recognized foremost by society, and hence the rights that come with ownership are specified and protected by the legal system. In contrast, psychological ownership is recognized foremost by the individual who holds this feeling. Consequently, it is the individual who manifests the felt rights associated with psychological ownership.

The core of psychological ownership is the feeling of possessiveness and of being psychologically tied to an object (Pierce, Kostova and Dirks, 2001). Further, Pierce et al. (1991) suggested that psychological ownership appears when employees feel they own a piece of it is 'theirs' (i.e., 'It is MINE!'); when employees have the right to be notified about the status of the owned object and they are informed; and when they have the right to influence/control the target of ownership and that they do in fact implement influence/control. In other words, when individuals emotionally feel they

are presented by a unit (e.g. an organization or a job), and they find it becomes 'theirs', the target becomes part of the psychological owner's identity (Pierce, Kostova and Dirks, 2001, 2003; Pierce, Rubenfeld, & Morgan, 1991). Moreover, feelings of ownership have important psychological and behavioural effects. James (1890) noted that the loss of possessions leads to "shrinkage of our personality, a partial conversion of ourselves to nothingness" (p.178) and feelings of depression, whereas the growth of possessions can produce a positive and inspiring effect (Formanek, 1991).

Pierce et al. (2001) specified distinctiveness of psychological ownership from other measurements which describe the psychological relationship between individuals and organizations. The feeling of possession is the core which differentiates psychological ownership from organizational commitment, organizational identification and internalization. For example, in the present study, psychological ownership can answer the question 'Is this my work?', whereas organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) answers the question "Should I maintain my membership in this NPO and why—because I ought to, I need to, and/or because I want to?" Organizational identification addresses the question 'Who am I?', and organizational internalization concerns itself with the question 'What do I believe?' (Pratt, 1998). In addition, Pierce et al. (2001) also concluded that feelings of ownership (feeling that something is mine or ours) are essentially different from wanting or needing to retain membership in an organization (i.e., organizational commitment; Meyer & Allen, 1991), from using a unique and admired characteristic

of the organization to define oneself (i.e., organizational identification; Mael & Tetrick, 1992), and from association with an organization because of goal congruence (i.e., internalization; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

Does psychological ownership apply to volunteer workers in NPOs? A volunteer can be defined as "an individual who donates his or her time, skills, or services to an agency or organization without obligation, and without receiving direct financial compensation for his or her work" (Laczo & Hanisch, 1999, p.456). Snyder and colleagues (e.g., Clary & Snyder, 1991; Clary, Snyder, & Ridge, 1992; Omoto & Snyder, 1995) have found that people do not work only for financial achievement, but they do also expect self-worth expression, social adjustment, and gaining knowledge from their work. Similarly, Farmer and Fedor (1999) claimed although volunteers do not expect financial gain from their services, there is very clear evidence that volunteers do expect other considerations (e.g., skill gain or self-fulfilment) from the organization they work for. This strongly involves that volunteers enter their working relationships with specific expectations and attend to whether the relationship with the non-profit organization is accomplishing these expectations (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Stevens, 1991).

Similarly, due to decreasing budgets, downsizing, and other cost-cutting procedures, many organizations are experiencing an increased need for the services and skills that volunteer workers can provide (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). Creating positive work attitudes and behaviours, and reducing the consequences of negative work attitudes and behaviours, are likely to be problems faced by managers

from volunteer programs. Additionally, the cost of individual acts of psychological withdrawal behaviours among volunteer workers may be costly to the organization just as they are costly among paid employees (Miller et al., 1990).

As a part of theorizing on psychological ownership in organizations, Pierce et al. (2001) provided insight into both the 'roots of' and the 'routes to' feelings of ownership. They claimed that there are at least three essential motives that give rise to feelings of ownership: (1) effectiveness and control, (2) self-identity, which is coming to know oneself, expressing the self to others, and maintaining continuity in the self, and (3) home, which means having a place to reside. However, these motives are not seen as the causes of psychological ownership, but rather they make an understanding of why the state of ownership exists. Therefore, psychological ownership can influence volunteer workers' motivation and performance through these three routes. For example, if volunteer workers do not feel personal control over their job, they would leave the organization because they lose their work motivations or feel the organization is not the right place to stay. Scholars (e.g., Pierce et al., 2001; Dirks et al., 1996; Kostova, 1998) further discussed the causal relationship between psychological ownership and resistance to organizational change, organizational citizenship behaviour, feeling of responsibility and stewardship, willingness to take personal risk and make personal sacrifice, and organizational performance. VandeWalle et al. (1995) argued that psychological ownership represents a bonding such that organizational members feel a sense of possessiveness toward the target of ownership even though no legal claim exists. For instance, when individuals feel

ownership for the organization, they engage in extra-role citizenship behaviour. Extra-role citizenship behaviour is a kind of working behaviour that "contributes to the organization's well-being, is voluntary and intended to be positive in nature, and for which there is no promised or implied quid pro quo" (O'Driscoll et al., 2006, p. 394). With regard to organizational commitment, Pierce et al. (1991) proposed that as employee-owners develop feelings of ownership for the organization, they become increasingly integrated into the organization. Pierce et al. (2001) further argued that feelings of ownership are pleasure-producing in and of themselves and, as a consequence, organizational members will want to maintain their relationship with that which produces positive effects. Dyne and Pierce (2004) examined the relationships of psychological ownership with work attitudes and work behaviours and confirmed previous arguments. There are positive links between psychological ownership for the organization and employee attitudes (e.g. organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organization-based self-esteem), and work behaviour (e.g. performance and organizational citizenship). Moreover, Pierce et al. (1997) theorised that a sense of ownership, the core of psychological ownership, leads to a sense of responsibility. They emphasized that "possession implies felt accountability and a sense of responsibility" (Pierce et al., 1997, p.30). Coghlan (1997) also claimed that employees' feelings of responsibility for the target of ownership would lead them to engage in discretionary behaviours to enhance the target of possession.

In summary, psychological ownership is the feeling of possession and being psychologically tied to subject. Levels of felt ownership influence individuals' work

motivations and performance. The present study expects to find that high levels of psychological ownership of a job is related to reduce volunteer workers' negative work attitudes (e.g., turnover intentions and psychological withdrawal) and improve their sense of responsibility in the NPOs

## **Turnover intentions**

Theoretically, turnover can be defined as the termination of an individual's membership with an organization (Mobley, 1982; Hsu et al., 2003). Organizations place great emphasis on employee turnover because turnover directly harms retention in an organization, which obliquely damages the strategic value of intellectual capital and increases the costs of replacing valued employees (Branch, 1998; Holtom, Mitchell, Lee, & Inderrieden, 2005; Lee & Maurer, 1997). For example, turnover costs American businesses billions of dollars per year (Rosch, 2001), and practices that promote retention can save even small companies millions of dollars annually (Mathis & Jackson, 2003). According to Meyer et al. (1989), turnover and related variables (e.g., turnover intention, intention to leave, and intent to search for alternative jobs) have been considered as important factors in organizational psychology research. Turnover intention is defined as "a conscious and deliberate wilfulness to leave the organization" (Hsu et al., 2003, p.39). Following the earlier theoretical work of March and Simon (1958) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), Mobley (1977) made several general predictions in his research which was one of the most comprehensive efforts to model the turnover process. Mobley predicted that (1) job attitudes should be directly associated with definite turnover behaviour; (2) the best

predictor of turnover should be the employee's behavioural intentions to leave the organization. Further, turnover intention is often explained as the last in the sequence of withdrawal cognitions, a set to which thoughts of quitting and intent to search for alternative employment belong (Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978). Hence, turnover intention is closely related to turnover and is the object of investigation in this study (Hsu et al. 2003).

According to the research of Bretz et al. (1994), employees' dissatisfaction with different aspects of the organization and job (e.g., compensation, job satisfaction, and organizational policy) was related to employees' job search activities. This finding is consistent with many turnover models (e.g., Price's model, 1977; Steer & Mowday's model, 1981) which consider dissatisfaction as a prime cause of turnover intentions, which leads to actual turnover. Steers and Mowday (1981) argued that job expectations can be conceptualized as met expectations and values, which influence an individual's affective responses to a job (Hus et al., 2003). Steers and Mowday (1981) also claimed that such affective responses can influence an individual's intention to stay or leave the organization, with the choice depending on other non-work influences such as the time left for family. Simultaneously, a variety of affective responses to organization and the job, such as organizational commitment and job involvement, have impacts on turnover intentions (Steer & Mowday, 1981; Hus et al., 2003).

As discussed earlier, the core of psychological ownership is the feeling of possession, which is directed toward the three basic human motives (efficacy and

effectiveness, self-identity, and having a place or home) and produces positive evaluative judgements (Pierce et al., 2003). This is consistent with Beggan's (1992) research that demonstrates that people develop favourable evaluations of their possessions. Thus, when organizational members feel possessive toward the job and organization (that is, they have influence and control at work, intimate knowledge about the organization, and feel they have invested themselves in their organizational roles) (Dyne & Pierce, 2004), they should have high level of general satisfaction, which in turn should influence turnover intentions. In sum, it is proposed here that there is a negative relationship between feelings of possession directed at the job (psychological ownership for the job) and negative evaluative judgments (intent to quit).

> *Hypothesis 1a*: There is a negative relationship between psychological ownership of the job and turnover intentions.

## Psychological withdrawal

Organizational withdrawal consists of a number of behaviours and intentions that are consequences of negative job attitudes and other antecedents (Hanisch, 1995). Psychological withdrawal behaviours (i.e., day dreaming and making excuses to get out of work) are correlated with organization members' general dissatisfaction. Hanisch and Hulin (1991) theorised that withdrawal behaviours reflect negative connection to the organisation and the job. Thus, an organization member who feels 'exhausted' from work is consciously or unconsciously expressing aversive attitudes and feelings toward the job and the organization, such as job dissatisfaction or high

level of turnover intention. Additionally, employee motivations are likely to suffer when colleagues and co-workers consistently demonstrate negative behaviours (e.g., conflict, oral or sexual harassment) (Koslowsky, Sagie, Krausz, & Singer, 1997). Therefore, these aversive attitudes can be considered as a form of psychological withdrawal that precedes any form of behavioural withdrawal (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Tziner & Vardi, 1984, Sagie, Birati, & Tziner, 2002). In contrast, employees who are highly satisfied with their jobs or have strong feelings of possession about their organization or job will avoid psychological withdrawal so as to maintain continued attachment to work (Blau & Boal, 1987, Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

Sagie et al. (2002) have argued that psychological withdrawal signals or predicts consequent withdrawal behaviours. Clegg (1983) also argued "lateness and absence behaviours elicit responses . . . that influence the subsequent effect of the individual" (p. 99). For example, one's withdrawal behaviour can cause criticism from others which subsequently reduce the withdrawing person's job satisfaction and his or her commitment to the job and the organization.  Hence, job dissatisfaction and a low level of affective organizational commitment (that is, "feelings concerning continued membership in the organization"; Sagie et al., 2002, p. 69) may cause psychological withdrawal, which would further cause behavioural withdrawal behaviours (e.g., lateness, absence). In contrast, Dyne and Pierce (2004) found psychological ownership positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Coghlan (1997) also found psychological ownership positively correlated to affective organizational commitment. Therefore, it is proposed here that a strong sense of

psychological ownership for the job would relate to low level of psychological withdrawal in the workplace.

*Hypothesis 1b*: There is a negative relationship between psychological ownership of the job and psychological withdrawal from the job.

**Sense of responsibility**

The concept of sense of responsibility is the same as Hackman and Oldham's (1976) conception of felt responsibility. Cummings and Anton (1990) define felt responsibility as "the state of cognitive and emotional acceptance of responsibility" (p.265). Hackman and Oldham (1976) argued that felt responsibility for one's output would lead individuals to be more concerned with output quality. Similarly, Salancik (1977) argued that certain job situations were associated with employees' organizational commitment because the situations induced a sense of responsibility toward the organization. In contrast, Pierce et al. (1991) noted that employees who have financial ownership from an organization but are not given a sense of responsibility will not feel like owners.

What might lead employees to feel responsible for their job? Although many hypotheses have been made, psychological ownership has received more and more attention. Pierce et al. (1997) theorised that a sense of ownership leads to a feeling of responsibility. They claim that "possession implies felt accountability and a sense of responsibility" (Pierce et al., 1997, p.30). Similarly, Pierce et al. (2001) hypothesized that feelings of ownership are accompanied by a felt responsibility for the target of ownership. They considered that when an employee's sense of self is closely linked to

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the organization, as in the case of psychological ownership, a desire to maintain, protect, or enhance that identity results in an enhanced sense of responsibility for the target of those ownership feelings. Pierce et al. (1991) also argued that an implicit right to control associated with ownership leads to a sense of responsibility. Pierce et al. (1997) found there was a positive association between psychological ownership and experienced responsibility. Following these investigations, it is hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 1c*: There is a positive relationship between psychological ownership of the job and sense of responsibility on the job.

**<u>Perceived control</u>**

Individual control is a variable that has been shown to play a significant role in human behaviour (Spector, 1986). While control can be defined at many levels (e.g., social, political, personal), the present study focuses solely on perceived control over the job. According to Wallston et al. (1987, p.5), perceived control is "the belief that one can determine one's own behaviour and influence one's own environment". According to Pierce et al. (2004), reviews of the child development, sociology, gerontology, geography, and psychology literatures show perceived control plays a major role in the association of human development for material and immaterial objects in nature. Evidence (e.g., Dixon & Street, 1957; Rochberg-Halton, 1980) from both sociological and psychological research suggests that control exercised over an object eventually gives rise to feelings of ownership for that object. Additionally, Prelinger (1959) provided practical support for the proposition that control is coupled to the behaviour of bringing the controlled object into the domain of the self. He

found that the more an individual feels that she or he has control over and can influence an object, the more likely it is that this object will be perceived as part of the self. Pierce et al. (2001) further claimed there are three major routes (e.g., controlling the target, coming to know the target intimately, and investing the self in the target), through which this psychological category is important within the organizational context.

Moreover, Deci and Ryan (1991) argued that people have an intrinsic requirement for self-determination in the working environment, that is, the experience of choice in refusing others. To be self-determining, people must perceive that they have control in the working environment. In the work context, perceived control refers to "employees' belief about the extent to which they have autonomy in their job (e.g., freedom to schedule work and determine how work is done) and are allowed to participate in making decisions on issues that affect their task domain" (Ashforth & Saks, 2000, p.313). Researchers (e.g., Greenberger, Strasser, Cumming, & Dunham, 1989; Parker, 1993; Spector, 1986; Stevens, Bavetta, & Gist, 1993; Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997; Yoon, Han, & Seo, 1996; O'Driscoll & Beehr, 2000) found that the extent to which employees believe they have control is a major determinant of their affective responses such as job satisfaction, work involvement and organizational commitment.

In the past three decades perceived control and related variables such as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), mastery (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978), and locus of control (Rotter, 1966), have received a great deal of attention in both sociological and

psychological research. Research (e.g., Gecas & Seff, 1989; Mirowsky & Ross, 1989; Wheaton, 1983; Wallston & Wallston, 1978; Bullers, 1999) has established that low levels of perceived control are related to several indicators of physical and psychological distress, whereas high levels of perceived control are associated with various indicators of successful well-being. Other studies (e.g., Ganster & Fusilier, 1989; Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997; Tetrick & LaRocco, 1987) examined the buffering effects of perceived control. Typically, researchers have predicted that employees who perceive themselves more in control would experience fewer negative consequences of role stressors than would their counterparts who perceive themselves less in control.

High levels of perceived control reduce organization members' job dissatisfaction. Some other researchers (Andrisani, 1976; Becker & Hills, 1981; Kalacheck & Raines, 1976) emphasized the effects of high perceived control on problem solving and goal attainment. They argued that a high level of perceived control related positively to personal confidence, initiative, and innate ability. Perceived control was treated as a characteristic that influenced an individual's ability to find, retain, and excel at high quality jobs (Bullers, 1999). Simultaneously, there is some empirical support for the moderating effect of perceived control on the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and various outcomes. For instance, Witt et al. (2000) studied participation in decision making by public-sector employees. They found that personal control significantly moderated the effects of perceptions of organizational politics on job satisfaction. Ferris et al. (1996) were

interested in the perceptions of organizational politics from non-academic university employees. They found less adverse effects on job anxiety and job satisfaction when employees perceived a high degree of control over their work environment.

As discussed earlier, psychological ownership was positively related to job satisfaction (Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Research also suggested perceived control correlated significantly to job satisfaction. Does psychological ownership relate to perceived control? According to their theory of psychological ownership in organizational settings, Pierce et al. (2001) perceived control to be an important component contributing to the development of the experienced state of ownership. Pierce et al. (2004) hypothesized that the extent to which individuals experience control over their job and work environment is positively associated with feelings of ownership for their job. The authors found that perceived control mediates the relationship between three sources of work environment structure (technology, autonomy, and participative decision making) and psychological ownership of the job. Other scholars (e.g., Dirks et al., 1996; Kubzansky & Druskat, 1993; Parker et al., 1997; Pierce et al., 2001, 1991; Pratt & Dutton, 2000) suggested that psychological ownership can develop within the organizational context much as it does in other spheres of the human condition. Through their structures and processes, organizations provide members with opportunities to experience control over factors such as job, workspace, people, and projects. Therefore, a control-ownership relationship is suggested and this study further hypothesizes:

*Hypothesis 2*: There is a positive relationship between perceived control and

psychological ownership of the job.

**<u>Leadership theories</u>**

Since the 1950s, significant developments have occurred in thinking about the participation of followers in leadership and the exercise of power in organizations (Burke, 1986). Concepts such as personal control of the job and power sharing reflect a shift in focus from a leader-dominated view to a broader one of follower involvement in sharing power (Kanter, 1981). House et al. (1999, p.184) defined leadership as "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization…" Similarly, Mcshane and Travaglione (2003, p.466) defined leadership as "the process of influencing people and providing an environment for them to achieve team or organizational objectives". Effective leaders can help groups of people to define their goals and find ways to achieve them (Miler, Ket de Vries, & Toulouse, 1982). They use power and influence to ensure that followers have the motivation and role clarity to achieve their goals. In addition, leaders arrange the work environment, such as assigning resources and changing communication patterns, so that employees can achieve corporate objectives more easily (Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003). Besides, the quality of leadership is accepted as a major factor leading to organizational growth, especially in small business and NPOs (Yukl, 1989). The leadership factor has been considered to be very important in NPOs in general (Wernet and Austin, 1991), and is therefore examined in this research.

Some scholars (e.g. Stogdill, 1948; Mann, 1959; Heslin, 1964) have studied the

traits or competencies of great leaders, whereas others have looked at their behaviours

(e.g. Fleishman, 1953; Halpin & Winer, 1957; Fleishman & Harris, 1962). Other

studies (e.g. Evans, 1970; House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974) have looked at

leadership from a contingency approach by considering the appropriate leader

behaviours in different settings (Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003). Instead of

attempting to explain leadership in terms of leaders' personal characteristics (e.g.

intelligence, ability and adjustment), behavioural leadership theorists turn their

attention to what leaders do and, in particular, and how they behave towards

subordinates (Wright, 1996). Such behaviour is typically described in terms of the

leadership or managerial style adopted by the supervisors. In other words, behavioural

leadership theorists focus on how much control organization members can have

through their managers/supervisors' supervision style in the work place.

The core question is whether a manager/supervisor is able to alter his/her

leadership style to match the shifting work environment (Lee-Kelley, 2002; Yukl,

1989). Fiedler (1964) argued that the manager/supervisor's personality characteristics

influence a member's sense of control in the work situation, which will determine the

group's performance (Ayman & Chemers, 1991). From his research Fiedler (1995)

sees the two main characteristics of a manager/supervisor as being task-oriented or

relationship-oriented.

The task-oriented managers focus on establishing well-defined patterns and

channels of communication, organizing and defining relationships in the group,

encouraging new ideas, assigning subordinates to particular jobs, and emphasizing

meeting deadlines (Halpin, 1955; Fleishman, 1973). Likert (1967) argued that task-oriented managers do not spend their time and effort doing the same kind of work as their subordinates. They clarify expectations of subordinates, scheduling work to be done, specifying procedures to be followed (House, 1971; Yukl, 2002), checking that subordinates observe rules and regulations, setting deadlines, and giving instructions (Misumi, 1985; Yukl, 2002; Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003). Thus, two important aspects of task-oriented leadership are pressure (i.e., pressuring subordinates to work hard and setting and emphasizing deadlines) and instruction (i.e., giving instructions and orders and specifying procedures) (Casimir, 2001). However, task-oriented managers lead subordinates in setting performance goals that are high but realistic (Likert, 1967). Hence when subordinates follow rules, regulations and work instructions, they would have appropriate job autonomy and control (e.g., when and how to take a short break) from task-oriented managers/supervisors.

Compared with task-oriented behaviour, relationship-oriented behaviour occurs when managers are concerned for leader-member relations (Yukl, 2002). Relationship-oriented supervisors are supportive and helpful to subordinates. Supportive behaviours that are correlated with effective leadership include showing mutual trust, respect and confidence in subordinates, acting in a friendly and considerate way, trying to understand subordinate problems, helping to develop subordinates and further their careers. Simultaneously, supervisors with a strong relationship-oriented style listen to employee suggestions, show appreciation for subordinates' ideas, and providing recognition for subordinates' contributions and

accomplishment. They also do personal favours for employees, support their interests when required and treat employees as equals (Yukl, 2002; Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003). Behavioural theorists also found that relationship-oriented supervisors tended to give more job-related control to subordinates than do task-oriented supervision. For instance, supervisors allowed their subordinates to have some autonomy in deciding how to do the work and how to pace themselves. Likert (1967) proposed that a manager should treat each subordinate in a supportive way that will build and maintain the person's sense of self-worth. Pierce et al. (2006) further argued that individuals with greater autonomy and control over their job had greater feelings of ownership over the job and the organization.

Although the relationship-oriented manager can be portrayed as "treating followers compassionately and respectfully, emphasizing communication by listening to followers, showing trust and confidence in followers, and acknowledging followers with recognition and appreciation" (Cohen et al., 2004, p.848), when organizational members express opinions or give suggestions that may or may not be accepted by their managers/supervisors, participation can be more accurately thought of as an influence-sharing option with the leader retaining control or power (Hollander & Offermann, 1990). In short, relationship-oriented managers would treat their subordinates in a supportive way, but they might not allow the subordinates to share their power of decision making. This is the main difference between a relationship–oriented manager/supervisor and a participative manager/supervisor.

Participative leadership involves the use of various decision procedures that

allow other people some influence over leaders' decisions. Participative managers use more group supervision rather than supervising each subordinate separately. Group meetings assist subordinate participation in decision making, hence improving communication, promoting cooperation, and facilitating conflict resolution. However, use of participation does not imply abdication of responsibilities, and the manager remains responsible for all decisions and their results (Yukl, 2002; Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003). Other terms commonly used to refer to aspects of participative leadership include consultation, joint decision making, power sharing, decentralization, and democratic management (Yukl, 2002). Vroom and Yetton (1973) pointed out that levels of participation may vary from gathering information and consultation to joint decision making and delegation. According to Roberson et al. (1999), participation in decision making provides increased opportunities for employees to experience control and to voice their views and concerns, thus they are more likely to experience procedural justice under participatory conditions. Moreover, Pierce et al. (2004) found a positive relationship between supervisor ratings of employee participation in job context decisions and employee expressions of experienced control.

In summary, different managers/supervisors' supervision styles give work members a sense of influence over the work process (Ayman & Chemers, 1991; Lee-Kelley, 2002). Participation in decision making builds understanding and cohesive teamwork, increases job satisfaction, resolves conflicts, increases decision acceptance, improves decision quality, increases understanding of the business, and enriches work

(Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1998). Therefore, based on the literature above, the following hypotheses are examined in the present research:

*Hypothesis 3a*: There is a positive relationship between task-oriented leadership and perceived control.

*Hypothesis 3b*: There is a positive relationship between relationship-oriented leadership and perceived control.

*Hypothesis 3c*: There is a positive relationship between participative leadership and perceived control.

**Mediating role of perceived control**

Following the model of this thesis (See Figure 1), it is anticipated that the positive effects of leadership styles might be understood in terms of the relationship between the leadership styles and volunteers' feelings of control in their work environment. As discussed above, Pierce et al. (2004) found that control fully mediated the association between work environment structure and feelings of ownership for the job. Full mediation effects were also found for control in the relationship between each of the three work environment variables (i.e., technology, autonomy and participative decision making) and job-based psychological ownership. They suggested that control exercised over an object eventually gives rise to feelings of ownership for that object.

Likert (1961) noted that the managers' supervision style sets a climate in an organization. Kerr and Jermier (1978) argued when subordinates have a clear goal and know how to do their work, they would normally feel control and be motivated and

satisfied. To Lahman and Weaver (1998), if people believed that they had some degree of control, they might be more likely to engage in various problem-solving activities which might provide job satisfaction to organizational members. Therefore, task-oriented supervision style might increase individuals' feelings of ownership if they felt some degree of control in the workplace.

In addition, individual differences among leaders are perceived as real and do play a role in subordinates' satisfaction and performance outcomes. For instance, some leadership literature suggests that relationship-oriented supervisors allow their subordinates to have some job autonomy in deciding how to do the work and how to pace themselves (Yukl, 2002; Mcshane & Travaglione, 2003; Poon, 2004). When employees have job autonomy, they will feel personally responsible for work outcomes that, in turn, will lead them to feel satisfied and motivated (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The freedom to use their own judgment and act in their job domain allows employees to influence desired outcomes, thus reducing their uncertainties and worries (Ford, & Fottler, 1995; Poon, 2004). Hence, a relationship-oriented leadership style might also improve individuals' psychological ownership via an individual's feeling of control in the workplace.

Another clear connection between the study of perceived control and leadership in organizations has been in the area of subordinate participation in decision making (Hollander & Offermann, 1990; Pierce et al., 2004; Pierce et al., 2006). In a meta-analysis, Miller and Monge (1986) reported a notable positive relationship between participation and satisfaction (mean correlation .34) and a small, but significant,

correlation between participation and performance (mean correlation .15). Therefore, when employees are given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, they will have more accurate information about and hence a better understanding of organizational events and processes (Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1996). They will feel a high level of perceived control through their participation and a high degree of possession in the organization. Based on the investigations above, it is hypothesized as follows:

*Hypothesis 4a*: Perceived control mediates the relationship between task-oriented leadership and psychological ownership.

*Hypothesis 4b*: Perceived control mediates the relationship between relationship-oriented leadership and psychological ownership.

*Hypothesis 4c*: Perceived control mediates the relationship between participative leadership and psychological ownership.

**Mediating role of psychological ownership**

Following the model of this thesis (See Figure 1), the psychology of possession can provide insight into how perceived control links up with volunteers' work attitudes and behaviour. In this study, it is expected that the positive effects of perceived control might be understood in terms of the association between perceived control and volunteers' feelings of psychological ownership for their job.

Pierce et al. (2004) observed a positive relationship between experienced control and psychological ownership for both the job and the organization. They obtained very clear evidence suggesting that there is an association between perceived

control and individuals' feelings of ownership. Pierce et al. (2004) suggested that creating and maintaining work settings can empower individuals and enable them to exercise control over important aspects of their work arrangements which should enhance their sense of ownership. This enhancement may promote the manifestation of work-related attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, organization-based self-esteem, nurturing, and protecting.

Additionally, O'Driscoll et al. (2006) explored a potential mediating role of psychological ownership in the relationship between levels of work environment structure and employee responses. They examined the role of felt ownership as a mediator of relationships between work environment structure and (a) affective organizational commitment, and (b) employee citizenship behaviours. Results indicated that when the work environment provided opportunities for employees to exercise job autonomy and control and participate in work-related decisions, individuals were more likely to feel a strong sense of ownership for both their job and the organization. Individuals who have high scores on organizational ownership may be more inclined to exhibit behaviours that serve to promote the welfare of the organization more broadly. Hence, this study also expected felt ownership of a job can also have mediating effects between perceived control and (a) turnover intention, (b) psychological withdrawal, and (c) sense of responsibility here. According to Mischel (1973), weak situations give employees more opportunity to exercise control over their actions. Hence the feelings of increased control will be correlated with a greater sense of ownership of the job which, in turn, will be related to lower turnover

intentions in their organization and decreased employees' psychological withdrawal behaviours. With increased feeling of psychological ownership for the job, the employee will want to maintain his or her relationship with the organization and will improve their feelings of responsibility for the job. Therefore, in this study it is proposed that psychological ownership of the job will function as an intervening variable in the relationship between perceived control and turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility for the job. Following the investigations above, the following hypotheses are:

*Hypothesis 5a*: Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between perceived control and turnover intentions.

*Hypothesis 5b*: Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between perceived control and psychological withdrawal.

*Hypothesis 5c*: Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between perceived control and sense of responsibility on the job.

# CHAPTER TWO

# METHOD

A survey measuring psychological ownership and other variables of interest was conducted across 20 of the 105 non-profit organizations in the Waikato region. The organizations were randomly selected from a multiplicity of sectors; five organizations were from health/medical, seven of them came from charity sector, two were educational organizations, one was from local government and the other five organizations came from the public service sector.

A list of the non-profit organizations was provided by Volunteering Waikato. Volunteering Waikato is a professional organisation which has been recognised by councils, businesses and a wide range of not-for-profit agencies, as the service at the heart of volunteering in the Waikato region.

## Participants

All volunteers within these 20 organizations were invited to participate in the study. In total, 552 volunteer questionnaires were distributed and 162 questionnaires were fully completed and returned, representing a response rate of 29%. A wide variety of jobs across the 19 organizations was surveyed, including clerical, emergency, befriending, counselling, looking after animals, tutoring, board directors, driving, retail, health, catering and fundraising. Response rates for the questionnaire across each category are presented in Table 1.  Females comprised 71% of the sample

and males 29%. The respondents ranged in age from 17 to 90, with an average age of 53.6 years. The average tenure with the organization was 20.6 years and average tenure in their current voluntary position was 6.3 years.

Table 1

Number of Respondents for Each Category of Job

| Category | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------|----------------------|------------|
| Befriending | 26 | 16.0 |
| Board Directors | 4 | 2.5 |
| Catering | 2 | 1.2 |
| Clerical | 25 | 15.4 |
| Counselling | 19 | 11.7 |
| Emergency | 2 | 1.2 |
| Driving | 8 | 4.9 |
| Fundraising | 1 | 0.6 |
| Health | 33 | 20.4 |
| Looking after Animals | 27 | 16.7 |
| Tutoring | 10 | 6.2 |
| Total | 162 | 100 |

## **Measures**

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) contained measures of task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership, participative leadership, perceived control, psychological ownership of the job, psychological withdrawal, turnover intention and sense of responsibility for the job. The scale score for each variable was completed as the mean responses to items. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were conducted to confirm the factor structure and items to be retained.

Leadership styles were targeted to measure supervisors' working behaviours. *Task-oriented* leadership (see Appendix A, Section D) was measured using an instrument developed and validated by Ekvall and Arvonen (1991). Ekvall and

Arvonen studied production-centred and employee-centred leadership behaviours, which are the same as task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership. Task-oriented leadership was measured with ten items, such as 'Plan carefully' and 'Give clear instructions'. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale, 1 (Never) -5 (Always), indicating how often the specified behaviour occurred. Cronbach's alpha for task-oriented leadership was .91.

*Relationship-oriented* leadership (see Appendix A, Section D) was also measured using the instrument developed and validated by Ekvall and Arvonen (1991). Ten items, which measured relationship-oriented leadership, such as 'Is considerate', and 'Is just in treating subordinates', were adopted. Responses were recorded on the same five-point scale as above. Cronbach's alpha for relationship-oriented leadership was .93.

*Participative leadership* (see Appendix A, Section D) was measured by Ogbonna and Harris's (2000) five items, such as 'Before making decisions, my supervisor considered what her/his subordinates had to say' and 'When faced with a problem, my supervisor consulted with subordinates'. Each item response was measured on a Likert type scale, anchored by 1= *strongly agree* to 7= *strongly disagree*. Cronbach's alpha for participative leadership was .95.

*Perceived control* (see Appendix A, Section A) was measured by using the instrument developed and validated by Dwyer and Ganster (1991). 22 items were used to measure perceived control over volunteers' work environment, such as 'How much control do you have over the variety of methods you use in completing your

work?' and 'How much can you choose among a variety of tasks or projects to do?'

Each item used a scale anchored with 1= *very little* to 5= *very much*. Cronbach's alpha

for perceived control was .90.

   *Psychological ownership* over the job (see Appendix A, Section B) was

measured via an instrument initially developed and validated by Pierce, Van Dyne and

Cummings (1997). Further validation evidence was provided by Coghlan (1997) and

Van Dyne and Pierce (2004). Items measuring psychological ownership express the

emotional state of ownership. Six items measured psychological ownership of the job,

such as 'This is my work' and 'I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for the

work that I do'. Each ownership item was measured on a Likert type scale anchored

with 1= *strongly disagree* to 7= *strongly agree*. Cronbach's alpha for psychological

ownership was .93.

   *Psychological withdrawal* behaviours (see Appendix A, Section E) were

measured via the scale developed by Lehman and Simpson (1992). Eight items, such

as 'Thought of being absent' and 'Daydreamed', were introduced with the statement

'In the past twelve months, how often have you….?' Responses were obtained using

a 7-point scale where 1= *never* to 7= *very often*. Cronbach's alpha for psychological

withdrawal was .78.

   *Sense of responsibility* for the job (see Appendix A, Section C) was measured

by Hackman and Oldham's (1975) four-item instrument. Further validation evidence

was provided by Coghlan (1997). Sample items for this scale were 'It is hard, on this

job, for me to care very much about whether or not the work got done right'

(Reversed scored), and 'I feel a very high degree of personal responsibility for the work I did on this job'. Responses were obtained using a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1= *strongly disagree* to 7= *strongly agree*. Cronbach's alpha for sense of responsibility was .79.

*Turnover intentions* were measured by O'Driscoll and Beehr's (1994) approach. Three items were used: 'Thought about quitting the voluntary job', 'Plan to look for a new voluntary job' and 'Actively search for a new voluntary job outside the organization'. These three items were introduced with the statement 'Over the next twelve months, will you….?' Participants were given a 6-point response scale and the response format varied for each item. They are shown in Section F of the questionnaire (See Appendix A). Cronbach's alpha for turnover intention was .70.

## Procedure

The list of non-profit organizations was given to the researcher by Volunteering Waikato. Additionally, this organization provided a reference letter (see Appendix B) to encourage participation in this research. The researcher met with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) from each organization to explain the purpose and nature of research. It was agreed that a summary report of the findings would be available for each organization and a brief summary made available for participants. Following agreement with the organization to participate in the research, questionnaires were distributed to volunteers via the CEO of each organization. Approximately two weeks after distribution, the surveys were returned in self-addressed envelopes directly to the researcher. All respondents were informed that the purpose of this research was to

look at volunteer work experiences in their organization. Respondents were told participation was voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, participants were informed that all responses were totally confidential. Ethical approval for the project was given by the Research and Ethics Committee, Psychology Department, University of Waikato.

**Data Analysis**

Statistical software, AMOS (4th ed), was used for CFA. Goodness of fit statistics are the emphasis in confirmatory factor analysis. Seven variables were used: minimum discrepancy (CMIN), degrees of freedom (DF) and CMIN/DF should be indicated in the statistics; acceptable values of the root mean square residual (RMR), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and acceptable values of adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) are greater than .80 and smaller than 1.0. Acceptable values of the scaled root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) tend to be .00. For EFA, SPSS (13th ed) was used. The varimax rotation of the factor loadings matrix was used to interpret the results of each principal component's analysis. The Eigenvalue of the factor needs to be addressed and a table of the eigenvalues of the correlation matrix, and the percentages of variance explained, needs to be presented (Breakwell et al., 2004; Coakes & Steed, 2007).

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to examine the relationships among all the study variables. Particularly, the researcher tested Hypotheses 1a-1c, 2 and 3a-3c with correlational analyses. The hypothesized mediating effects (e.g.., Hypotheses 4a-4c and 5a-5c) were tested by using Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediated regression

technique. Specifically, they recommend a three-step process:

1. Regress the mediator variable on the predictor variable.

2. Regress the criterion variable on the predictor variable.

3. Regress the criterion variable simultaneously on the predictor and mediator variables.

Baron and Kenny proposed that mediation is indicated when the following conditions are met:

1. The relationship between the mediator and the predictor variables is significant at equation 1.

2. The relationship between the predictor and criterion variables is significant at equation 2.

3. The mediator is significantly related to the criterion variable at equation 3.

4. The effect of the predictor on the criterion variable is less in equation 3 than in equation 2.

In addition, full mediation occurs when the relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable becomes non-significant when the effect of the mediator is controlled for. Partial medication occurs when the predictor effect is reduced, but it still significant when the mediator is controlled for (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Pierce, O'Driscoll, & Coghlan, 2004). Moreover, the Sobel test was also used in this study. The purpose of the Sobel test is to test whether a mediator carries the influence of an independent variable to a dependent variable, and to illustrate whether a mediating effect is significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Sobel, 1982).

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESULTS

The results chapter is organized into four main parts: (1) factor analysis, (2) descriptive statistics, (3) correlations between major variables, and (4) mediated regression analyses.

## <u>Factor analysis</u>

One of purposes of this study is to compare three leadership styles and find out whether they each have significant association with psychological ownership via perceived control. Hence, task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership and participative leadership were combined together in the confirmatory factor analysis. The initial model did not show acceptable values, thus one item at a time was deleted and the model retested after each deletion. The final model (omitting the six items: Item 8, 12, 13, 20, 24 and 25. See Appendix A, Section D) had the following list statistics: CMIN= 124.21, DF= 127, CMIN/DF = .98, RMR = .06, the goodness-of-fit index GFI = .92, AGFI = .89, the root mean square error of approximation RMSEA = .00. The factor loadings for all leadership styles are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor structures of three leadership styles

| Items | Factor loadings |
|---|---|
| | Participative leadership |
| Before making decisions, my supervisor considers what her/his subordinates have to say. | .91 |
| Before taking action my supervisor consults with subordinates. | .90 |
| When faced with a problem, my supervisor consults with subordinates. | .91 |
| My supervisor asks subordinates for their suggestions. | .91 |
| My supervisor listens to subordinate's advice on which tasks should be made. | .91 |
| | Task-oriented leadership |
| Plans carefully. | .76 |
| Gives clear instructions. | .88 |
| Defines and explains the work requirements clearly to the subordinates. | .89 |
| Creates order. | .70 |
| Makes a point of following rules and principles. | .65 |
| Sets clear goals. | .71 |
| Is very clear about who is responsible for what. | .63 |
| | Relationship-oriented leadership |
| Is considerate. | .95 |
| Is just in treating subordinates. | .81 |
| Creates an atmosphere free of conflict. | .85 |
| Creates trust in other people. | .92 |
| Is friendly. | .85 |
| Relies in his/her subordinates. | .45 |
| Stands up for his/her subordinates. | .78 |

The initial model of perceived control also did not display acceptable values. Items were still deleted one at a time and the model retested after each deletion. The final model (omitting the five items: Item 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14. See Appendix A, Section A) had the following list statistics: CMIN = 88.87, DF = 95, CMIN/DF = .94, RMR = .07, GFI = .94, AGFI = .90, RMSEA = .00. Factor loading for the remaining 17 items are shown in Table 3.

The model of psychological ownership had acceptable values initially and no items were deleted. Fit statistics results were: CMIN = 4.29, DF = 6, CMIN/DF = .71, RMR = .03, GFI = .99, AGFI = .97, RMSEA = .00. The factor loadings for psychological ownership are shown in Table 4.

The initial model of psychological withdrawal did not show acceptable values, one item (i.e., item 2. See Appendix A, Section E) was removed after analysis. Final fit statistics results were: CMIN = 15.05, DF = 12, CMIN/DF = 1.25, RMR = .08, GFI = .98, AGFI = .94, RMSEA = .04. The factor loadings are shown in Table 5.

Table 3

Factor structures of perceived control

| Items | Factor loadings |
|---|---|
| How much control do you have over the variety of methods you use in completing your work? | .56 |
| How much can you generally predict the amount of work you will have to do on any given day? | .50 |
| How much control do you have over how quickly or slowly you have to work? | .49 |
| How much control do you have over the scheduling and duration of your rest breaks? | .58 |
| How much control do you have over when you come to work and leave? | .58 |
| How much are you able to predict what the results of decisions you make on the job will be? | .51 |
| How much are you able to decorate, rearrange, or personalize your work area? | .57 |
| How much can you control the physical conditions of your work station (lighting, temperature)? | .51 |
| How much control do you have over how you do your work? | .51 |
| How much influence do you have over the policies and procedures in your work unit? | .59 |
| How much control do you have over the sources of information you need to do your job? | .69 |
| How much are things that affect you at work predictable, even if you can't directly control them? | .54 |
| How much control do you have over the amount of resources (tools, material) you get? | .70 |
| How much can you control the number of times you are interrupted while you work? | .63 |
| How much control do you have over the amount you earn at your job? | .43 |
| How much control do you have over how your work is evaluated? | .56 |
| In general, how much overall control do you have over work and work-related matters? | .77 |

Table 4

Factor structures of psychological ownership

| Items | Factor loadings |
|---|---|
| This is my work. | .77 |
| I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for the work that I do. | .53 |
| I sense that this job is my job. | .84 |
| I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for my work. | .46 |
| I sense that this work is my work. | .80 |
| This is my job. | .58 |

Table 5

Factor structures of psychological withdrawal

| Items | Factor loadings |
|---|---|
| Thought of being absent. | .61 |
| Left work situation for unnecessary reasons. | .43 |
| Day dreamed. | .62 |
| Spent work time on personal matters. | .56 |
| Put less effort into the job than should have. | .64 |
| Thought of leaving current job. | .40 |
| Let others do your work. | .69 |

Because of the number of items which measured sense of responsibility and turnover intentions each are less than five, exploratory factor analysis was used for these constructers. Factor loadings for sense of responsibility and turnover intentions are shown respectively in Tables 6 and Table 7. Factor 1 comprised three items with factor loadings ranging from .60 to .85.

Factor 2 comprised 1 item with loadings of .43. The Eigenvalue of Factor 1 was 1.72; explained

variance accounted for 43.23%, whereas the Eigenvalue of Factor 2 was below 1.00 (.33). The

scree plot (Firue 2) also confirmed the dominance of a single factor represented by 3 items.

Table 6

Factor structures of sense of responsibility

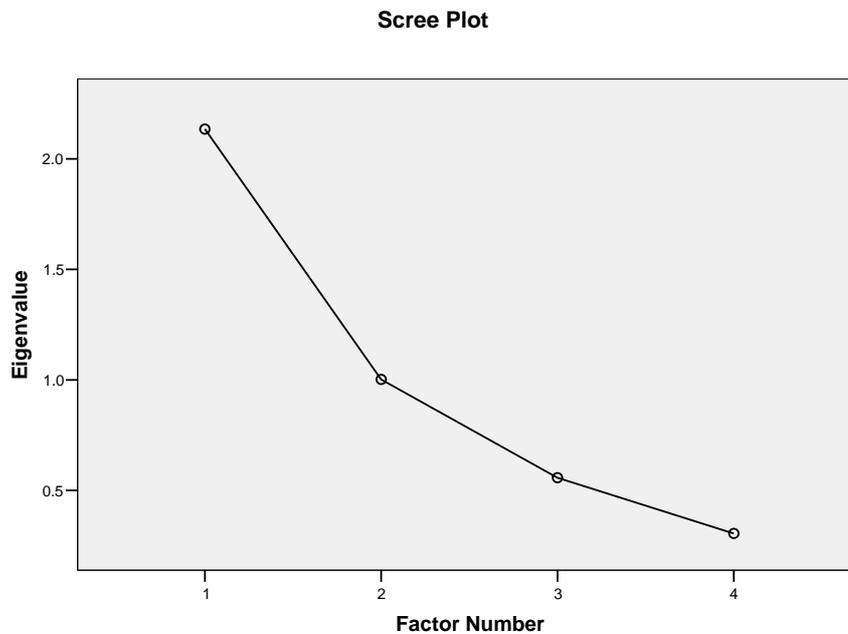| Items | Factor | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | 1 | 2 |
| It is hard, on this job, for me to care very much about whether or not the work got done right. (Reversed scored) | | .43 |
| I feel a very high degree of personal responsibility for the work I do on this job. | .60 | |
| I feel I should personally take the credit or blame for the results of my work on this job. | .85 | |
| Whether or not this job gets done right is clearly my responsibility. | .84 | |
| Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. 2 factors extracted. 18 iterations required. Criterion value as 0.4. | | |

Figure 2



**Scree Plot**

Table 7

Factor structures turnover intentions

| Items | Factor 1 |
|---|---|
| Thought about quitting this voluntary job cross my mind. | .37 |
| I plan to look for a new voluntary job with the next 12 months. | .91 |
| How likely is it that, over the next year, you will actively look for a new voluntary job outside of this organization? | .75 |
| Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. 1 factor was extracted. More than 25 iterations required. (Convergence=.002). Extraction was terminated. Criterion value as 0.4. | |

Additionally, all three items measured turnover intentions were remained. The

Eigenvalue of the factor was 1.52; explained variance accounted for 50.61%.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics for all latent variables, including means, standard

deviations, skew ness and Cronbach's alphas are presented in Table 8. Five variables

had high levels of skew: task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership,

psychological ownership of the job and sense of responsibility for the job. With regard

to task-oriented leadership (skew = -2.49) and relationship-oriented leadership (skew

= -1.71), most respondents indicated the two styles were used by their supervisors

generally. Participative leadership also displayed relatively high levels of skew (skew

= -1.60), with most respondents reporting their supervisors also adopted a

participative approach. In relation to psychological ownership of the job (skew = -

2.61), the majority of participants indicated they had high levels of psychological

ownership for their job. In respect of the sense of responsibility for the job (skew = -

2.4), most respondents indicated they experienced high levels of responsibility for

their work. These high negatively skewed distributions indicated participants have high response rates on task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership, and psychological ownership of the job and sense of responsibility for the job. Therefore, all variables have been transformed to Z scores.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics

| Variable | M | SD | Skew | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task-oriented Leadership | 3.3 | 0.24 | -2.49** | 0.91 |
| Relationship Leadership | 3.4 | 0.22 | -1.71** | 0.93 |
| Participative Leadership | 3.1 | 0.48 | -1.60** | 0.95 |
| Control | 3.9 | 0.26 | -0.76 | 0.90 |
| PO-Job | 3.5 | 0.35 | -2.61** | 0.93 |
| T I | 1.6 | 0.47 | 0.81** | 0.70 |
| PW | 2.6 | 0.39 | 0.40** | 0.76 |
| Sense of Responsibility | 2.8 | 0.39 | -2.4** | 0.79 |

Note. PO-Job = psychological ownership of the job. TI = turnover intentions. PW = psychological withdrawal.  **$p < .01$

## Correlations

Results of Pearson Product Moment correlations between major variables are presented in Table 9. Based on the findings of Pierce at al. (1997) and Vandewalle et al. (1995), it was expected that psychological ownership of the job would be negatively associated with turnover intentions and psychological withdrawal, and positively related to sense of responsibility. Hypothesis 1a predicted that psychological ownership of the job would be negatively associated with turnover intentions. However, there was no significant correlation ($r = .02$) between job based

ownership and turnover intentions. In support of Hypothesis 1b, psychological ownership was significantly and negatively related to psychological withdrawal, r = -.16, p < .05, indicating that lower levels of psychological withdrawal were associated with higher level of psychological ownership. There was no significant correlation (r = .03) between psychological ownership of the job and sense of responsibility on the job. Thus, Hypothesis 1c was not supported in this study.

Table 9

Correlations Between Major Variables

| Variable | Correlations | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1. Task-oriented | .68** | .45** | .24** | .18* | -.10 | -.14* | .12 |
| 2. Relationship | | .61** | .14* | .11 | -.10 | -.09 | .18* |
| 3. Participative | | | .18* | .07 | -.11 | .10 | .10 |
| 4. Control | | | | .26** | -.11 | -.09 | -.02 |
| 5. PO-Job | | | | | -.02 | -.16* | .03 |
| 6. T I | | | | | | 43** | -.17* |
| 7. PW | | | | | | | -.10 |
| 8. Sense of Res | | | | | | | -- |

Note. Relationship = relationship-oriented leadership. Participative = participative leadership. PO-Job = psychological ownership of the job. TI = turnover intentions. PW = psychological withdrawal. Sense of Res = sense of responsibility.
N = 162 *p< .05. **p< .01

Task-oriented leadership significantly and positively related to relationship-oriented leadership (r = .68, p< .01) and participative leadership (r =.45, p< .01), respectively. This indicated that although these three styles represented different kinds of behaviours, moderately high correlations among the three styles explained managers/supervisors' behaviours which consisted of any combination of these three forms (Yukl, 1999, 2002). There was a significant positive relationship between turnover intentions and psychological withdrawal, r = .43 (p< .05); and there was a significant negative correlation between turnover intentions and sense of

responsibility, r = -.17 (p‹ .05). This indicated that high levels of turnover intentions were associated with psychological withdrawal behaviours, and with a reduced sense of responsibility for the job. However, there was no significant relationship between psychological withdrawal behaviours and sense of responsibility for the job ( r = -.10). This result may indicate volunteer workers' psychological withdrawal could not directly influence their feelings of responsibility for their voluntary job or vice versa.

Theoretically, control is one primary determinant of the experienced state of ownership (Pierce, O'Driscoll, & Coghlan, 2004). The data obtained here reveal a significant and positive relationship between perceived control and psychological ownership (r = .26, p < .01), therefore Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Further, it was predicted that the amount of control experienced by organizational members would be associated with the leadership styles which managers/supervisors are perceived to implement. Each of the leadership variables has a significant and positive relationship with perceived control: r = .24 (p‹ .01) for task-oriented leadership (Hypothesis 3a), r = .14 (p‹ .05) for relationship-oriented leadership (Hypothesis 3b), and r = .18 (p‹ .05) for participative leadership (Hypothesis 3c). Thus, having emphasized managers/supervisors who are meeting deadlines, showing mutual trust, respect and confidence for subordinates, and relying on participative decision making may contribute to volunteer workers' experienced sense of control.

**Mediated Regression Analyses**

The central focus of this research is on the mediating effects of control on the relationship between leadership styles and psychological ownership, and the mediating effects of psychological ownership in the relationship between control and the three correlated variables (e.g., turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility for the job). Hypotheses 4a-c and 5a-c were tested using Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediated regression approach and the Sobel test.

*The mediating effect of perceived control*

Hypotheses 4a-c positioned control as mediating the relationship between the three styles of leadership (task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership and participative leadership) and psychological ownership of the job respectively. In Table 10, Equation 1 illustrates that perceived control fully mediated the relationship between task-oriented leadership and job-based ownership ($Z = 2.13$, $p < .05$) because in this case the initially significant link between task-oriented leadership and ownership ($ß = .18$, $p < .05$) became non significant ($ß = .12$) when task-oriented leadership and control were entered simultaneously at Step 3 in the equation. Thus, Hypothesis 4a was supported. In the cases involving relationship-oriented leadership (Hypothesis 4b, $Z = 1.57$) and participative leadership (Hypothesis 4c, $Z = 1.88$), control did not function as a mediator of the predictor-criterion relationship. This was because in Equation 2 there was no significant relationship between relationship-oriented leadership (i.e., predictor) and psychological ownership of the job (i.e., criterion) at Step 2 and in Equation 3 there was also no significant relationship

between participative leadership (i.e., predictor) and psychological ownership of the job (i.e., criterion) at Step 2. In summary, the findings indicate that perceived control did not mediate the relationship between relationship-oriented leadership and psychological ownership of the job. Control also did not have mediating effects between participative leadership and job-based ownership. In contrast, as noted on p17, perceived control mediated the relationship between task-oriented leadership and psychological ownership of the job.

Table 10

Mediating Effects of Control on Job Ownership

| Step | Criterion | Predictor | ß | t | Adjusted R² | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Hypothesis 4(a)* | | | | |
| *Equation 1* | | | | | | |
| 1 | Control | Task-oriented | .24 | 3.16* | .05 | 9.98 |
| 2 | Job Ownership | Task-oriented | .18 | 2.25* | .03 | 5.06 |
| 3 | Job Ownership | Task-oriented | .12 | 1.53 | | |
| | | Control | .23 | 2.91* | .07 | 6.89 |
| | | | | Sobel test | $Z = 2.13$, $p < .05$ | |
| | | *Hypothesis 4 (b)* | | | | |
| *Equation 2* | | | | | | |
| 1 | Control | Relationship | .14 | 1.81* | .01 | 3.28 |
| 2 | Job Ownership | Relationship | .11 | 1.35 | .01 | 1.83 |
| 3 | Job Ownership | Relationship | .07 | .92 | | |
| | | Control | .25 | 3.20 | .06 | 6.09 |
| | | | | Sobel test | $Z = 1.57$ (nonsignificant) | |
| | | *Hypothesis 4 (c)* | | | | |
| *Equation 3* | | | | | | |
| 1 | Control | Participative | .18 | 2.28* | .03 | 5.22 |
| 2 | Job Ownership | Participative | .07 | .90 | - .00 | .80 |
| 3 | Job Ownership | Participative | .03 | .33 | | |
| | | Control | .25 | 3.25 | .06 | 5.70 |
| | | | | Sobel test | $Z = 1.88$ ( nonsignificant) | |

Note. Relationship = relationship-oriented leadership. Participative = participative leadership.
    *$p < .05$.

## The mediating effect of psychological ownership

It was earlier proposed that psychological ownership would mediate the relationship between perceived control and turnover intentions (Hypothesis 5a); that psychological ownership of the job will function as an intervening variable in the relationship between perceived control and psychological withdrawal (Hypothesis 5b);

and that psychological ownership would mediate the relationship between perceived control and sense of responsibility on the job (Hypothesis 5c).

Because there was no significant correlation between perceived control, turnover intentions and sense of responsibility, Hypotheses 5a and 5c were rejected. However, correlations for the tests of Hypotheses 1b and 2 provided evidence supporting a significant relationship between perceived control (i.e., the predictor) and psychological ownership (i.e., the mediator) and between psychological ownership (i.e., the mediator) and psychological withdrawal (i.e., criterion). Therefore, the prediction (Hypothesis 5b) that psychological ownership would mediate the relationship between perceived control and psychological withdrawal was examined. Table 11 presents the findings associated with this hypothesis. In testing Hypothesis 5b (Equation 2), there was a significant relationship ($\beta = .26$, p‹ .05) between control and psychological ownership at Step 1. However, there was no significant relationship ($\beta = -.09$) between control and psychological withdrawal at Step 2, hence Hypothesis 5b was rejected. Psychological ownership did not mediate the relationship between perceived control and psychological withdrawal.

Table 11

Mediating Regression Equation Testing Hypothesis 4b

| Step | Criterion | Predictor | ß | T | Adjusted R² |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----|------|-------------|
| 1 | Job Ownership | Control | .26 | 3.37* | .06 |
| 2 | P W | Control | -.09 | -1.09 | .01 |
| 3 | P W | Control | -.05 | -.60 | |
| | | Job Ownership | -.14 | -1.78 | .02 |
| | | Sobel test | Z= -1.58 | (nonsignificant) | |

Note.

PW = psychological withdrawal. *p< .05

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study is to examine empirically, in a sample of social volunteers, (1) the concept of psychological ownership and its relationship with turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility, (2) the relationship between perceived control and psychological ownership, (3) the association between leadership styles and perceived control, and (4) the mediating effects of psychological ownership and perceived control. Examination of the potential consequences of psychological ownership may increase the attention of organizational managers to the importance of inducing and managing a sense of ownership from the members of their organizations.

Major findings of the present study are, first, that psychological ownership does not have a relationship with turnover intentions and sense of responsibility, but is significantly related to psychological withdrawal. Second, the present study confirms the findings of Pierce et al. (2004) that perceived control is positively related to psychological ownership. This study further finds that psychological ownership is linked with leadership styles and perceived control. However, psychological ownership does not have mediating effects between perceived control and the volunteers' work attitudes (i.e., turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility). This thesis also finds that perceived control only has a mediating effect between task-oriented leadership and psychological ownership. It

does not have mediating effects between other two leadership styles (i.e., relationship-oriented leadership and participative leadership) and psychological ownership. In summary, this research is the first study focused on volunteers' feelings of ownership in non profit organizations (NPOs). The overall findings of this research indicate that psychological ownership is related to volunteers' work attitudes. Implications of the outcomes of this study are discussed below.

## Psychological ownership and correlated variables

This study expected psychological ownership of the job would significantly relate to volunteers' turnover intentions and sense of responsibility. This expectation was based on two research findings (e.g., Walle et al., 1995; Coghlan, 1997) on psychological ownership and feelings of possession. Walle et al. (1995) found there was a positive link between psychological ownership of the job and organizational commitment and citizenship behaviours. Coghlan (1997) emphasized there was a positive relationship between felt responsibility and psychological ownership of the job. Therefore, it was reasonable to hypothesize that a high level of felt ownership can reduce turnover intentions and increase individuals' sense of responsibility in organizations. However, it was surprising to find that meeting volunteers' feelings of psychological ownership had no relationship with turnover intentions (Hypothesis 1a) or sense of responsibility (Hypothesis 1c). In addition, according to O'Driscoll et al. (2006), psychological ownership of the job played a mediating role between work environment and employees' work attitudes and behaviours. Based on this finding, this thesis explored the possibility that psychological ownership of the job can

function as an intervening variable in the relationship between perceived control and volunteer work attitudes (i.e., turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal and sense of responsibility) (Hypothesis 5a-c). Contrary to the expectations, results of the present study failed to confirm the findings of O'Driscoll et al. and illustrated that psychological ownership is not a significant mediating variable in all regression equations.

Some explanations can be offered here. First, volunteer workers feeling psychological ownership are different from those of paid employees. Normally, a financial payment leads to employees' psychological responses such as organizational commitment or job involvement, which was based on what might exist in the context of employee-ownership (Pierce et al., 1991; Pierce et al., 1997). Volunteers and paid employees have similarities in organizational behaviours (Farmer & Fedor, 1996). The work of volunteerism and paid employment both involve a situation in which there is a specific task to be carried out within a specific organizational context (Gidron, 1984). Volunteers do not expect financial gain from their services, but they do expect other benefits (e.g., respect or skill gained) from the organization they work for. However, holding a paid job and volunteering are different processes, and the two realms likely represent very different psychological feelings to participation in an organization (Allen, 1987; Pearce, 1983). In addition, a key factor in a paid employee's decision to quit is that paid employees must actively search out and compete for alternate employment opportunities in seeking immediate replacement of a job (Russ & McNeilly, 1995). Because the element of pay in a job represents an

economic necessity and is a form of recognition, paid employees have to think about their financial loss when they leave or reduce their job involvement in an organization (Gidron, 1984). Conversely, Farmer and Fedor (1996) argued volunteer workers have different reasons for joining an organization. They usually show different patterns of attitudinal, calculative, and affective involvement in the organization. For example, many volunteer workers believe 'given is better than taken' or want to 'care about people' (Wilson, 2000), so that they join an NPO to help other people. Hence, there are many opportunities volunteer workers can decide to join other organizations without worrying about losing their financial benefits. This might be one reason why volunteer workers' psychological ownership of a job could not relate to turnover intentions and a sense of responsibility.

Second, there is reason to believe that the perspective of social exchange theory (e.g., Blau, 1964; Adams, 1965; Walster, Walster, and Berscheid, 1978) might help explain why psychological ownership of the job failed to relate volunteer workers' work attitudes. First, individuals clearly do weigh costs and benefits when considering volunteer work. For example, a 'bad reputation' (e.g., free labour) attached to volunteer work that makes it harder to recruit people and higher turnover (Snyder et al., 1999). Second, many people volunteer because they anticipate needing help themselves or have already received help and want to give something back (Banks, 1997; Broadbridge & Horne, 1996). Third, volunteers also expect rewards (that is, principally recognition of their efforts). Fourth, volunteering often provides steady benefits, which is the pleasure of socializing with paid staff, other volunteers, and

clients with whom emotional attachments may be formed (Wuthnow, 1998). Therefore, this study suggests that psychological ownership of a job is not the only determinant influencing volunteer workers' work attitudes. Finally, some volunteers are explicit about seeking resource exchanges (e.g., using personal time to gain work experiences) from their volunteer work (Gora & Nemerowicz, 1985). When the NPO for which they work can not satisfy their needs, or they find other opportunities to have better exchange, they choose to quit easily. The positive skew in turnover intentions and high negative skew in the sense of responsibility may have weakened the association between feelings of ownership and these two variables. In sum, although the sample of participants responded that they have strong feelings of ownership about their volunteering job, psychological ownership of a job is not only one determinant factor to affect volunteers' work attitudes. Turnover intentions and sense of responsibility still can be influenced by other work elements such as job expectations, emotional responses, and job satisfaction. As a consequence, the present study does not find distinct links between psychological ownership of a job with volunteer workers' turnover intentions and sense of responsibility, and also failed to prove psychological ownership plays a mediating role.

Third, results of this research confirmed the findings of Pierce et al. (2004) that perceived control is one of determinants of psychological ownership (Hypothesis 2). However, psychological ownership failed to play a mediating role between perceived control and psychological withdrawal, although ownership had a significant relationship with both variables. One potential reason might be that volunteering can

provide extremely different and distinct functions (Omoto & Snyder, 1990, 1995; Penner, Midili, & Kegelmeyer, 1997). It is suggested in this thesis that volunteer workers' feelings of ownership are different to those held by paid employees. As discussed above, the heart of psychological ownership is the feeling of possessiveness and of being psychologically united to an object (Pierce, Kostova & Dirks, 2001). Pierce et al. (1997) have emphasized that a formal ownership (e.g., holding of a share of equity in some objects) leads to psychological ownership. However, volunteer workers are different to paid employees because they are unpaid workers and do not have any financial gain (e.g., salary and work insurances) through their organization or job. A volunteer's psychological ownership may be based on the match between his/her beliefs and the NPO's values. Laczo and Hanisch (1999) compared organizational commitment and withdrawal behaviours from volunteer workers and paid employees working within the same organization. Volunteer workers in their study showed slightly higher levels of organizational commitment and substantially lower levels of organizational withdrawal than paid employees.

Additionally, this research ignored other variables such as satisfaction with co-workers, which may also have an influence on psychological ownership of a job. Laczo and Hanisch (1999) argued that volunteer workers were happier with their fellow volunteer workers than paid employees were with their fellow paid employees. Their results suggested that volunteer workers have positive feelings towards other volunteer workers because of the very nature of their work as a voluntary, helping activity, and because they acknowledge the fact that their fellow volunteer workers

are pursuing similar interests in terms of organizational goals and values. In contrast, paid employees may not always have the same organizational goals and values in mind, thus they may not view their fellow co-workers in as positive a manner as do volunteer workers.

In sum, the present study suggests a volunteer worker's psychological ownership may be different when compared to a paid employee's. A volunteer's felt ownership could be based on accomplishment of a voluntary helping activity (e.g., helping refugees to settle down), and the feeling of ownership would be reduced when the activity is completed. As a consequence, there would be fewer correlations between perceived control, psychological ownership of a job and psychological withdrawal; hence, psychological ownership fails to play a mediating role in this research.

**Leadership styles, perceived control and psychological ownership**

It is reasoned that a significant organizational determinant of psychological ownership would be the extent to which leadership styles enable the individual volunteer to exercise control over their job itself and the work setting. The results of this study show significant and positive relationships between each of the leadership styles (i.e., task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership, and participative leadership) and perceptions of control (Hypotheses 3a-c). Hence, this evidence supports this hypothesized association. Additionally, the findings of Pierce et al. (2004) are confirmed, that perceived control fully mediated the relationship between task-oriented leadership and job-based ownership (Hypothesis 4a), demonstrating that

when supervisors gave clear expectations of work, scheduled work to be done, and specified procedures to be followed, volunteer workers sense they can have control over their work which in turn was associated with a high level of psychological ownership of a job.

Regarding task-oriented leadership, relationship-oriented leadership and participative leadership, all of these variables had a positive and significant relationship with perceived control (Hypotheses 3a-c), but in respect of relationship-oriented leadership (Hypothesis 4b) and participative leadership (Hypothesis 4c), the mediating effects of control on job-based ownership were not significant. The result indicated task-oriented leadership style may match the volunteer work environment. When volunteer workers understand how to achieve and complete their tasks, they feel control of their job. From another side, volunteer workers also expect a supportive supervision and to share appropriate power with the manager/supervisor in the NPOs (Hollander & Offermann, 1990; Laczo & Hanisch, 1999; Aioanei, 2006) and volunteers also want to participate in some decision making. This finding partially confirms the findings of Pierce et al. (2004) that a work environment structure has a positive relationship with perceived control, but fails to confirm that control can play a mediating role between participative decision making and psychological ownership of the job. These results may explain that managers/supervisors from NPOs have practiced a relationship-oriented or participative supervision style in their daily work, but these leadership styles did not have obvious influences to make volunteers feel ownership. For example,

managers/supervisors might give opportunities to volunteer workers to participant in their decision making, but they did not really listen or accept volunteer workers' suggestions and make changes. Hence, volunteer workers seem to have high level of job autonomy and participated in decision making, but virtually they would not change a manager's decision. Therefore, perceived control failed to have mediating effects between these two supervision styles and psychological ownership of the job.

In addition, the results may also indicate that a task-oriented supervision style is the most appropriate way for the sample of volunteers to exercise perceived control so that they have feeling of ownership about their volunteering job. As Wilson (1998) noted, volunteer work is unremunerated time and effort devoted to helping others. Motivations for individuals to join volunteering work normally are to express or act on important values (e.g., humanitarianism); to learn more about the world or exercise skills that are often unused; to grow and develop psychologically through volunteer activities; to set the goal of gaining career-related experience through volunteering; to strengthen individuals' social relationships; to reduce negative feelings (e.g., guilt, or to address personal problems) through volunteering (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Characteristics (that are, well-defined channels of communication, assigning subordinates to particular jobs, and emphasizing meeting deadlines) of task-oriented supervision style seem to be the most direct way which applies volunteer workers' satisfaction with their experiences. Aioanei (2006) suggested that in a stable working environment, such as volunteers' working environment from this research, it is safe and effective to adopt task oriented-leadership. Under task-oriented supervision,

volunteers have pressures from deadlines, but they are given instructions, orders and follow specifying procedures. Hence, results of the present study showed task-oriented leadership style has stronger correlations with perceived control and psychological ownership than the other two styles.

**Limitations**

The sample limits the results of this study. The data were self-reported and collected from a single source, hence subject to biases, although research suggests that self-reported data are not as limited as was previously believed and that people often accurately perceive their social environment (Spector, 1992; Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 1998). Further, high negative skews were obtained for several variables. Thus, self report measures may raise high responses. It is also important to mention that the present study is limited by its correlational design and that the data examined are cross-sectional in nature. Hence, the present findings cannot be interpreted as definitive evidence of causal relationships between the variables studied here. Moreover, survey items of this research borrowed instruments which were used to be measured paid employees' working behaviour. Thus, the veracity of data was influenced by these instruments. Furthermore, the present study was unable to obtain performance data from participants, which also influence the veracity of the data.

**Practical Implications**

Volunteer behaviour is often difficult to manage or control (Laczo & Hanisch, 1999). An important function of psychological ownership is to administer individual behaviour without necessarily requiring managerial surveillance since volunteers are

monitoring their own behaviours. The present study suggested that volunteers could have high levels of psychological ownership via task-oriented supervision style. Thus, supervisors need to pay attention to what volunteers perceive them as obliged to provide. For example, supervisors should establish well-defined patterns and channels of communication, organize and define the relationships in the group, try out new ideas, assign subordinates to particular jobs, and emphasize meeting deadlines. This process can begin at the time the volunteer is recruited. This research also found psychological ownership of a job has a significant and negative relationship with psychological withdrawal. Puffer and Meindl (1992) suggested motivation was an important element for volunteer organizations to retain their human resources. The present study suggests supervisors need to realize different motivations from potential volunteers and match volunteers to activities that satisfy these motivations. This would increase the feelings of psychological ownership. Supervisors should also watch their own work behaviour, improving performance and retention. For example, supervisors need to give feedback to volunteer workers opportunely when they have completed their tasks and to listen carefully to comments from volunteer workers.

The results show task-oriented supervision style can increase volunteer workers' feeling of ownership through perceived control. The findings indicate that volunteers' ownership depend on how well the voluntary organization can offer control to them. Simultaneously, there was not significant correlation between psychological ownership, turnover intentions and sense of responsibility. This finding suggests that feelings of ownership from volunteer workers are different from those of paid

employees. According to Farmer and Fedor (1999), volunteers' reasons for affiliation with the voluntary organization are primarily symbolic, which means there is not any legal contract between volunteer workers and the organization they work for. Most volunteer workers expect their contributions can be recognized by the organization and the public. Hence, volunteer supervisors need to be sure to provide such symbolic support. This study did not obtain evidence for an obvious relationship between relationship-oriented leadership and participative leadership with psychological ownership through perceived control. In contrast, there is a clear path through task-oriented leadership, perceived control, psychological ownership and psychological withdrawal. Hence, it is necessary for supervisors to provide the form of recognition and appreciation for work done, personal interest in the life and well-being of the volunteers because these factors influence volunteer workers' work attitudes. They should also give helpful feedback on the results of volunteers' efforts, and provide a supportive social network for other volunteers.

Additionally, for many volunteer workers, the strongest motivation from them is that their contributions are valued. Such volunteers may respond well to complete their work, but they also look for clear and visible signs that their job is actually contributing to the overall mission and goals of the voluntary organization. For these volunteers, this may be part of the symbolic support that gives them a feeling of possession of their job and reduce withdrawal tendencies. In communication with many volunteers, it was clear that they all felt satisfaction when they saw that their efforts improved the quality of life for their clients, and most of them felt ownership

for their organization and job. Therefore, these expectations extended beyond personal support and seemed to include an assessment of whether the organization is providing necessary resources such as information, funds, and training for volunteers to do their jobs. The path-goal theory of leadership can be introduced here to help supervisors administer their volunteer workers. The path-goal theory emphasizes how leaders influence their subordinates' perceptions of their work goals, personal goals, and paths to goal attainment (House et al., 1974). Two recommendations from this study are 1) managers of volunteer programs should give more attention to volunteers' motivation and ability to perform effectively and satisfaction and, 2) managers/supervisors should also adopt a task-oriented leadership style to increase volunteer workers' goal attainment.

Moreover, Farmer and Fedor (1999, p.364) emphasized "withdrawal or turnover intentions are particularly important for volunteers given the sometimes blurred distinction of organizational membership of volunteers." Thus, supervisors frequently confuse whether a volunteer has quit or has simply decided to limit his or her activities to a low involvement. In any case, once a worker has actually quit, it is too late for the organization to make changes so that workers may reconsider those intentions. Hence, voluntary organizations need to pay attention to whether volunteers see their "ownership" as being largely rewarded. Such attentions could allow supervisors to make changes that would help retain strong performers before it is too late.

**Future Studies**

Although the present study showed psychological ownership of a job did not play a mediating role and did not relate to volunteer workers' work attitudes, job based ownership still has a positive relationship with task-oriented leadership and perceived control. Hence, future studies can further explore this relationship and explore further why the other forms did not have mediated relationships.

Additionally, Pierce et al. (2001) believed there were three different routes to the development of psychological ownership for a target (in this research, only the job). In the present study, the researcher only explored one of these routes: the route through the experience of control over one's work. The other two routes: via intimate knowing of the job (organization) and investment of the self in the job (organization) also need to be examined. Research (e.g., Pierce, Rubenfeld, & Morgan, 1991; Pierce, Kostova & Dirks, 2001; Dyne & Pierce, 2004) has found that individual employees would experience higher levels of psychological ownership for the target of ownership (i.e., the job and/or the organization) when they possess more knowledge about the functioning of the ownership object, when they devote more effort and energy to the object and its welfare, and when their self-concept is linked with their involvement in that object. However, how do these findings apply differently from unpaid volunteers? This question could be further studied in the future. Moreover, future research could also focus on how felt ownership influenced by factors from outside of organization, such as work-family role conflict. Regardless of the particular question asked, additional research focusing on the role of psychological ownership

for volunteers is strongly recommended.

**<u>Conclusions</u>**

This study provided a first step in showing how supervision styles influence psychological ownership of the job via perceived control, and how job-based ownership have effects on volunteer work attitudes such as psychological withdrawal, turnover intentions, and sense of responsibility for the job. Although hypotheses of this study were only partially supported, it still suggests that psychological ownership of the job is significantly related to volunteers' attitudes. The present study also suggests the task-oriented supervision style has a positive association with job-based ownership through the mediating role of perceived control. Much work still remains to be done, but one thing is clear from this study: if supervisors can create a truly supportive, two-way relationship between the voluntary organization and the volunteer workers, volunteer workers' feelings of possession about their job will be improved obviously and they will intend to stay longer in the organization.

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# APPENDIX A


**Volunteer Questionnaire**

## SECTION A

: Below are listed a number of statements which could be used to describe a job. Please read each statement carefully and indicate the extent to which each is an accurate or an inaccurate description of **your** job by writing a number in front of each statement.

**1       2       3       4       5**
**Very little   Little   A moderate amount   Much   Very much**

1.      ___ How much control do you have over the variety of methods you use in completing your work?

2.      ___ How much can you choose among a variety of tasks or projects to do?

3.      ___ How much control do you have personally over the quality of your work?

4.      ___ How much can you generally predict the amount of work you will have to do on any given day?

5.      ___ How much control do you have personally over how much work you get done?

6.      ___ How much control do you have over how quickly or slowly you have to work?

7.      ___ How much control do you have over the scheduling and duration of your rest breaks?

8.      ___ How much control do you have over when you come to work and leave?

9.      ___ How much control do you have over when you take vacations or days of?

10.     ___ How much are you able to predict what the results of decisions you make on the job will be?

11.     ___ How much are you able to decorate, rearrange, or personalize your work area?

12.     ___ How much can you control the physical conditions of your work station (lighting, temperature)?

13.     ___ How much control do you have over how you do your work?

14.     ___ How much can you control when and how much you interact with others at work?

15.     ___ How much influence do you have over the policies and procedures in your work unit?

16.     ___ How much control do you have over the sources of information you need to do your job?

17.     ___ How much are things that affect you at work predictable, even if you can't directly control them?

18.     ___ How much control do you have over the amount of resources (tools, material) you get?

19.     ___ How much can you control the number of times you are interrupted while you work?

20.     ___ How much control do you have over the amount you earn at your job?

21.     ___ How much control do you have over how your work is evaluated?

22.     ___ In general, how much overall control do you have over work and work-related matters?

INSTRUCTIONS: Think about the land, house, pet, car (or something else) that you own or co-own with someone, and the experiences and feelings associated with the statement **"**This is my (our) home"

The following items deal with the _sense of ownership_ that you feel for your work/job. For each item, PLEASE indicate the degree to which you **disagree** or **agree** with the statement, and circle the appropriate number.

    1 = Strongly agree       5 = Slightly disagree
    2 = Moderately agree      6 = Moderately disagree
    3 = Slightly agree        7 = Strongly disagree
    4 = Neither agree nor disagree

1.  This is my work.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7
2.  I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for the work that I do.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7
3.  I sense that this job is my job.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7
4.  I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for my work.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7
5.  I sense that this work is my work.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7
6.  This is my job.

        1    2    3    4    5    6    7

INSTRUCTIONS: The following items deal with the *sense of responsibility* that you feel for your work/job. For each item, PLEASE indicate the degree to which you **disagree** or **agree** with the statement, and circle the appropriate point.

      1 = Strongly disagree      5 = Slightly agree
      2 = Moderately disagree    6 = Moderately agree
      3 = Slightly disagree       7 = Strongly agree
      4 = Neither agree nor disagree

1.  It is hard, on this job, for me to care very much about whether or not the work gets done right.

      1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2.  I feel a very high degree of personal responsibility for the work I do on this job.

      1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3.  I feel I should personally take the credit or blame for the results of my work on this job.

      1   2   3   4   5   6   7

4.  Whether or not this job gets done right is clearly my responsibility.

      1   2   3   4   5   6   7

**SECTION D**

: Please indicate the extent to which the following statements are true of supervisor of your organization by circling the appropriate number. For each item, please indicate the degree to which you **disagree** or **agree** with the statement.

1 = Strongly disagree    5 = Slightly agree
2 = Moderately disagree    6 = Moderately agree
3 = Slightly disagree    7 = Strongly agree
4 = Neither agree nor disagree

1. Before making decisions, my supervisor considers what her/his subordinates have to say.
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
2. Before taking action my supervisor consults with subordinates.
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
3. When faced with a problem, my supervisor consults with subordinates.
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
4. My supervisor asks subordinates for their suggestions.
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
5. My supervisor listens to subordinate's advice on which tasks should be made.
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

For the following items please circle the appropriate number

1 = Never    2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes   4 = Often   5 = Always

My supervisor….

6. Plans carefully.
   1   2   3   4   5
7. Gives clear instructions.
   1   2   3   4   5
8. Is very exacting about plans being followed.
   1   2   3   4   5
9. Defines and explains the work requirements clearly to the subordinates.
   1   2   3   4   5
10. Creates order.
    1   2   3   4   5
11. Makes a point of following rules and principles.
    1   2   3   4   5
12. Is controlling in his/her supervision of the work.
    1   2   3   4   5

1 = Never    2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes  4 = Often  5 = Always

13. Analyses and thinks through before deciding.
      1    2   3   4   5

14. Sets clear goals.
      1    2   3   4   5

15. Is very clear about who is responsible for what.
      1    2   3   4   5

16. Is considerate.
      1    2   3   4   5

17. Is just in treating subordinates.
      1    2   3   4   5

18. Creates an atmosphere free of conflict.
      1    2   3   4   5

19. Creates trust in other people.
      1    2   3   4   5

20. Is flexible and ready to rethink his/her point of view.
      1    2   3   4   5

21. Is friendly.
      1    2   3   4   5

22. Relies in his/her subordinates.
      1    2   3   4   5

23. Stands up for his/her subordinates.
      1    2   3   4   5

24. Has an open and honest style.
      1    2   3   4   5

25. Allows his/her subordinates to decide.
      1    2   3   4   5

# SECTION E

INSTRUCTIONS: The following items ask you to indicate how often you have behaved like the statements which described below, in the past **12** months. PLEASE circle one response for each statement.

1. Thought of being absent.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2. Chatted with co-workers about non work topics.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3. Left work situation for unnecessary reasons.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

4. Day dreamed.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

5. Spent work time on personal matters.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6. Put less effort into the job than should have.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

7. Thought of leaving current job.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

8. Let others do your work.

        Never   Seldom   Sometimes   Often   Very often
    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

**SECTION F**

: Please place a <u>cross</u> [X] on one of the spaces underneath each question to indicate how you feel.

1.  Thought about quitting this voluntary job cross my mind.


:____: :____: :_____: :____: :_____: :_____:
Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Very often   All the time


2.  I plan to look for a new voluntary job with the next 12 months.


:_____: :_____: :_____: :_____: :_____: :_____:
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
disagree   disagree   disagree   agree   agree   agree


3.  How likely is it that, over the next year, you will actively look for a new voluntary job outside of this organization?


:_____: :_____: :_____: :_____: :_____: :_____:
 Very   Moderately   Somewhat   Somewhat   Moderately   Very
unlikely   unlikely   unlikely   likely   likely   likely

## SECTION G

In this final part of the survey, I would like to get some details about yourself and your job. This information will be used only for this research and your individual details will not be identified in any report of the research results.

1**.** How long have you been in your present voluntary job?

    \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

2. What type of voluntary job do you do in this organization?

    _____

3**.** How long have you been working for this organization?

    \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

4**.** Are you male \_\_\_\_ or female \_\_\_\_

5. How old are you \_\_\_\_\_

6**.** Your Highest Completed Level of Education (Please tick)

    □ Elementary school   □ High school  □ University degree

    □ Others (specify) _____

**Thank you for your cooperation again!**

# Appendix B




# Reference Letter

**volunteering**
waikato

10 August 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

### Reference:  Tian Li

I am pleased to be writing in support of Tian Li, and the research that he is currently undertaking for his Masters in Applied Psychology.

Tian's research will focus on exploring relationships between leadership styles, perceived control, psychological ownership of job and volunteers' working attitudes.  With greater understanding of these issues, I believe we will be able to strengthen the satisfaction that a volunteers gains from their work with us, resulting in better outcomes for our organisation in general.

Tian has been a Volunteer Interview at Volunteering Waikato since 2006, and has a good understanding of volunteers and volunteering.  This knowledge puts him in a strong position to effectively undertake this research.

I believe that the outcomes from this research will be most valuable for our organisation, and for other organisations that work with volunteer staff.

Volunteering Waikato is privileged to be able to assist Tian with his research, and I would strongly encourage other organisation to also become involved.

Yours sincerely

**Heather Kemp**
**GENERAL MANAGER**

# Appendix C




# Contact's Letter

Mr Tian Li
Psychology Department
University of Waikato
Hamilton
Telephone: 021518833
Email:   tl33@waikato.ac.nz
1 August 2007
Name of Organization
Contact address

Dear Mr/Mrs…..

I am currently undertaking a research thesis to complete a Masters in Applied Psychology supervised by Professor Michael O'Driscoll and Dr. Samuel Charlton at the University of Waikato.

I would like to invite your organization to participate in a study which aims to investigate the possible beneficial outcomes of psychological ownership, and further explore the potential relationship between leadership styles, perceived control and psychological ownership. I believe this study will provide useful information for your organization. It is suggested that an employee's feeling of ownership for the organization encourages a sense of responsibility for organizational outcomes. It is also suggested that the state of psychological ownership can help to understand why individuals in organizations promote or resist change and improvement efforts. Hence understanding employees' feeling of ownership will provide valuable information for your organization.

Volunteers of your organization will be invited to fill a survey which will take approximately 15 minutes. A summary report will be available on completion of the project. If desired, a seminar of the findings also could be provided.

If you are interested to discuss this project, I will be pleased to meet with you, and to provide further information on the methodology and logistics of this research. I will call you in a few days to further discuss the possibility of carrying out my research in your organization.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely Yours,

Tian Li

**Appendix D**

<p style="text-align:center">Survey of volunteers' working attitudes</p>

Dear Volunteer,

I am gathering research information about volunteers working attitudes and experiences to complete a Master thesis in Applied Psychology supervised by Professor Michael O'Driscoll and Dr. Samuel Charlton at the University of Waikato. I have been given permission by *(.......)* to distribute a questionnaire to volunteers in this organization. This survey only will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. I really appreciate you attend this survey.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Completing and returning this questionnaire will be interpreted as your consent to participate.

The questions in this survey ask for your opinions about your voluntary job. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these questions. Instead, each question asks you to express YOUR personal opinions, experiences, and feelings.

PLEASE read the instruction to each section and each question carefully.

Your responses to the items asked in this questionnaire will be treated with *total* and *absolute confidentiality*. Your responses will not be known to anyone outside the research team, and will not be disclosed to anyone within the organization. You will not be personally identified in any report that is prepared from this information. Only summary information, based on the overall sample, will be included in reports of survey results.

THANK YOU for both your time and cooperation. Your involvement in this project is very important to us, so that we can get a representative view of volunteer work attitudes, conditions and experiences. When you finish the survey, please return it directly by using the envelop provided and the post has been paid.

In return for your help, *we will be very happy to make available a brief summary of the overall findings when the project is completed.* You can contact me by the address and phone number which is listed below or email me at: tl33@waikato.ac.nz

**Mr Tian Li**
**Psychology Department**
**University of Waikato**
**Hamilton**
**Ph. 021518833**

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,
Tian Li