

**CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS AND JOB INSECURITY OF  
EMPLOYEES IN A GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION**

**MARYKA ANNELIZE MAREE, HONS. B.A.**

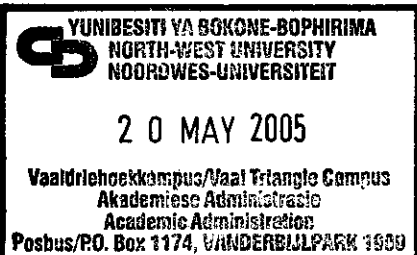
Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree  
Magister Artium in Industrial Psychology in the School of Behavioural Sciences at the  
Vaal Triangle Campus of the North-West University.

**STUDY LEADER: DR J.H. BUITENDACH**

**ASSISTANT STUDY LEADER: MS J. BOSMAN**

**VANDERBIJLPARK**

**DECEMBER 2004**



## REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

The references, as well as the editorial style as prescribed by the Publication Manual (*4<sup>th</sup> edition*) of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this mini-dissertation. This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University.

This mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article.

This research was funded by the NRF (National Research Foundation). The views and opinions expressed in this article is not necessarily the same as that of the NRF.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to various individuals who supported me throughout the completion of this mini dissertation:

- Most importantly, I thank the Lord for giving me the ability and strength to complete my studies.
- Ms. J. Bosman for being such a wonderful friend at times when I least expected it and for guiding me with the utmost patience.
- Dr. J.H. Buitendach for her expert input and guidance.
- My parents, H.O. (Hendrik Oostenwaldt) and Anita Maree who encouraged me to always do my best and persevere in the face of hardship.
- My dearest husband, Francois Liebenberg for his love and continued support.
- Ms. Anne Naidu for the language editing of my mini dissertation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
List of Tables	iv
Summary	v
Opsomming	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT	p. 1
1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	p. 5
1.2.1 General objective	p. 5
1.2.2 Specific objectives	p. 5
1.3 RESEARCH METHOD	p. 5
1.3.1 Research design	p. 5
1.3.2 Study population	p. 6
1.3.3 Measuring battery	p. 6
1.3.4 Data analysis	p. 7
1.4 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS	p. 9
1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY	p. 9
REFERENCE LIST	P. 10
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH ARTICLE	p. 13
CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
3.1 CONCLUSIONS	p. 38
3.1.1 Conclusions regarding the specific theoretical objectives	p. 38
3.1.2 Conclusions regarding the specific empirical objectives	p. 39
3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	p. 39
3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	p. 40
3.3.1 Recommendations for the organisation	p. 40
3.3.2 Recommendations for further research	p. 41
3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY	p. 41
REFERENCE LIST	p. 42

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Description	Page
Table 1	Compilation of the study population (N=298)	p. 22
Table 2	Goodness-of-fit Statistics for the CSES Models	p. 26
Table 3	Goodness-of-fit Statistics for the JISI Models	p. 27
Table 4	Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Inter-Item Correlation Coefficients of the Measuring Instruments	p. 28
Table 5	Correlation Coefficients between the CSES and JISI	p. 29
Table 6	MANOVA – Differences in Job Insecurity levels of Demographic Groups	p. 29
Table 7	ANOVA – Differences in Job Insecurity Levels of Cultural Groups	p. 30
Table 8	ANOVA – Differences in Core Self-evaluation Levels of Participants with Different Levels of Tenure	p. 31

## SUMMARY

**Title:** Core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees in a government organisation.

**Key words:** Core self-evaluations, job insecurity, government organisation

South Africa is a rapidly changing country, and so too are the companies within its borders due to economic demands. In an attempt to remain competitive with international companies, organisations rationalise jobs through “downsizing”, “rightsizing” and “retrenchments”. All of these terms refer to the reduction of the workforce in order to cut costs and improve turnover. With all these changes taking place in and around employee’s careers, it is expected that they will experience feelings of job insecurity. Judge, Locke and Durham (1997) mention that core self-evaluations are basic conclusions or bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves, their jobs and others. It is perceived that such an all-encompassing construct will have an influence on employees’ job insecurity perceptions.

The primary objectives of this research were to investigate the relationship between core self-evaluations and job satisfaction of employees ( $N = 298$ ) at a government organisation. A cross-sectional survey design was used.

Results indicated that a practically significant negative relationship exists between core-self evaluations and job insecurity, suggesting that decreased levels of core self-evaluations are associated with increased levels of job insecurity. It was furthermore found that core self-evaluations hold some predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

## OPSOMMING

**Titel:** Kern self-evaluasies en werksonsekerheid van werknemers by 'n staatsorganisasie.

**Sleuteltermes:** Kern self-evaluasies, werksonsekerheid, staatsorganisasies

Suid-Afrika is 'n vinnig veranderende land, en so ook die organisasies wat deel is van Suid-Afrika, as gevolg van ekonomiese eise. Organisasies moet mededingend bly met internasionale standaarde en daarom rationaliseer hul poste deur werksmagvermindering en afdanking om sodoende kostes te sny en hul omset te verhoog. Gedurende al hierdie veranderings wat plaasvind in en om die loopbane van baie individue kan dit verwag word dat werknemers gevoelens van werksonsekerheid mag ervaar. Judge, Locke and Durham (1997) beskryf kern self-evaluasies as basiese evaluasies wat individue het oor hulself, hul werk en die mense om hulle. Dit word verwag dat 'n omvattende konstruk soos hierdie 'n invloed sal hê op werknemers se werksonsekerheid persepsies.

Die hoofdoelwit met hierdie studie was om die verhouding tussen kern self-evaluasies en werksonsekerheid van werknemers ( $N = 298$ ) binne 'n staatsinstansie te bestudeer. Tydens die studie is gebruik gemaak van 'n dwarsneeopname-ontwerp.

Resultate het 'n prakties beduidende negatiewe verband aangetoon tussen kern self-evaluasies en werksonsekerheid, wat impliseer dat laer vlakke van kern self-evaluasies gepaard gaan moet hoër vlakke van werksonsekerheid. Daar is verder gevind dat kern self-evaluasies voorspellende waarde het met betrekking tot werksonsekerheid.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This mini dissertation is about the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees in a government organisation. In Chapter 1, the problem statement is discussed, as well as research objectives and research methods. Chapter divisions are also laid out.

#### **1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Economic changes during the last few decades led to a host of transformations in the labour market as part of the industrialised world (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Organisations are engaged in “downsizing”, “rightsizing” or restructuring, or all three simultaneously, in an attempt to survive these difficult economic conditions, and this almost inevitably implies the rationalising of jobs. These words like “downsizing”, “rightsizing” and restructuring can be seen as different forms of “retrenchment”. All of these terms refer to the reduction of the workforce in order to cut costs and are used interchangeably (Marais and Schepers, 1996). Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans and Van Vuuren (1991) imply that the growing unemployment may only be the tip of the iceberg. Organisations attempting to reduce costs, put pressure on employees who remain at work to modify their jobs, accept alternative employment conditions or other positions, or relocate, all of which are likely to fuel job insecurity, and leads employees to work harder (intensify their work) in order to keep their job (Büssing, 1999).

Organisations worldwide, but most especially in South Africa, are exposed to radical change in the economic, political, social, demographical and technological arenas. During the last few decades this led to transformations in the labour market (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). According to Judge, Locke, Durham and Kluger (1998) increasing attention has been given to the hypothesis that factors within the individual, divorced from the attributes of the job, affect the degree of satisfaction experienced on the job. These factors, called dispositions, are also asserted to affect life satisfaction, although the possible effects of dispositions on satisfaction at work have been recognised for many decades.

Over the past five years there has been a growing body of literature that examines the relationships among some of psychology's most studied traits (Neuroticism, self-esteem, and locus of control). Core self-evaluation theory posits a conceptual and empirical relationship between these traits and job satisfaction (Bono & Judge, 2003).

Recently, Judge, Locke and Durham (1997) proposed a higher order construct they termed *core self-evaluations*. According to Judge et al. (1997), this construct is a broad dispositional trait that is indicated by four more specific traits, namely, self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (low neuroticism).

Judge et al. (1997) suggest that core evaluations are fundamental, bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves, the world, and others. They argue that core self-evaluations are the assessment of traits that meet three criteria: (a) *evaluation-focus* (the degree to which a trait involves evaluation, as opposed to description); (b) *fundamentality* (fundamental or source traits underlie surface traits); and (c) *breadth or scope* (cardinal traits are broader in scope than secondary traits). Furthermore Judge et al. (1997) identify the four traits that meet the criteria as discussed above. Firstly they consider self-esteem to be the most fundamental manifestation of core self-evaluations as it represents the overall value that one places on oneself as a person. Second, generalised self-efficacy – one's estimate of one's fundamental ability to cope, to perform, and to be successful – is viewed as an indicator of positive core evaluations. Third, internal locus of control is considered a manifestation of core evaluations because individuals believe they can control a broad array of factors in their lives. Forth and finally, emotional stability (low neuroticism), reflecting the tendency to be confident, secure, and steady, is argued to be indicative of core self-evaluations because it is a broad trait that manifests one's view of one's emotional stability.

According to Judge et al. (1997) core-evaluations influence people's appraisal of themselves, the world and others, and do so subconsciously. Thus, situation specific appraisals (for example the evaluation of one's work or one's colleagues) are affected by these deeper and more fundamental self-appraisals, even though most people are not aware of the influence their self-evaluations have on their perceptions or behaviour as they occur. Although individuals may have core evaluations in multiple domains (e.g. evaluations of self, evaluations of others, evaluations of the world), early work on core evaluations (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998) demonstrated that core self-evaluations were the most important.

Previous research has shown that a relationship exists between some of psychology's most studied personality traits like self-efficacy and sense of coherence and job insecurity. Soehlein (1998) and Elbert (2002) found that job insecurity and self-efficacy are negatively related, suggesting that higher levels of job insecurity are related to a lower level of self-efficacy. Elbert (2002) also found a negative correlation with regard to job insecurity and sense of coherence. Thus, the researcher is of the opinion that an integrative personality trait like core self-evaluations may also be related to perceptions of job insecurity.

Job insecurity refers to employees' negative reactions to the changes concerning their jobs. A few definitions of job insecurity states that it is an individual's expectation about continuity in a job situation (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997); overall concern about the future existence of the job (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996); perception of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job (Heaney, Israel & House, 1994) and powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984).

According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984), employees respond with a sense of powerlessness, anxiety and feelings of job insecurity when they observe an organisation's *downsizing or change efforts*. *Job insecurity reflects the discrepancy between the preferred and experienced levels of job security* (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Heaney, Isreal & House, 1994).

Literature usually conceptualises job insecurity from three general points of view, this being (1) a global or (2) multidimensional concept or (3) a job stressor (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). In most instances, job insecurity has been defined according to the global viewpoint, signifying the threat of job loss or job discontinuity (Caplan, Cobb, French, van Harrison & Pinneau, 1980), whereas researchers who have adopted the multidimensional definition of job insecurity, argue that job insecurity refers not only to the degree of uncertainty, but also to the continuity of certain other dimensions, such as opportunities for promotion (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989).

Mauno and Kinnunen (1999) view the *multi-dimensional application of Ashford et al., (1989)* as the most sophisticated, which describes five components of job insecurity, as being (1) the severity of the threat concerning job continuity or aspects of the job; (2) the importance of job features, meaning that the fear of losing an important job feature is a cause of greater job insecurity than the threat of losing a minor job feature; (3) the perceived threat of the occurrence

which is expected to negatively affect an employee's total job situation, for example, being laid off; (4) the total importance of the changes mentioned above; and (5) powerlessness, referring to an employee's inability to control the threats described in the previous four components.

Hellgren and Sverke (2002) make a distinction between quantitative and qualitative job insecurity. Quantitative job insecurity refers to worry about losing the current job, while qualitative job insecurity refers to perceptions of potential loss. Potential loss includes demotion, lack or absence of career opportunities decreasing salaries and deterioration of working conditions.

In this research, use was made of De Witte's (2000) Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) as a measure of job insecurity, conceptualising job insecurity, as being two-dimensional, consisting of an affective and cognitive component. Cognitive job insecurity relates to the perceived likelihood of job loss, whereas affective job insecurity relates to fear of job loss.

The rationale and motivation for this study lies in the fact that although optimism has been the object of numerous studies, a lack of research exists regarding how such positive emotions and evaluations of individuals influence their response to a negative occurrence such as job insecurity.

Mauno and Kinnunen (2002) mention that the phenomenon of job insecurity itself and its antecedents have not received enough attention in the past and requires further research. Judge and Bono (2001) recommended that further research on core self-evaluations and the validity of the trait would be beneficial. For this reason, it is believed that this research will make a meaningful contribution to the field.

## **1.2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH (OBJECTIVES)**

### **1.2.1 General objective**

The general objective of this research is to establish the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees working at a government organisation in Gauteng.

## **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

During this study the following specific objectives will be addressed:

- to conceptualise core self-evaluations and job insecurity, as well as the relationship between these constructs, from the literature;
- to determine the reliability and validity of the Core Self-evaluation Scale, and the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) for employees at a government organisation;
- to determine the levels of core self-evaluations and job insecurity for employees at a government organisation; and
- to determine the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity for employees at a government organisation.

## **1.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.3.1 Research design**

A cross-sectional survey design was used. According to Burns and Grove (1993), cross-sectional designs are appropriate where groups of subjects at different developmental stages are studied simultaneously. The survey technique of data collection gathers information from the target population by means of questionnaires.

### **1.3.2 Study population**

The entire population of 500 employees working at the government organisation in Gauteng will be targeted in this research. The population includes employees from all levels, i.e. ranging from an unskilled/semi-skilled to professional level.

### **1.3.3 Measuring battery**

Two standardised measuring batteries will be used in the empirical study, namely the Core self-evaluations Scale (CSES) (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen, 2003) and the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) (De Witte, 2000). A biographical questionnaire will also be used.

The *Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSES)*, a 12-item measure will be used to measure core self-evaluations (Judge et al., 2003). Examples of questions include "I am confident I get the success I deserve in life", "Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work", and "I determine what will happen in my life". According to Judge et al. (2003) the CSES displayed a unitary factor structure and correlated significantly with job satisfaction, job performance and life satisfaction. The scale demonstrated equal to that of an optimal weighting of the four specific core traits (self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, neuroticism, and locus of control), as well as incremental validity over the 5 factor model (Big 5 personality traits model) overall results. The scale presented with acceptable Cronbach's alphas ranging between 0,81 and 0,85 (Judge et al., 2003).

The *Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI)* (De Witte, 2000) is used as a measure of job insecurity. This 11-item questionnaire relating to job insecurity is used to measure the perceived job insecurity of participants. The 11-items of the JISI summarise both the cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point Likert scale, varying from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example of a question relating to cognitive job insecurity would be, "I think that I will be able to continue working here ", whereas an example of a question relating to affective job insecurity would be, "I fear that I might lose my job ". The items of the JISI, measuring global job insecurity are reported to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,92 and both scales (cognitive and affective) were shown to be highly reliable, with the six items measuring cognitive job insecurity, displaying a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,90; and the five items of the affective job insecurity having a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 (De Witte, 2000). According to De Witte (2000), the content of these two scales do not overlap, but nevertheless have a high correlation ( $r = 0,76$ ). Heymans (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,81 for the JISI and Elbert (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,84.

#### **1.3.4 Data analysis**

The data analysis will be carried out with the help of the SPSS-program (SPSS, 2003) and the Amos-program (Arbuckle, 1997).

Cronbach alpha coefficients ( $\alpha$ ) and inter-item correlations coefficients will be used to determine the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments and descriptive statistics (e.g. means,

standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) will be used to analyse data. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient will be determined to indicate the extent to which one variable is related to another. Effect sizes will be used to determine the practical significance of relationships between variables. A regression analysis will be conducted to determine the predictive value of core self-evaluations with regard to job insecurity.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) methods as implemented by AMOS (Arbuckle, 1997) will be used to test the factorial model for the CSES and the JISI, using the maximum likelihood method. SEM is a statistical method that takes a hypothesis-testing approach to the analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon (Byrne, 2001). In essence, the researcher imposes the structure of the hypothesised model on the sample data, thereafter testing how well the observed data fit the restricted structure.

Hypothesised relationships will be tested empirically for goodness of fit with the sample data. The  $\chi^2$  statistic and several other goodness-of-fit indices, which sum up the degree of correspondence between the inferred (hypothesised) and observed covariance matrices, will be used. If used in isolation, the  $\chi^2$  statistic can lead to certain limitations, given its sensitivity to sample size. Researchers have addressed the  $\chi^2$  limitations by developing goodness-of-fit indexes that take a more pragmatic approach to the evaluation process. One of the first fit statistics to address this problem was the  $\chi^2$ /degrees of freedom ratio (CMIN/DF) (Wheaton, Muthén, Alwin & Summers, 1977), which is the minimum discrepancy per degree of freedom. These criteria also referred to as “subjective” or “practical” indices of fit are frequently used as additions to the  $\chi^2$  statistic.

The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) indicates the relative amount of the variances/co-variances in the sample predicted by the estimates of the population. The Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), which is a measure of the relative amount of variance accounted for by the model, corrected for the degrees of freedom in the model relative to the number of variables, was also used. The AGFI differs from the GFI in that the AGFI adjusts for the number of degrees of freedom in the specified model, thus also addressing the issue of parsimony by incorporating a penalty for the inclusion of additional parameters. The GFI and AGFI are classified as absolute indexes of fit because they basically compare the hypothesised model with no model at all (Hu & Bentler, 1995). Both these indexes range from 0 to 1, with values close to 1 (i.e. exceeding 0,90) being considered as indicative of a good fit.

The next set of goodness-of-fit statistics can be classified as incremental or comparative indexes of fit. Normed Fit Index (NFI) is used to assess global model fit. The NFI, which similarly to the CFI and TLI, is normed to fall on a 0 to 1 continuum, is considered to represent the point at which the model under evaluation falls on a scale running from a null model to perfect fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) also compares the hypothesised and independent models, but takes cognisance of sample size. Although both the NFI and CFI are included in AMOS output, it has been suggested that the CFI should be the index of choice (Bentler, 1992). The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is a relative measure of co-variation explained by the model, which is specifically developed to assess factor models (Tucker & Lewis, 1973). Although a value larger than 0,90 was originally considered representative of a well-fitting model, a revised cut off value close to 0,95 has been advised (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

As suggested by Browne and Cudeck (1993), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which estimates the overall amount of error in the hypothesised model-data fit relative to the estimated parameters of the model, and the 90% confidence interval of the RMSEA, will be used. The RMSEA essentially asks how well the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameters, would fit the population covariance matrix if it were available. Values less than 0,05 represent a good fit, and values as high as 0,08 represent reasonable errors of approximation in the population (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

#### **1.4 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

In Chapter 1, an introduction to the research study is given. The problem statement briefly outlines the constructs and reasons for this study. The research objectives describe the general and specific objectives of the study. Lastly research methods are discussed. In Chapter 2, a brief literature review is provided, where after the results of the study are indicated and discussed. In Chapter 3, conclusions regarding the entire study are given. Research limitations and recommendations are also stated.

## **1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter an introduction to the research study was given, followed by the problem statement briefly outlining the constructs and reasons for the study. Research objectives were given and the chapter was concluded by discussing the research methods.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Arbuckle J.L. (1997). *Amos users' guide version 4.0*. Chicago, IL: Smallwaters Corporation.
- Ashford, S., Lee, C. & Bobko, P. (1989). Content, causes and consequences of job insecurity: A theory-based measure and substantive test. *Academy of Management Journal*, 32(4), 803-829.
- Bentler, P.M. (1992). On the fit of models to covariances and methodology to the bulletin. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 400 – 404.
- Bono, J.E., & Judge, T.A. (2003). Core Self-evaluation: A review of the trait and its role in job satisfaction and job performance. *European Journal of Personality*, 17, 5-18.
- Browne, M.W. & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K.A. Bollen & J.S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 136-162). London: Sage.
- Burns, N. & Grove, S.K. (1993). *The practice of nursing research, conduct, critique and utilisation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders.
- Büssing, A. (1999). Can control at work and social support moderate psychological consequences of job insecurity? Results from a quasi-experimental study in the steel industry. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology*, 8(2), 219-242.
- Byrne, B.M. (2001). *Structural equation modelling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications and programming*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Caplan, R.D., Cobb, S., French, J.R.P., van Harrison, R.V. & Pinneau, S.R. (1980). *Job demands and worker health: Main effects and occupational differences*. Ann Arbor, MI: Survey Research Centre, Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Davy, J.A., Kinicki, A.J. & Scheck, C.L. (1997). A test of job insecurity's direct and mediated effects on withdrawal cognitions. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 18, 323 – 349.
- De Witte, H. (2000). Arbeidsethos en jobonzekerheid: Meting en gevolgen voor welzijn, tevredenheid en inzet op het werk. In R. Bouwen, K. de Witte, H. de Witte & T. Taillieu (Eds.). *Van groep tot gemeenschap* (pp.1-32). Leuven, Netherland: Garant.
- Dekker, S.W. & Schaufeli, W.B. (1995). The effects of job insecurity on psychological health and withdrawal: A longitudinal study. *Australian Psychologist*, 30, 57-103.
- Elbert, J. (2002). *Job insecurity, and psychological strengths of service workers in a parastatal*. Unpublished master's dissertation, Vaal Triangle Campus of the Potchefstroom University, Vanderbijlpark.
- Greenhalgh, L. & Rosenblatt, Z. (1984). Job insecurity: Toward conceptual clarity. *Academy of Management Review*, 9(3), 438 – 448.

- Hartley, J., Jacobson, D., Klandermans, B. & Van Vuuren, T. (1991). *Job insecurity coping with jobs at risk*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Heany, C.A., Israel, B.A. & House, J.S. (1994). Chronic job insecurity among automobile workers: Effects on job satisfaction and health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 38, 1431 – 1437.
- Hellgren, J. & Sverke, M. (2002). Does job insecurity lead to impaired well-being or visa-versa? Estimation of cross-lagged effects using latent variable modeling. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 2, 215 – 222.
- Heymans, D. R. (2002). *Job insecurity, job satisfaction and organisational commitment*. Unpublished master's dissertation, Vaal Triangle Campus of the Potchefstroom University, Vanderbijlpark.
- Hu, L.-T. & Bentler, P.M. (1995). Evaluating model fit. In R.H. Hoyle (Ed.), *Structural equation modeling: Concepts, issues and applications* (pp. 76-99). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hu, L.-T. & Bentler, P.M. (1999). Cut-off criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6, 1-55.
- Judge, T.A. & Bono, J.E. (2001). A rose by any other name...Are self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, neuroticism, and locus of control indicators of a common construct? In B.W. Roberts & R. Hogan (Eds.), *Personality psychology in the workplace* (pp. 93-118). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Judge, T.A., Erez, A., Bono, J.E. & Thoresen, C.J. (2003). The core self-evaluations scale: development of a measure. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 303-331.
- Judge, T. A., Locke, E. A., & Durham, C. C. (1997). The dispositional causes of job satisfaction: A core evaluations approach. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 19, 151–188.
- Judge, T.A., Locke, E.A., Durham, C.C. & Kluger, A.N. (1998). Dispositional effects on job and life satisfaction: The role of core evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 17-34.
- Marais, E.N. & Schepers, J.M. (1996). The effect of organisational restructuring on job satisfaction, career aspirations and stress levels of employees. *Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 22(3), 1 – 6.
- Mauno, S. & Kinnunen, U. (1999). Job insecurity and well-being: A longitudinal study among male and female employees in Finland. *Community, Work and Family*, 2(2), 147 – 171.
- Mauno, S. & Kinnunen, U. (2002). The stability of job and family involvement: Applying the multi-wave, multi-variable technique to longitudinal data. *Work and Stress*, 14, 15 – 64.

- Rosenblatt, Z. & Ruvio, A. (1996). A test of multidimensional model of job insecurity: The case of Israeli teachers. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 17, 587-605.
- Soehnlein, K. M. (1998). The relationship of job insecurity, career planning, goal orientation and the self-development of survivors in a downsizing corporation. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 59, 5A, 1436.
- SPSS. (2003). *SPSS 12.0 for Windows*. Chicago, IL: SPSS Incorporated.
- Tucker, L.R. & Lewis, C. (1973). A reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor analysis. *Psychometrika*, 38, 1-10.
- Wheaton, B., Muthèn, B., Alwin, D.F. & Summers, G.F. (1977). Assessing reliability and stability in panel models. In D.R. Heise (Ed), *Sociological Methodology* (pp. 84-136). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

**CHAPTER 2**

**ARTICLE**

# **CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS AND JOB INSECURITY OF EMPLOYEES AT A GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION\***

**M.A. Maree**

**J.H. Buitendach**

**J. Bosman**

*WorkWell: Research Unit for People, Policy and Performance, Faculty of Economic and  
Management Sciences, North-West University.*

## **ABSTRACT**

The primary objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees (N = 298) at a government organisation. A cross-sectional survey design was used. Constructs were measured by means of the Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSES), the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI), and a biographical questionnaire. Results indicated that a practically significant negative relationship exists between core-self evaluations and job insecurity. It further found that core-self evaluations holds some predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

## **OPSOMMING**

Die hoofdoelwit met hierdie studie was om die verhouding tussen kern self-evaluasies en werksonsekerheid van werknemers (N = 298) binne 'n staatsinstansie te bestudeer. Tydens die studie is gebruik gemaak van 'n Dwarssneeopname-ontwerp. Konstruksie was gemeet deur gebruik te maak van die "Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSES), die "Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) en 'n biografiese vraelys. Resultate het 'n prakties beduidende negatiewe verhouding tussen kern self-evaluasies en werksonsekerheid aangedui. Verder is daar ook gevind dat kern self-evaluasies voorspellings waarde bevat met betrekking tot werksonsekerheid.

\*The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are that of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the National Research Foundation.

Organisations world-wide, but most especially in South Africa, are exposed to radical change in the economic, political, social, demographical and technological arenas, which has led to transformations in the labour market during the last few decades (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Economic pressures and international competition have forced organisations to reduce their costs, while still preserving, or increasing, their productivity and quality (Roux, 2002). Organisations engage in “downsizing”, “rightsizing” or restructuring, or all three simultaneously, in an attempt to survive these difficult economic conditions, and this almost inevitably implies the rationalising of jobs (Marais & Schepers, 1996). Words like “downsizing”, “rightsizing” and restructuring can be seen as different forms of “retrenchment”. All of these terms refer to the reduction of the workforce in order to cut costs and are used interchangeably (Marais & Schepers, 1996). Employees are no longer secure in their jobs, given that organisations can only afford employing workers as long as they can make a contribution and their skills and knowledge are needed (Roux, 2002).

Organisations attempting to reduce costs, put pressure on employees who remain at work to modify their jobs, accept alternative employment conditions or other positions, and relocate, all of which are likely to fuel job insecurity, and leads employees to work harder (intensify their work) in order to keep their job (Büssing, 1999).

According to Judge, Locke, Durham and Kluger (1998) increasing attention has been given to the hypothesis that factors within the individual, divorced from the attributes of the job, affect the degree of satisfaction experienced on the job. These factors, called dispositions, also are asserted to affect life satisfaction, although the possible effects of dispositions on satisfaction at work have been recognised for many decades.

Over the past five years there has been a growing body of literature that examines the relationships among some of psychology’s most studied traits, namely neuroticism, self-esteem, locus of control and even generalised self-efficacy (Bono & Judge, 2003). Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997) published a conceptual paper linking an integrative personality trait —termed core self-evaluations—to job satisfaction.

The higher order construct termed *core self-evaluations*, can also be called *self-concept* (Judge, Locke & Durham, 1997). According to Judge et al. (1997), this construct is a broad dispositional trait that is indicated by four more specific traits, namely, self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (low neuroticism).

In their initial formulation of the core self-evaluation concept, Judge et al. (1997) searched the literature for traits that meet three criteria: *self-evaluative* (core traits should involve self-evaluation as opposed to description of oneself or others), *fundamentality* (core traits should be fundamental as opposed to surface traits), *breadth* or *scope* (core traits should be wide in scope or cardinal traits). Judge and colleagues identified three traits that clearly meet these criteria: self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy and neuroticism. Additionally, they suggested that locus of control might also qualify. Subsequent core self-evaluation research has focused mostly on these four traits. However, Judge et al. (1997) also discuss the possibility that other traits might be considered as indicators of core self-evaluations. Specifically, they identify dispositional optimism and positive and negative affectivity. There is some evidence that dispositional optimism and negative affectivity are indicators of the core self-evaluation concept (Bono & Judge, 2003).

Judge et al. (1997) define core self-evaluations as basic conclusions or bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves. Conceptually, these traits share strong similarities. Firstly they considered self-esteem to be the most fundamental manifestation of core self-evaluations as it represents the overall value that one places on oneself as a person. According to Coopersmith (1967), self-esteem is the approval of oneself and the degree to which one sees oneself as capable, significant, successful and worthy. Second, generalised self-efficacy – one's estimate of one's fundamental ability to cope, to perform, and to be successful – was viewed as an indicator of positive core evaluations. There is an obvious link between self-esteem and generalised self-efficacy, the least studied of the four traits. Generalised self-efficacy is conceptualised as a general, stable trait, which is related to individuals' beliefs regarding their ability to mobilise their motivation, cognitive resources and specific actions to comply with demands posed by a situation (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen, 2002). According to Coopersmith (1967) it is also one's estimate of one's capabilities of performing, at a global level across many contexts. Clearly, the distinction between seeing oneself as capable, successful, and worthy (self-esteem) and generalised self-efficacy is subtle. Generalised self-efficacy and locus of control also share strong similarities. Third, internal locus of control was considered a manifestation of core

evaluations because individuals believe they can control a broad array of factors in their lives and environment. Forth and finally, emotional stability (low neuroticism), reflecting the tendency to be confident, secure, and steady, was argued to be indicative of core self-evaluations because it is a broad trait that manifests one's view of one's emotional stability.

Judge et al. (1997) suggest that core evaluations are fundamental, bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves, the world, and others. According to Judge et al. (1997), core-evaluations influence people's appraisal of themselves, the world and others, and do so subconsciously. Thus, situation specific appraisals (for example the evaluation of one's work or one's colleagues) are affected by these deeper and more fundamental self-appraisals, even though most people are not aware of the influence their self-evaluations have on their perceptions or behaviour as they occur.

Research has shown that a relationship exists between personality variables like self-efficacy and sense of coherence and job insecurity. Soehlein (1998) found a negative correlation between self-efficacy and job insecurity. Elbert (2002) found a negative correlation between job insecurity and sense of coherence, as well as between job insecurity and self-efficacy. High levels of job insecurity thus appear to be associated with lower levels of sense of coherence and self-efficacy. Thus it is the researcher's opinion that an integrative personality trait like core self-evaluations is also expected to be related to perceptions of job insecurity.

Job insecurity refers to employees' negative reactions to the changes concerning their jobs (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van Vuuren, 1991). Job insecurity has emerged as an important stressor in modern organisations (Bono & Judge, 2003). Definitions of job insecurity include an individual's expectations about continuity in a job situation (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997); overall concern about the future existence of the job (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996); perception of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job (Heaney, Israel & House, 1994) and powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984).

Literature usually conceptualises job insecurity from three general points of view, it being (1) a global concept or (2) multidimensional concept or (3) a job stressor (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). In most instances, job insecurity has been defined according to the global viewpoint, signifying the threat of job loss or job discontinuity (Caplan, Cobb, French, van Harrison & Pinneau, 1980),

whereas researchers who have adopted the multidimensional definition of job insecurity, argue that job insecurity refers not only to the degree of uncertainty, but also to the continuity of certain dimensions, such as opportunities for promotion (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989).

Mauno and Kinnunen (1999) view the multi-dimensional application of Ashford et al., (1989) as the most sophisticated, which describe five components of job insecurity, as being (1) the severity of the threat concerning job continuity or aspects of the job; (2) the importance of job features, meaning that the fear of losing an important job feature is a cause of greater job insecurity than the threat of losing a minor job feature; (3) the perceived threat of the occurrence which is expected to negatively affect an employee's total job situation, for example, being laid off; (4) the total importance of the changes mentioned above; and (5) powerlessness, referring to an employee's inability to control the threats described in the previous four components.

Various conceptual themes rise from the study of the literature regarding the conceptualisation of job insecurity. Another one of the conceptual themes is the objective versus the subjective phenomenon. The observation was made that not all workers whose jobs are threatened experience job insecurity. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984), as well as Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans and Van Vuuren (1991) believe that job insecurity is a subjective phenomenon, based on the worker's interpretation of the uncertainties in the immediate work environment. Each worker's own judgment of the specific environment plays an important role in the literature of job insecurity (Klandermans, Van Vuuren & Jacobson 1991). Previous research has shown that personality factors such as self-confidence and pessimism have a strong influence on the worker's subjective experience of job insecurity, but they also see these personality factors as insignificant in organisations where the job is threatened. In such organisations demographic characteristics such as education, age, and position in the organisation, as well as ethnic background are also of importance as these characteristics can influence the worker's chance of losing his/her job (Klandermans, Van Vuuren & Jacobson, 1991). The conclusion can be made that job insecurity are both subjective and objective due to the fact that organisations bring an objective threat to the fore as soon as the job is threatened, whilst a worker's subjective fears come to the fore through his subjective opinion about his chances to lose his job.

According to De Witte's (2000) conceptualisation of job insecurity, job insecurity further consists of a cognitive and an affective dimension. The cognitive dimension refers to the possibility of job loss and a worker's judgment of the situation. The affective dimension refers to

the emotional experience of the possible threat of job loss and the worker's reaction (Borg & Elizur, 1992). Job insecurity, in this research, is conceptualised and measured in terms of this two-dimensional definition.

Studies indicate that job insecurity could lead to negative physical and psychological health problems (Büssing, 1999). Employees who experience feelings of job insecurity are more likely to display undesirable organisational outcomes such as withdrawal behaviours, job dissatisfaction and low organisational commitment (De Witte, 2000). According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984), employees respond with a sense of powerlessness, anxiety and feelings of job insecurity when they observe an organisation's downsizing or change efforts. Growing emphasis on more flexible employment contracts may also intensify feelings of job insecurity (De Witte, 1997,1999). Furthermore, Lim (1997) has identified job insecurity as a form of work-related stressor that is potentially detrimental to the individual's job attitude and behaviour.

Job insecurity is problematic for both the individual and the company, as the impact of job insecurity on individual employees can erode the effectiveness of the organisation (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). A downward spiral is created, where productivity decreases in such manner that the competitive strength of the company is undermined. The risk of further redundancies is increased, which in turn, increase the feeling of job insecurity, due to the associated costs of increased absenteeism, resulting from lowered employee well-being (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984).

The rationale and motivation for this study lies in the assumption that job insecurity is important because it deals with the continuing existence or survival of an organisational member within an organisation. According to Yousef (1998) the significance of job insecurity relates to the fact that it is critical in influencing work-related outcomes, *inter alia* employee health, physical and psychological well-being, employee turnover, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Furthermore the research of Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfield and Smith (1998), as well as that of Dekker and Schaufeli (1995), indicated a negative relationship between job insecurity and well-being, in turn indicating a reduction in well-being as job insecurity increases.

Mauno and Kinnunen (2002) mention that the phenomenon of job insecurity itself and its antecedents have not received enough attention in the past and further research is needed. More importantly, although optimism has been the object of numerous studies, a lack of research exists

regarding how such positive emotions and evaluations of individuals influence their response to a negative occurrence as job insecurity. It is therefore necessary to determine whether a relationship exists between core self-evaluation and job insecurity so that organisations can better assist people at work and help secure their well being.

South African companies are faced with an unpredictable economic environment and changes at a political level. South African employees have to secure and sustain employment in an ever-shrinking labour market, making the prospect of unemployment a potential reality for many South Africans. The management of this government organisation are concerned regarding the general well-being of the workforce, noting that they present unusually high levels of absenteeism and turnover. The employees of this government organisation are reportedly insecure regarding their occupational futures, many not knowing how their desired occupational futures fit in with their potential career paths within the organisation. Limited research regarding the core self-evaluations construct exists, and no literature linking job insecurity and core self-evaluations could be found. However, given the link found between job insecurity and psychological strengths such as sense of coherence and self-efficacy, it is believed that an all encompassing personality trait such as core self-evaluations will also present a relationship to job insecurity.

The general objective of this research is to establish the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees working at a government organisation in Gauteng. Research hypotheses related to the present study are formulated as follows:

- H1: Core self-evaluations and job insecurity are negatively related and core self-evaluations hold predictive value with regard to job insecurity.
- H0: Core self-evaluations and job insecurity are not negatively related and core self-evaluations holds no predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

## **AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this research is to determine the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity of employees at a government organisation.

## **Research design**

A cross-sectional survey design was utilized to reach the research objectives. According to Burns and Grove (1993), cross-sectional designs are appropriate where groups of subjects at different developmental stages are studied simultaneously. The survey technique of data collection gathers information from the target population by means of questionnaires.

## **Sample**

The entire population of 500 employees working at the government organisation in Gauteng was targeted in this research, although a response rate of only 298 participants (60%) was obtained. The population includes employees from all levels, i.e. ranging from semi-skilled to professional level. The lowest level employees have a level of literacy adequate enough to allow for valid completion of questionnaires. The biographical characteristics of the study population are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1

*Compilation of the study population (n = 298)*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural group	Black (1)	185	62,3
	White (2)	56	18,9
	Other (3)	34	11,4
	Total	275	92,6
Gender	Male (1)	145	48,8
	Female (2)	142	47,5
	Total	286	96,3
Age	24 years and younger (1)	27	9,1
	25 – 35 years (2)	105	35,4
	36 – 45 years (3)	69	23,2
	46 – 55 years (4)	47	15,8
	56 years and older (5)	17	5,7
	Total	265	89,2
Qualification	St 8 – 10 (1)	139	46,8
	Diploma (2)	77	25,9
	Degree (3)	55	18,5
	Post-graduate Degree (4)	24	8,1
	Total	295	99,3
Tenure	Less than 1 year (1)	47	15,8
	2 – 5 years (2)	74	24,9
	6 – 10 years (3)	68	22,9
	11 – 20 years (4)	59	19,9
	Longer than 20 years (5)	37	12,5
	Total	285	96,0

In summary, it can be stated that the study population were represented by an excess of 60% black participants, but is balanced in terms of gender. The large percentage of population under study had been working for the organisation between two to five (25%) and six to 10 (23%) years. The majority of participants fell in the 25 to 35 and 36 to 45 years age groups and 47% had a Grade 10 to 12 level of education.

## Measuring Battery

Two standardised measuring instruments will be used in the empirical study, namely the Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSES) (Judge, Bono & Thoresen, 2003) and the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) (De Witte, 2000). A biographical questionnaire will also be used.

The *Core Self-evaluations Scale (CSES)*, a 12- item measure will be used to measure core self-evaluations (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen, 2003). Examples of questions include "I am confident I get the success I deserve in life", "Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work", and "I determine what will happen in my life". According to Judge et al. (2003) the CSES displayed a unitary factor structure and correlated significantly with job satisfaction, job performance and life satisfaction. The scale demonstrated equal validity to that of an optimal weighting of the four specific core traits (self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, neuroticism, and locus of control), as well as incremental validity over the 5 factor model (Big 5 personality traits model) overall results. The scale presented with acceptable Cronbach's alphas ranging between 0,81 and 0,85 (Judge et al., 2003).

The *Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI)* (De Witte, 2000) is used as a measure of job insecurity. This 11-item questionnaire relating to job insecurity is used to measure the perceived job insecurity of participants. The 11 items of the JISI summarise both the cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point Likert scale, varying from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example of a question relating to cognitive job insecurity would be, "I think that I will be able to continue working here ", whereas an example of a question relating to affective job insecurity would be, "I fear that I might lose my job ". The items of the JISI, measuring global job insecurity are reported to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,92 and both scales (cognitive and affective) were shown to be highly reliable, with the six items measuring cognitive job insecurity, displaying a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,90; and the five items of the affective job insecurity having a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 (De Witte, 2000). According to De Witte (2000), the content of these two scaled do not overlap, but nevertheless have a high correlation ( $r = 0,76$ ). Heymans (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,81 for the JISI and Elbert (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,84.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The SPSS programme (SPSS, 2003) was used to carry out the statistical analysis. Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlations coefficients were used to determine the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments and descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) were used to analyse data. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was determined to indicate the extent to which one variable is related to another. Effect sizes were used to determine the practical significance of relationships between variables. A regression analysis will be conducted in order to determine whether core self-evaluations holds any predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) methods as implemented by AMOS (Arbuckle, 1997) was used to test the factorial models for the CSES and the JISI, using the maximum likelihood method. SEM is a statistical method that takes a hypothesis-testing approach to the analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon (Byrne, 2001).

Hypothesised relationships were tested empirically for goodness-of-fit with the sample data. The  $\chi^2$  statistic and several other goodness-of-fit indices, which sum up the degree of correspondence between the inferred (hypothesised) and observed covariance matrices was used. If used in isolation, the  $\chi^2$  statistic can lead to certain limitations, given its sensitivity to sample size. Researchers have addressed the  $\chi^2$  limitations by developing goodness-of-fit indexes that take a more pragmatic approach to the evaluation process. One of the first fit statistics to address this problem was the  $\chi^2$ /degrees of freedom ratio (CMIN/DF) (Wheaton, Muthén, Alwin & Summers, 1977), which is the minimum discrepancy per degree of freedom. These criteria also referred to as “subjective” or “practical” indices of fit are frequently used as additions to the  $\chi^2$  statistic.

The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) indicates the relative amount of the variances/co-variances in the sample predicted by the estimates of the population. The Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), which is a measure of the relative amount of variance accounted for by the model, corrected for the degrees of freedom in the model relative to the number of variables, was also used. The AGFI differs from the GFI in that the AGFI adjusts for the number of degrees of freedom in the specified model, thus also addressing the issue of parsimony by incorporating a penalty for the inclusion of additional parameters. The GFI and AGFI are classified as absolute indexes of fit because they basically compare the hypothesised model with no model at all (Hu &

Bentler, 1995). Both these indexes range from 0 to 1, with values close to 1 (i.e. exceeding 0,90) being considered as indicative of good fit.

The next set of goodness-of-fit statistics can be classified as incremental or comparative indexes of fit. Normed Fit Index (NFI) is used to assess global model fit. The NFI, which similarly to the CFI and TLI, is normed to fall on a 0 to 1 continuum, is considered to represent the point at which the model under evaluation falls on a scale running from a null model to perfect fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) also compares the hypothesised and independent models, but takes cognisance of sample size. Although both the NFI and CFI are included in AMOS output, it has been suggested that the CFI should be the index of choice (Bentler, 1992). The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is a relative measure of co-variation explained by the model, which is specifically developed to assess factor models (Tucker & Lewis, 1973). Although a value larger than 0,90 was originally considered representative of a well-fitting model, a revised cut off value close to 0,95 has been advised (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

As suggested by Browne and Cudeck (1993), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which estimates the overall amount of error in the hypothesised model-data fit relative to the estimated parameters of the model, and the 90% confidence interval of the RMSEA, was used. The RMSEA essentially asks how well the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameters, would fit the population covariance matrix if it were available. Values less than 0,05 represent a good fit, and values as high as 0,08 represent reasonable errors of approximation in the population (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

## **RESULTS**

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) methods were used to test factorial models for the CSES and JISI. Data analyses proceeded as follows: An overview of model fit was done by looking at the overall  $\chi^2$  value, together with its degrees of freedom and probability value. Global assessments of model fit were based on several goodness-of-fit statistics (GFI, AGFI, NFI, TLI, CFI and RMSEA). Secondly, based on findings of an ill-fitting initially hypothesised model, analyses proceeded in an exploratory mode. Possible misspecifications as suggested by the so-called modification indices were looked for, and eventually a revised, re-specified model was fitted to the data.

### *Hypothesised model of core self-evaluations*

The full hypothesised 1-factor model consisting of all 12 items of the CSES was tested. Table 2 presents fit statistics for the test of the various models.

Table 2

#### *Goodness-of-fit Statistics for the CSES Models*

Model	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Model 1	139,068	2,58	0,91	0,88	0,73	0,77	0,81	0,07
Model 2	77,136	2,20	0,94	0,91	0,81	0,85	0,88	0,06
Model 3	26,253	1,38	0,98	0,96	0,92	0,96	0,97	0,04

#### *Confirmatory analyses*

The statistically significant  $\chi^2 = 139,068$  ( $df = 54$ ;  $p < 0,00$ ) and fit indices revealed a poor fit of the originally hypothesised CSES model (Model 1). The NFI, TLI and CFI indexes fell below the 0,90 level, as well as the AGFI value.

#### *Exploratory Analyses*

To pinpoint possible areas of misfit, modification indexes (MI) were examined. Modification indexes can be conceptualised as an  $\chi^2$  statistic with one degree of freedom (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1988). Looking at the regression weights, Items 5 (“I complete tasks successfully”) and 11 (“I am capable of coping with most problems”) demonstrated comparatively low values. The standardised residual co-variances confirmed the problematic nature of these items, with a loading higher than 2,85, and it was decided to re-specify the model with these items deleted, resulting in Model 2.

Model 2 was re-specified with Item 5 and Item 11 deleted. A lower statistically significant  $\chi^2 = 77,136$  ( $df = 35$   $p < 0,00$ ) and fit indices revealed a relatively good overall fit, with exception of the NFI, TLI and CFI values which remained low. Modification indexes were again examined. Looking at the regression weights, Items 3 (“When I try, I generally succeed”) and 9 (“I determine what will happen in my life”) demonstrated comparatively low values, with the

standardised residual co-variances confirming a loading higher than 2,85. The model was re-specified with these items deleted, resulting in Model 3, also allowing the errors of Items 1 and 7 to correlate due to the comparatively high covariance associated with these errors. All indexes confirmed excellent fit of Model 3 to the data. Further research regarding the construct validity of the CSES is required.

### *Hypothesised model of job insecurity*

The full hypothesised 2-factor model, as well as a 1-factor model, consisting of all 11 items of the JISI, was tested. Table 3 presents fit statistics for the test of the various models.

Table 3 -

### *Goodness-of-fit Statistics for the JISI Models*

Model	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Model 1 (1-factor)	79,67	1,74	0,95	0,93	0,90	0,94	0,95	0,05
Model 1 (2-factor)	74,81	1,74	0,95	0,93	0,90	0,94	0,95	0,05
Model 2 (2-factor)	42,21	1,31	0,97	0,95	0,94	0,98	0,99	0,03

### *Confirmatory factor analyses*

First, a one-dimensional model, which assumes that all 11 items of the JISI load on one single factor, was tested. Table 3 provides a summary of the fit statistics for the hypothesised 1-factor model. This model revealed relatively good overall fit. The  $\chi^2 = 79,67$  ( $df = 44$ ;  $p < 0,00$ ), was however statistically significant. The other fit indices indicated relatively good fit between the model and the data.

Next, a two-factor model was tested. The statistically significant  $\chi^2 = 74,81$  ( $df = 43$ ;  $p < 0,00$ ) and fit indices revealed a relatively good overall fit.

### *Exploratory factor analyses*

To pinpoint possible areas of misfit, modification indexes were examined. Modification indexes (MI) demonstrated misspecification associated with the pairing of items 1 and 3 ( $MI = 10,14$ )

and items 1 and 8 (MI = 9,06). Upon inspecting the regression weights, it was noted that item 2 (“There is only a small chance that I will become unemployed”) delivered an estimate of -0.05 and consequently this item was deleted. Model 2 was re-specified with item 2 deleted allowing the errors of item 1 and 3 and items 1 and 8 to correlate. A lower statistically significant  $\chi^2 = 42,21$  (df = 32;  $p < 0,00$ ) and fit indices revealed a good overall fit of the hypothesised JISI model (Model 2).

The structural equation modelling results provided above indicate that although good fit was obtained for both the one-factor JISI model and the two-factor JISI mode, the fit of the two-factor model was marginally better than that of the one-factor model.

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients and the inter-item correlation coefficients of the CSES and JISI for employees ( $N = 297$ ) working at a government organisation are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Inter-Item Correlation Coefficients of the Measuring Instruments*

Test and subscales	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Inter-item $r$	$\alpha$
CSES	297	3,15	0,66	0,21	0,20	0,23	0,71
JISI – Total	297	2,68	0,70	-0,15	0,10	0,25	0,79
JISI – Affective	297	2,78	0,82	0,00	0,24	0,35	0,73
JISI – Cognitive	297	2,58	0,79	0,05	-0,40	0,32	0,70

Table 4 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained on all the measuring instruments, as well as their subscales (see Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). All of the inter-item correlation coefficients were acceptable (Clark & Watson, 1995). Scores on all the dimensions seem to be distributed normally (skewness and kurtosis were smaller than one).

The correlation coefficients between the CSES and JISI for employees working at a government organisation are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

*Correlation Coefficients between the CSES and JISI*

	JISI Cognitive	JISI Affective	JISI Total	CSES
JISI Cognitive	1			
JISI Affective	0,63++*	1		
JISI Total	0,85++*	0,92++*	1	
CSES	-0,37+*	-0,37+*	-0,39+*	1

\* Statistically significant  $p \leq 0,01$

+ Correlation is practically significant  $r > 0,30$  (medium effect)

++ Correlation is practically significant  $r \geq 0,50$  (large effect)

As indicated by Table 5, practically significant negative correlations of medium effect were obtained between CSES and total job insecurity and both its subscales. In other words, higher levels of job insecurity are associated with lower levels of core self-evaluations.

A regression analysis was done in order to determine the percentage variance between practically significant correlations. The regression analysis of core self-evaluations and job insecurity indicates that  $r^2=0,169$ , which implies that 17% of the variance in job insecurity was predicted by core self-evaluations.

*Job insecurity and biographical characteristics*

Next, MANOVA and ANOVA analyses followed to determine the relationship between scores on the JISI and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure, the results of which are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

*MANOVA – Differences in Job Insecurity levels of Demographic Groups*

Variable	Value	F	Df	Den Df	p
Culture	0,94	4,20	4	530	0,00*
Age	0,95	1,66	8	506	0,11
Qualifications	0,96	1,98	6	568	0,06
Tenure	0,95	1,93	8	546	0,05

\* Statistically significant  $p \leq 0,01$

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values ( $p < 0,01$ ), statistically significant differences in job insecurity scores were obtained for culture. The relationship between job insecurity and culture was further analysed to determine practical significance using ANOVA and Tukey HSD tests.

The ANOVA of differences in job insecurity of the different cultural groups are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

*ANOVA'S – Differences in Job Insecurity Levels of Cultural Groups*

	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>p</i>	Root MSE
JISI Affective	2,69	3,07	2,85	0,00*	0,81
JISI Cognitive	2,55 <sup>a</sup>	2,99 <sup>b</sup>	2,67	0,00*	0,72

\* Statistically significant difference:  $p < 0,01$

a Practically significant differences from type (in row) where b (medium effect,  $d \geq 0,5$ ) or c (large effect,  $d \geq 0,8$ ) are indicated

As indicated by Table 7, statistically significant differences were obtained between the cognitive and affective job insecurity scores of the various cultural groups. Practically significant differences were obtained between the cognitive job insecurity scores of the White and Black cultural groups, where the White participants obtained a higher mean cognitive job insecurity score compared to the Black participants.

*Core self-evaluations and biographical characteristics*

No statistically significant differences were obtained between the core self-evaluation scores of participants of different ages and cultures, and with different levels of qualifications. The ANOVA of differences in core self-evaluation levels of participants with different levels of tenure are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

*ANOVA'S – Differences in Core Self-evaluation Levels of Participants with Different Levels of Tenure*

	Less than 1 year	2 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 20 years	Longer than 20 years	<i>p</i>	Root MSE
Core Self- evaluations	3,60 <sup>b</sup>	3,30 <sup>a</sup>	3,27 <sup>a</sup>	3,16 <sup>a</sup>	3,15 <sup>a</sup>	0,00*	0,59

\* Statistically significant difference:  $p < 0,01$

a Practically significant differences from type (in row) where b (medium effect,  $d \geq 0,5$ ) or c (large effect,  $d \geq 0, 8$ ) are indicated

Table 8 demonstrates that statistically significant differences exists between the levels of core self-evaluations as experienced by participants with different levels of tenure. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between participants working at the organisation for less than one year compared to those with tenure of 2 to 5 years, 6 – 10 years, 11 to 20 years and longer than 20 years. Participants with less than one year's tenure thus appear to experience higher core self-evaluations scores than all other categories.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity. Results obtained by using the structural equation modelling approach provided support for the one factor model of CSES and for the two factor model of the JISI. In order to obtain a better fit, items 3 ("When I try, I generally succeed"), 5 ("I complete tasks successfully"), 9 ("I determine what will happen in my life") and 11 ("I am capable of coping with most problems") of the CSES were eliminated, and the errors of items 1 ("I am confident I get the success I deserve in life") and 7 ("Overall, I am satisfied with myself") were allowed to correlate. The finding that items 1, 3, 5, and 9 are problematic and do not correspond with the findings of Judge et al. (2003). Lastly, with regard to the JISI, item 2 ("There is only a small chance that I will become unemployed") was eliminated and items 1 ("I think that I will be able to continue working here") and 3 ("I am certain/sure of my job environment"), as well as 1 and 8 ("I fear that I might lose my job") were correlated, in order to obtain a better fit to the data. More studies regarding the construct validity of the JISI in a South African context is required, as the finding of item 2 as being problematic does not correspond with the research of De Witte (2000).

With regard to job insecurity, it was found that the White participants experience practically significantly higher levels of cognitive job insecurity than the Black participants, which could be related to Affirmative Action legislation, wherein White employees are aware that they have a greater chance of losing their employment than their Black colleagues. This does not correspond with the findings of Manski and Straub (2000) who found higher job loss concern among the Black participants compared to White participants. Manski and Straub (2000) however found that the levels of job insecurity differ with regard to age, qualifications, race and tenure. Regarding core self-evaluations, it was established that participants working at the organisation for less than one year indicated higher levels of core self-evaluations compared to participants with longer tenure. No other research could be found in this regard.

Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients indicated a practically significant negative relationship of medium effect between core self-evaluations and job insecurity. Regression analysis demonstrated that core self-evaluations predicted 17% of the variance in job insecurity. Thus, the results of this study provided support for the hypothesis, stating that job insecurity and core self-evaluations are negatively related and that core self-evaluations hold predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

## **LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Various limitations were identified in this research. Firstly, the research design was a cross sectional survey design, whereas longitudinal research would be more appropriate, allowing one to make causal inferences. Secondly, self-reporting measures were used. According to Schaufeli, Enzmann and Girault (1993) the use of self-report measures increases the chances that at least part of the shared variance between measures can be attributed to method variance. The study population was imbalanced in terms of race, whereas stratified random sampling may have been a more appropriate selection technique so as to ensure equal representation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

More research on the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity should be conducted. The relationship between job insecurity and other psychological strengths, as well as work-related outcomes, must also be further researched.

Limited research regarding core self-evaluations could be found in the literature. Future studies should focus on the reliability, validity, bias and equivalence of the CSES for different cultural, race and language groups, as well as the relationship of core self-evaluations with other constructs besides job insecurity. Further research is also required regarding the validity, reliability, bias and equivalence of the JISI in South Africa.

It is recommended that larger samples with a more powerful sampling method be used and that longitudinal designs be employed, so as to enable causal inferences.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Arbuckle J.L. (1997). *Amos users' guide version 4.0*. Chicago, IL: Smallwaters Corporation.
- Ashford, S., Lee, C. & Bobko, P. (1989). Content, causes and consequences of job insecurity: A theory-based measure and substantive test. *Academy of Management Journal*, 32(4), 803-829.
- Bentler, P.M. (1992). On the fit of models to covariances and methodology to the bulletin. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 400 – 404.
- Bono, J.E., & Judge, T.A. (2003). Core Self-evaluation: A review of the trait and its role in job satisfaction and job performance. *European Journal of Personality*, 17, 5-18.
- Borg, I. & Elizur, D. (1992). Job insecurity: Correlates, moderators and measurement. *International Journal of Manpower*, 13, 13-26.
- Browne, M.W. & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K.A. Bollen & J.S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 136-162). London: Sage.
- Burns, N. & Grove, S.K. (1993). *The practice of nursing research, conduct, critique and utilisation* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders.
- Büssing, A. (1999). Can control at work and social support moderate psychological consequences of job insecurity? Results from a quasi-experimental study in the steel industry. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology*, 8(2), 219-242.
- Byrne, B.M. (2001). *Structural equation modelling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications and programming*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Caplan, R.D., Cobb, S., French, J.R.P., van Harrison, R.V. & Pinneau, S.R. (1980). *Job demands and worker health: Main effects and occupational differences*. Ann Arbor, MI: Survey Research Centre, Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Clark, L.A. & Watson, D. (1995). Construct validity: Basic issues in objective scale development. *Psychological Assessment*, 7, 309-319
- Coopersmith, S. (1967). *The antecedents of self-esteem*. San Francisco, CA: Penguin.
- Davy, J.A., Kinicki, A.J. & Scheck, C.L. (1997). A test of job insecurity's direct and mediated effects on withdrawal cognitions. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 18, 323 – 349.
- De Witte, H. (1997), April. *Long term job insecurity as a stressor: Its impact on satisfaction and commitment*. Paper delivered at the 8<sup>th</sup> European Congress on Work and Organisational Psychology, Verona, Italy.
- De Witte, H. (1999). Job insecurity and psychological well-being: Review of the literature and exploration of some unresolved issues. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(2) 155-177.

- De Witte, H. (2000). Arbeidsethos en jobonzekerheid: Meting en gevolgen voor welzijn, tevredenheid en inzet op het werk. In R. Bouwen, K. de Witte, H. de Witte & T. Taillieu (Eds.). *Van groep tot gemeenschap* (pp.1-32). Leuven, Netherland: Garant.
- Dekker, S.W. & Schaufeli, W.B. (1995). The effects of job insecurity on psychological health and withdrawal: A longitudinal study. *Australian Psychologist*, 30, 57-103.
- Elbert, J. (2002). *Job insecurity, and psychological strengths of service workers in a parastatal*. Unpublished master's dissertation, Vaal Triangle Campus of the Potchefstroom University, Vanderbijlpark.
- Ferrie, J., Shipley, M.J., Marmot, M.G., Stansfield, S. & Smith, G.D. (1998). The health effects of major organizational change and job insecurity. *Social Science and Medicine*, 18, 155-170.
- Greenhalgh, L. & Rosenblatt, Z. (1984). Job insecurity: Toward conceptual clarity. *Academy of Management Review*, 9(3), 438 – 448.
- Hartley, J., Jacobson, D., Klandermans, B. & Van Vuuren, T. (1991). *Job insecurity coping with jobs at risk*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Heany, C.A., Israel, B.A. & House, J.S. (1994). Chronic job insecurity among automobile workers: Effects on job satisfaction and health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 38, 1431 – 1437.
- Heymans, D. R. (2002). *Job insecurity, job satisfaction and organisational commitment*. Unpublished master's dissertation, Vaal Triangle Campus of the Potchefstroom University, Vanderbijlpark.
- Hu, L.-T. & Bentler, P.M. (1995). Evaluating model fit. In R.H. Hoyle (Ed.), *Structural equation modeling: Concepts, issues and applications* (pp. 76-99). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hu, L.-T. & Bentler, P.M. (1999). Cut-off criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6, 1-55.
- Jöreskog, K.G. & Sörborn, D. (1993). *LISREL 8: Structural equation modeling with the SIMPLIS command language*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Judge, T.A., Erez, A., Bono, J.E. & Thoresen, C.J. (2002). Do the traits self-esteem, neuroticism, locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy indicate a common core construct? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 693-710.
- Judge, T. A., Locke, E. A., & Durham, C. C. (1997). The dispositional causes of job satisfaction: A core evaluations approach. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 19, 151– 188.
- Judge, T.A., Locke, E.A., Durham, C.C. & Kluger, A.N. (1998). Dispositional effects on job and life satisfaction: The role of core evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 17-34.

- Judge, T.A., Erez, A., Bono, J.E. & Thoresen, C.J. (2003). The core self-evaluations scale: Development of a measure. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 303-331.
- Klandermans, B., Van Vuuren, T., & Jacobson, D. (1991). Employees and job insecurity. In J. Hartley, D. Jacobson, B. Klandermans & T. Van Vuuren (Eds), *Job insecurity: Coping with jobs at risk* (pp. 40–64). London: Sage Publications.
- Lim, V.(1997). Moderating effects of work-based support on the relationship between job insecurity and its consequences. *Work and Stress*, 11(3), 251-266.
- Manski, D.F. & Straub, J.D. (2000). Worker perceptions of job insecurity in the mid-nineties. *Journal of Human Resources*, 35, 447-479.
- Marais, E.N. & Schepers, J.M. (1996). The effect of organisational restructuring on job satisfaction, career aspirations and stress levels of employees. *Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 22(3), 1 – 6.
- Mauno, S. & Kinnunen, U. (1999). Job insecurity and well-being: A longitudinal study among male and female employees in Finland. *Community, Work and Family*, 2(2), 147 – 171.
- Mauno, S. & Kinnunen, U. (2000). The stability of job and family involvement: Applying the multi-wave, multi-variable technique to longitudinal data. *Work and Stress*, 14:15-64.
- Nunnally, J.C. & Bernstein, I.H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Roux, A. (2002). *Everyone's guide to the future of South Africa*. Cape Town: Zebra.
- Rosenblatt, Z. & Ruvio, A. (1996). A test of multidimensional model of job insecurity: The case of Israeli teachers. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 17, 587-605.
- Schaufeli, W.B., Enzmann, D., & Girault, N. (1993). Measurement of burnout: A review. In W. B. Schaufeli, C. Maslach & T. Marek (Eds.), *Professional burnout: Recent developments in theory and research* (pp. 199–215). Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis.
- Soehnlein, K. M. (1998). The relationship of job insecurity, career planning, goal orientation and the self-development of survivors in a downsizing corporation. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 59, 5A, 1436.
- SPSS. (2003). *SPSS 12.0 for Windows*. Chicago, IL: SPSS Incorporated.
- Tucker, L.R. & Lewis, C. (1973). A reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor analysis. *Psychometrika*, 38, 1-10.
- Wheaton, B., Muthén, B., Alwin, D.F. & Summers, G.F. (1977). Assessing reliability and stability in panel models. In D.R. Heise (Ed), *Sociological Methodology* (pp. 84-136). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Yousef, D.A. (1999). Organisational commitment:A mediator of the relationships of leadership behavior with job satisfaction and performance in a non-western country. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*,15(1),6-28.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this chapter conclusions regarding the literature study and the results of the empirical research will be made. Shortcomings of the research will be discussed, and recommendations for organisations and future research will be provided.

#### **3.1 CONCLUSIONS**

Conclusions regarding the specific theoretical objectives and the results of the empirical research will be made.

##### **3.1.1 Conclusions regarding the specific theoretical objectives**

In line with the first specific objective stated in chapter 1, core self-evaluations and job insecurity as well as the relationships between these constructs, were conceptualised from literature.

Core self-evaluation was conceptualised from literature, as being a broad dispositional trait that is indicated by four more specific traits, namely, self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability (low neuroticism). This higher order construct termed core self-evaluations can also be termed positive self-concept and can be seen as basic conclusions or bottom-line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves, the world and others, and do so subconsciously.

Job insecurity was described as a construct relating to fear of losing one's employment, consisting of an affective and cognitive dimension. Job insecurity varies according to personal attributes and contextual factors and was shown to hold damaging consequences for both the individual and the organisation, for example a reduction in psychological well-being, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction; and an increase in absenteeism, turnover, anxiety and depression.

After a literature review, no relationships between core self-evaluations and job insecurity was found in literature, as very little research has been done on core self-evaluations and particularly

its relationship to job insecurity. It was however hypothesised that given the fact that previous research had linked job insecurity to similar constructs such as sense of coherence and self-efficacy, core self-evaluations would in all likelihood also be negatively related to job insecurity.

### **3.1.2 Conclusions regarding the specific empirical objectives**

In line with the second specific objective, structural equation modelling results confirmed the one-dimensional structure of the CSES, although items 3, 5, 9 and 11 were eliminated, and the errors of items 1 and 7 were allowed to correlate, in order to obtain a better fit. Structural equation modelling results confirmed the two-dimensional structure of the JISI, although item 2 appeared to be problematic and was consequently removed. Items 1 and 3, and 1 and 8 were also allowed to correlate in an attempt to obtain a better fit. Statistical analyses confirmed the internal consistency of the JISI and the CSES.

The third specific objective was to determine the levels of core self-evaluations and job insecurity. Results indicated that neither the study populations' mean core self-evaluation score nor their mean job insecurity were particularly high or low.

The fourth specific objective was to determine the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity. A practically significant negative relationship was found to exist between core self-evaluations and job insecurity, implying that higher levels of core self-evaluations are associated with lower levels of job insecurity. A regression analysis indicated that core self-evaluations holds predictive value (17%) with regard to job insecurity, suggesting that core self-evaluation holds a relatively large amount of predictive value with regard to job insecurity.

## **3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The following limitations can be identified in this study.

- The entire population did not complete the measuring battery. Although the entire study population consisted of approximately 500 participants, only 297 (59,4%) completed booklets were received.

- The research group consisted of one governmental organisation and therefore the possibility of a specific culture within the organisation could have been an influencing factor.
- The research design was a cross sectional survey design, whereas longitudinal research would be more appropriate, as this would allow the researcher to make causal inferences.
- Self-reporting measures were used. According to Schaufeli, Enzmann and Girault (1993) the use of self-reporting measures increase the chances that at least part of the shared variance between measures can be attributed to method variance.
- The study population was imbalanced in terms of race, whereas stratified random sampling may have been a more appropriate selection technique so as to ensure equal representation.
- The sample size was limited, suggesting that the findings obtained in this study might have been obtained by pure chance.

### **3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations are made with regard to the applicable organisation, as well as in regard of future research.

#### **3.3.1 Recommendations for the organisation**

The mean job insecurity score obtained by the participants in this study, does not appear to be particularly high or low. This implies, that while the level of job insecurity experienced by the employees in this company is not problematic, some job insecurity does exist and may need to be managed. Holm and Hovland (1999) propose making use of career counsellors as a mechanism for assisting job employees with job insecurity. Barker (1999) found that perceived fairness is a major concern for employees in terms of job insecurity and that job insecurity is affected by how employees feel, the process is fairly managed.

The results of this research indicated that a practically significantly negative correlation of medium effect exists between core self-evaluations and job insecurity, and that core self-evaluations holds some predictive value with regard to job insecurity. Hence, by stimulating a high level of core self-evaluations, the experienced level of job insecurity may be relieved.

Participants in this research did not present particularly high or low levels of core self-evaluations. Although not cumbersome, core self-evaluations of the study population may be improved. Further research is required regarding the enhancement of individual's core self-evaluations and the lowering job insecurity levels.

### **3.3.2 Recommendations for further research**

The relationship between job insecurity and other psychological strengths, as well as work-related outcomes, must be researched. Research on job insecurity and psychological strengths, must also take place within a wide range of organisations. Larger research groups must be used and qualitative research into job insecurity might deliver a more representative depiction of the presence of job insecurity. Also, South African norms need to be established for the CSES and JISI.

The role of reputation in personality processes is under-researched according to Hogan (1996), and might prove fruitful in this area. For example, perhaps individuals with core self-evaluations are more protective of their reputations and therefore better manage positive impressions others have of them. Perhaps core self-evaluations can be seen, in part, as the desire of an individual to project a positive image as and this might have implications for an individual's job security or insecurity. Research in this regard may also hold beneficial information.

## **3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter conclusions regarding the theoretical and empirical objectives were made. The limitations of the research were pointed out and recommendations were made for the organisation in which the study took place, as well as for future research. All theoretical and empirical objectives formulated for this research, have been attained.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Barker, M. A. (1999). Toward an understanding of factors affecting perceptions of job insecurity in downsizing survivors. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 60, 5A, 1654.
- Hogan, F. (1996). A socioanalytic perspective on the five-factor model. In J.S. Wiggins (Ed.), *The five-factor model of personality: Theoretical perspectives* (pp. 173-179). New York: Guilford.
- Holm, S. & Hovland, J. (1999). Waiting for the other shoe to drop: Help for the job insecure employee. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 36, 156 – 166.
- Schaufeli, W.B., Enzmann, D., & Girault, N. (1993). Measurement of burnout: A review. In W. B. Schaufeli, C. Maslach & T. Marek (Eds.), *Professional burnout: Recent developments in theory and research* (pp. 199–215). Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis.