

**JOB INSECURITY, WORK-BASED SUPPORT, JOB SATISFACTION,
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND GENERAL HEALTH OF
HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS IN A CHEMICAL INDUSTRY**

By

FLORENCE NOMHLANGANO RANI

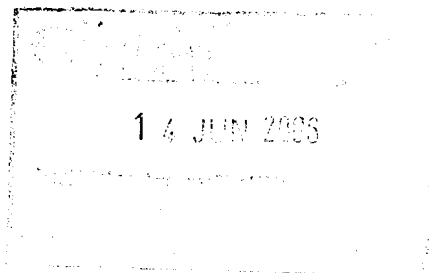
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Supervisor: Prof. J.H. Buitendach

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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

The references and the editorial style prescribed by the Publication Manual (*4th ed.*) 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.

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SUMMARY

Title: Job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry.

Key words: Job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, general health

The work environment in which South African employees have to function is highly demanding, offering them little in terms of job security, but simultaneously expecting them to give more in terms of *inter alia* flexibility, competency, and effort. Tracking and addressing chemical industry employees' functioning in areas that could affect their general health and consequent standard of service is essential. Job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health are specific focus areas in this research. It is important to use reliable and valid measuring instruments to measure these constructs. It appears that job insecurity results in reduced organisational commitment as well as reduced job satisfaction. In the long run all this may have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of employees. Therefore, the right kind of support from the right kind of people can be of significant value in reducing occupational stress, improving health, and buffering the impact of stress on health. A lack of South African research exists regarding job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health - hence the importance of this research.

The primary objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals ($N = 114$) in a chemical industry. A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data.

It was found that affective and cognitive job insecurity demonstrated a statistically significant negative correlation with emotional social support (supervisor and other), but practically and statistically negative correlation with intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. With regard to

affective and cognitive job insecurity and general health, a statistically significant positive correlation was obtained for somatic symptoms, social dysfunction and severe depression, and a practically and statistically significant correlation with anxiety and insomnia. Affective commitment demonstrated a statistically significant negative relationship with cognitive job insecurity.

The regression analysis indicated that job insecurity has some predictive value with regard to the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and general health subscales, namely somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression. With regard to the two components of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic, job insecurity predicted 14% and 5% respectively of the variance. No predictions were found between affective commitment and job insecurity. With regard to general health, job insecurity predicted 5% (somatic symptoms), 11% (anxiety and insomnia), 1% (social dysfunction) and 8% (severe depression).

Conclusions were made, limitations of the current research were discussed and recommendations for future research were put forward.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid en algemene gesondheid van Menslike Hulpbronpraktisyns in 'n chemiese nywerheid.

Sleutelbegrippe: Werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid, algemene gesondheid.

Die werksomgewing waarin Suid-Afrikaanse werknemers hulle bevind is baie veeleisend; dit is 'n omgewing wat werknemers min werksekerheid bied, maar wat terselfdertyd van werknemers verwag om meer buigsaam te wees, om hulle vaardighede te verbeter en om harder te werk. Dit is noodsaaklik om ondersoek in te stel na werknemers in 'n chemiese nywerheid se funksionering op gebiede wat hulle algemene gesondheid en gevolglik ook die gehalte van hulle werk kan beïnvloed. In hierdie navorsing val die klem spesifiek op werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid en algemene gesondheid. Dit is belangrik om betroubare en geldige meetinstrumente te gebruik om hierdie konstrakte te meet. Dit blyk dat werksonsekerheid lei tot 'n afname in organisasieverbondenheid, asook 'n verlaging in werkstevredenheid. Op die lang duur sal al hierdie faktore 'n negatiewe invloed op die psigologiese welsyn van werknemers hê. Die regte tipe ondersteuning van die regte tipe mense sal derhalwe 'n beduidende rol kan speel in die verlaging van werkstres, die verbetering van gesondheid en om die effek van stres op werknemers se gesondheid te verminder. Daar bestaan 'n tekort aan navorsing in Suid-Afrika oor werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid en algemene gesondheid – derhalwe is hierdie studie van groot belang.

Die primêre doelwit van hierdie studie was om die verhouding tussen werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid en algemene gesondheid van Menslike Hulpbronpraktisyns ($N=114$) in 'n chemiese nywerheid te ondersoek. 'n Dwarssnee-opname is gebruik om die inligting te versamel.

Daar is bevind dat affektiewe en kognitiewe werksonsekerheid 'n statistiese negatiewe korrelasie met emosioneel-sosiale ondersteuning (toesighouer en ander) getoon het, maar 'n praktiese en statistiese negatiewe korrelasie met intrinsieke en ekstrinsieke werkstevredenheid. Met betrekking tot affektiewe en kognitiewe werksonsekerheid en algemene gesondheid is daar 'n statistiese betekenisvolle positiewe korrelasie tussen somatiese simptome, sosiale wanfunksionering en ernstige depressie getoon, en 'n praktiese en statistiese betekenisvolle korrelasie met angstigheid en slapeloosheid. Affektiewe verbondenheid het 'n statisties betekenisvolle negatiewe verband met kognitiewe werksonsekerheid getoon.

Die regressie-ontledings het getoon dat werksonsekerheid 'n mate van voorspellingswaarde het met betrekking tot die intrinsieke en ekstrinsieke werkstevredenheid, affektiewe organisasieverondenheid en algemene gesondheidssubskale, naamlik somatiese simptome, angstigheid en slapeloosheid, sosiale disfunksie en ernstige depressie. Met betrekking tot die twee komponente van werkstevredenheid, naamlik intrinsieke en ekstrinsieke werkstevredenheid, het werksonsekerheid onderskeidelik 14% en 5% van die variansie voorspel. Geen verskille is tussen affektiewe verbondenheid en werksonsekerheid nie bevind. Met betrekking tot algemene gesondheid het werksonsekerheid onderskeidelik 5% (somatiese simptome), 11% (angstigheid en slapeloosheid), 1% (sosiale disfunksie) en 8% (ernstige depressie).

Gevolgtrekkings is gemaak, die beperkinge van die onderhawige studie is bespreek en aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen.

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this mini-dissertation is to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. In this chapter, the problem statement is discussed and the research objectives are set out. Following this, the research method is explained and the division of chapters is given.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Never in the history of the world has there been such rapid, mammoth change as the period in which we are living today (Schulte, 2003). During the last few decades many economic changes leading to transformations in the labour market have taken place in the industrialised world (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). In a rapidly changing environment, characterised by intensified competition and escalating demands for flexibility and adjustment, organisations have taken to re-organisational activities such as outsourcing, downsizing, and mergers in order to adapt to the new situation (Cascio, 1995; Gowing, Kraft, & Campbell Quick, 1998).

Organisations engage in “downsizing”, “right-sizing”, or “restructuring” or all three simultaneously, in an attempt to survive in difficult economic conditions. Actions such as these almost inevitably imply the rationalising of jobs. According to Marais and Schepers (1996), terms such as “downsizing”, “rightsizing” and “restructuring”, are used interchangeable and refer to the reduction of the workforce in order to cut costs. These terms are viewed as synonymous with “retrenchment” (Marais & Schepers, 1996).

According to the researcher it is no exaggeration to say that South African companies are also being affected by the above-mentioned rapid changes; they are now more than ever being exposed to the effects of the world economy, technological advancement and fierce international competition. According to De Witte (1997), plant closures with mass redundancies are now the

order of the day across the world, while mergers and restructuring threaten the jobs of thousands more. The pressure that is placed on organisations to improve their performance and to become increasingly competitive, seriously affects these organisations. In such a competitive environment, profitability becomes the main focus point for an organisation. In order to gain a competitive advantage and improve profitability, companies need to identify sources of cost saving. According to Marais and Schepers (1996), such sources include economies of scale, technology, access to raw materials and salaries and wages, the latter usually being the largest, immediate source of cost saving.

A report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (1997) indicates that media references to job insecurity increased substantially within the European countries in the 1980s and 1990s. A growing number of employees thus face the possibility of losing their jobs due to lay-offs and restructuring. In South Africa, a similar situation to that which is found in the European countries prevails. This is indicated by the research done by International Survey Research (ISR), according to which South Africa scores badly on the ISR rankings – 51% of surveyed employees indicated that they are worried about being laid off, compared with a high global figure of 32% (Sunday Times, 13 October 2002, Business News). Consequently, changes in working life that took place over the last two decades have caused feelings of insecurity concerning the nature and future existence of their jobs (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, & Van Vuuren, 1991).

Literature usually conceptualises job insecurity from three points of view, namely that it is (i) a global or (ii) multi-dimensional concept, and (iii) a job stressor (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Most of the job insecurity has been defined according to global view, signifying the threat of job loss or job discontinuity (Hartley et al., 1991). Researchers, who have adopted the multi-dimensional definition of job insecurity, argue that job insecurity refers not only to the degree of uncertainty, but also to the continuity of certain dimensions of the job, such as opportunities for promotion (Elbert, 2002). According to De Witte (1999) and Van Vuuren (1990), job insecurity consistently presents itself as a stressor. With regard to consequences, a distinction is made between stress and coping behaviour. According to De Witte (1997), stress reactions refer to the

effect of the stressor on psychological well-being, while coping refers to the way in which the person deals with stress.

For the purposes of this study, Van Vuuren's definition of job insecurity as an overall concern is adopted (Van Vuuren, 1990). She emphasises that job insecurity has the following components: First of all, it is a subjective (affective) experience or perception, as different employees might perceive the same situation differently. Secondly, job insecurity implies uncertainty (cognitive insecurity) regarding the future and finally, doubts about the continuation of the job as such are central to job insecurity.

From this brief review, it follows that job insecurity reflects the subjectively experienced anticipation of a fundamental and involuntary event. Along this line of reasoning, job insecurity can be considered a classic work stressor (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Barling & Kelloway, 1996; Fox & Chancey, 1998; Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen, 2001). Consistent with theories of the stress process (Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Siegrist, 2000), job insecurity would then result in various types of strain.

Stress is often described with the help of a model, and the model presented in this research is the International Survey Research Model, developed by Katz and Kahn (1978). This model is characterised by the notion of stress as a process, originating in the interaction between the individual and the environment. A stressor is considered to arise when an individual experiences signals in the environment that indicate the presence of a threat. The perceived risk of losing one's job can be such a threat, which the individual interprets as something negative and thus tries to counteract (Sverke, Hellgren, Näswall, Chirumbolo, De Witte, & Goslinga, 2004). It may turn out that individuals feel that they do not have access to the necessary resources, or that they are not able to utilise these resources in a way that would eliminate the threat to employment. If that is the outcome of the evaluation, the individual will experience stress, which in this case is job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Just as the term suggests, job insecurity implies a great deal of uncertainty.

Job insecurity may be taxing for the individual since it involves prolonged exposure to uncertainty (Sverke et al., 2004). The situation, however, often is such that individuals experiencing job insecurity tend to react to the dissatisfying circumstances in ways that affect the organisation as well (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Sverke et al., 2004). Probst (2002) found job insecurity to hold important negative consequences at individual and organisational levels, leading to increased organisational withdrawal, increased reported health conditions, increased psychological distress and lowered organisational commitment. It is, however, reasonable to assume that a radical change in working conditions – from having been secure to being volatile and insecure – will have an influence not only on employees' health status, but also on their attitudes and behaviours in relation to the organisation, and will in the long run also have consequences for the vitality of the organisation (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004). Based on the above, the researcher concludes by saying that numerous consequences of job insecurity are mediated by job attitudes and affective reactions.

The effort-reward imbalance model, as discussed by Bakker, Kilmer, Siegrist, and Schaufeli (2000), provides a theoretical approach to explaining the adverse health effects produced by a lack of reciprocity at work. According to this model, a lack of reciprocity between costs and gains defines a state of emotional distress with particular proclivity to autonomic arousal and associated strain reactions. This is especially true if poor reward is experienced in terms of poor stability, forced occupational change, downward mobility, or a lack of promotion prospects. From this point of view perceived job insecurity can thus be expected to produce a lack of reciprocity, thereby resulting in emotional distress.

Reactions to job insecurity can also be examined within a framework of coping with stress. The term "coping with stress" refers to the various ways different individuals deal with stress. Two forms of coping behaviour (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) are found, namely problem and emotional-directed behaviour. The former aims to remove the unpleasant event or to mitigate its influence, while the latter aims to alleviate the distressing feelings caused by the unpleasant event. According to Roskies, Louis-Guerin and Fournier (1993), there are certain strategies an employee might use to cope with job insecurity: withdrawing psychologically from work, or attempting to restore his or her job security either by individual or by collective action.

Employees who withdraw feel psychologically less motivated to go to work, they are less interested in their work, and they are less dedicated to their work than employees who feel more secure. Employees who experience a high degree of job insecurity are willing to undertake individual action (e.g. seek alternative employment) more often than employees who do not feel threatened.

Given that job insecurity reflects a worry about losing the present job, it can be speculated that this subjective experience is likely to have a strong impact on employees' job attitudes which may in turn affect employees' level of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, general health, etc. Individual employees may perceive their situation as threatened – that is, experience job insecurity – even if there is no apparent threat. This raises the question of why some individuals are more prone to worry about job loss. For the purposes of this research, individual factors such as age, race, gender, qualification, etc. were used (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004).

The diagram below elaborates on what has been said above; it also gives an indication of the multiple antecedents as well as the consequences of job insecurity.

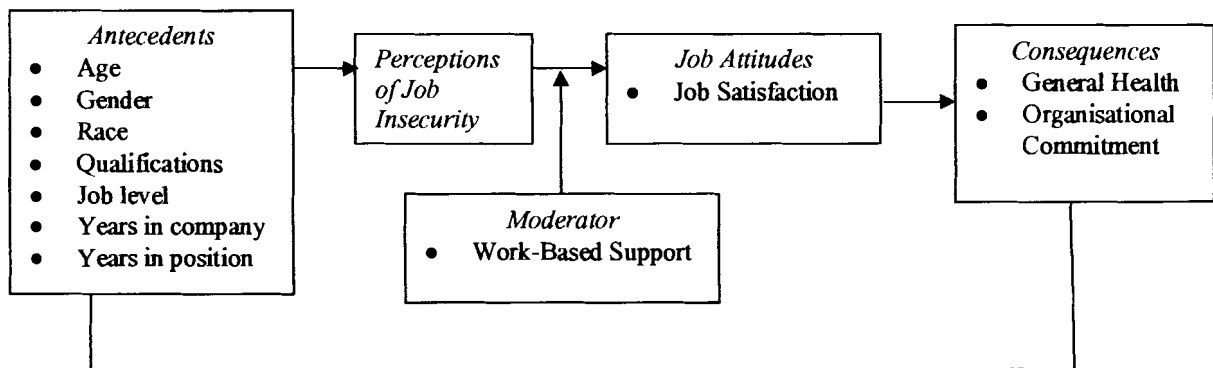


Figure 1. An adopted conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of job insecurity. (Probst, 2003, p. 453)

With regard to the depiction of the antecedents and consequences of job insecurity (Figure 1), Mohr (2000) found a strong positive relationship between age and job insecurity, which is taken as evidence that older employees experience higher job insecurity than younger employees. Age

may influence an employee to appraise the alternatives in the labour market differently. Younger persons usually have more alternatives, and companies value youth and competence, whereas older employees are experiencing more job insecurity than younger employees. Age may influence an employee to appraise the alternatives in the labour market differently (Sverke et al., 2004). This finding is confirmed by a South African study done by Buitendach and Rothmann (2004) which also indicated a strong positive relationship between age and job insecurity. The study shows that employees in the age group of 36 to 45 experienced the highest levels of job insecurity. It can be speculated that this period in life is a very difficult time. During this period important decisions need to be made. It is time when an employee must decide whether he or she wants to make a career change or stay with the current career (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004).

As far as gender is concerned, Näswall, Sverke, and Hellgren (2001) indicated that men exhibited a stronger relation between the experience of job insecurity and its negative outcomes than women. Rosenblatt, Talmud, and Ruvio (1999) also found that males and females differ significantly in their levels of job insecurity, with males being more insecure than their female counterparts. These results are in contrast with research done by Rannona (2003), Elbert (2002), and Buitendach and Rothmann (2004), where no significant differences were found between males and females.

Regarding the relationship between job insecurity and race, the findings of Rannona (2003) seem to suggest that black respondents experienced higher levels of job insecurity than their white counterparts. These results are in contrast with the findings of Buitendach and Rothmann (2004), who found that white employees experienced higher levels of job insecurity than black employees. One possible explanation for higher levels of job insecurity in whites is that the implementation of the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) created new job opportunities for blacks, while whites (and especially white males) face less employment opportunities (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004).

With regard to the level of qualification, Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson, and Hartley (1991) mentioned that individuals with higher levels of education tend to experience lower levels

of job insecurity. It has been suggested that since white-collar workers and professionals usually have higher qualification levels, they will be less vulnerable to job loss than employees with lower levels of qualifications (Schaufeli, 1992). In contrast, Elbert (2002) and Rannona (2003) found no significant differences between qualification and job insecurity. It is clear from the above explanations that the experience of job insecurity cannot be interpreted in isolation from other factors such as age, gender, race, qualification, etc.

To the extent that job insecurity has become a relatively permanent state for increasing numbers of employees, and that it has been shown to have a negative effect on individuals' job attitudes, work behaviours and psychological health, it is important to identify the factors that may reduce or eliminate the strains associated with job insecurity. In this study, one specific potential moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and its outcomes has been examined, i.e. work-based support. According to Probst (2003), work-based support is defined as support provided by supervisors and work colleagues. These sources of support have been examined because they were likely to be those that are readily available to the individual employee in the context of the workplace.

Probst (2003) reports that job insecurity is positively associated with job dissatisfaction. It is hypothesised that support provided by supervisors and work colleagues would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and job dissatisfaction. In his study he also states that support provided by work colleagues and supervisors may perform several functions that are critical in buffering individuals against the effects of job insecurity on job satisfaction. The companionship and emotional functions performed by the support received from the supervisor and work colleagues may create a supportive and conducive work atmosphere in the organisation, thereby mitigating the individual's feelings of job dissatisfaction even when his or her job security is at stake (Probst, 2003).

Sverke et al. (2004) consider work-based support to be important in the context of job insecurity. As any stressor, perceived job insecurity affects the individual negatively (Sverke et al., 2004). The negative feelings that job insecurity evokes may prompt employees to seek out the support

of each other, to express their frustration or fears, but also to seek alternatives and strategies for coping with the negative situation (Callan, 1993).

Armstrong-Stassen (1993) found that support from supervisors during restructuring served as a moderator of the effect of job insecurity on organisational attitudes. She suggests that it is vital for the organisation to proactively provide support in order to prevent employees' attitudes towards the organisation from deteriorating. According to Lim (1997), support outside of work influenced the relation between job insecurity and life satisfaction. Individuals experiencing more support were, despite job insecurity, more satisfied with life than those reporting less support (Lim, 1997).

Considering the above arguments, the researcher came to the conclusion that there is a relationship between job insecurity and work-based support. Work-based sources of support seem to be most effective in reducing work stress and buffering the impact of work stress on social support. Supervisors are identified as a primary target for efforts to enhance work-related social support. Co-worker support also plays a crucial role in buffering the impact of job insecurity on employees as employees can turn to their colleagues for support during stressful times. Consequently, it can be concluded by saying that during uncertain circumstances, if there is lack of work-based support, employees' basic attachments such as commitment and satisfaction can be affected.

Job satisfaction is the most often-researched work attitude in the organisational behaviour literature (Blau, 1999). According to Rothmann and Agathagelou (2000), job satisfaction is a complex variable and is influenced by situational factors of the job environment, as well as dispositional characteristics of an individual. Job insecurity is consistently associated with a reduced level of job satisfaction. The relationship is illustrated in the research conducted by Rannona (2003), who found a strong negative relationship between job satisfaction, including all its facets, and job insecurity. This result confirms previous findings that job insecurity is negatively associated with job satisfaction (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991). On the contrary, results by Heymans (2002) indicated no significant correlation between job insecurity

and job satisfaction. According to De Witte (1997), job insecurity has an impact on a crucial variable, namely organisational commitment.

Organisational commitment has become an important topic for organisational research because of its association with extra-role behaviours (Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993), absenteeism (Gellatly, 1995) and turnover (Somers, 1993). It has been defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987; Michaels, 1994; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Russ & McNeilly, 1993). Bagrain (2003) views this identification as a psychological bond between employees and their organisations.

Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed a three-component model of organisational commitment. The affective component of organisational commitment refers to employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation. The continuance component refers to commitment based on the costs that employees associated with leaving the organisation. Finally, the normative component refers to employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation.

Despite these differences in conceptualisation and the increasing consensus that organisational commitment is a multidimensional construct, much of the empirical research has focused on the affective perspective. The emphasis on affective commitment has been mostly due to the evidence that affective commitment has the strongest and most consistent relationship with desirable outcomes (Arzu Wasti, 2003). As a consequence, researchers such as Buitendach and De Witte (2005) restricted the measurement of organisational commitment to affective commitment, leaving the two other components aside. The present study will also measure only affective commitment.

Previous research has related the experience of job insecurity to lower levels of organisational commitment (Amstrong-Stassen, 1993; Borg & Elizur, 1992; McFarlane, Shone, & Tetrick, 1991). This is, for example, illustrated in research carried out by Apisakkul (2000), who indicated that job insecurity was associated with lower levels of organisational commitment and

some organisational citizenship behaviours. The research by Ashford et al. (1989) also confirms that job insecurity leads to a reduction in organisational commitment. Selepe (2004) reported that both job insecurity scales demonstrated a negative relationship with organisational commitment, given that normative commitment did not correlate with job insecurity. The research by Laba (2004) also indicated that the presence of job insecurity in the working environment will result in a decrease in the affective and normative commitment towards the organisation. The results of Rannona (2003) showed a negative correlation between continuance facets of organisational commitment, but a positive correlation between continuance and affective commitment.

For the purposes of this study, job insecurity is also viewed as a stressor, causing strain reactions in terms of a decline in the health of employees. According to Constitution of the World Health Organisation (2000), "general health" can be defined as state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is a resource for everyday life; it is not the object of living. It is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities.

De Witte (1999) notes that the effect of job insecurity is not only limited to psychological variables, but it has also been linked to psychosomatic complaints, physiological variables and various physical strains. Janse van Rensburg (2003) found an inverse relationship between job insecurity and general health. This then seems to support Burchell's (1999) theory that there is a causal link between job insecurity and psychological well-being in the form of anxiety and depression. The results furthermore confirm the findings of other authors like Probst and Brubaker (2001), and Vahtera and Kirikamki (1997) that job insecurity leads to anxiety and depression. From these results one might speculate that, if job insecurity is reduced, general health will be promoted, especially relating to the reduction of anxiety and depression.

The organisation in which the study was conducted is regarded as one of the market leaders in the chemical industry, which places enormous pressure on the organisation to remain competitive. Due to these pressures, this industry is going through constant change and transformation processes. As a result of these changes, job insecurity is constantly on the mind of

many an employee. During the last few years the roles of Human Resources Professionals have changed tremendously. The new roles call for less emphasis on Human Resources processing and administration; it requires a greater focus on strategic or value-added Human Resources activities.

The introduction of new technology and integrated Human Resources systems has resulted in some of the functional areas to be centralised, e.g. recruitment service. People in redundant positions had to accept alternative employment positions or relocate to other business units or geographical areas in order to retain their jobs. More work has to be done with fewer employees in order for the industry to manage its cost to income ratio, which in turn places a lot of extra pressure on employees, especially in terms of work/life balance. All these drastic changes cause discomfort, frustration, stress and above all, job insecurity in some employees.

The present study makes a valuable contribution to the chemical industry in various ways. Firstly, it determines the relationship between job insecurity and various demographic characteristics, such as age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications, as measured in participants. Secondly, it gives an indication on whether the potential moderator factor (i.e. work-based support), if available, reduces or moderates the strains associated with job insecurity of Human Resources Professionals. Information obtained from the analysis in the study can be used to develop or improve work-based support structures to assist Human Resources Professionals with the increased levels of pressure and insecurity.

Based on the above arguments, the research problem can be summarised as follows: It is evident that the experience of job insecurity is a reality – not only in the South African context, but also worldwide. Furthermore, to date no programmes have been implemented to address this problem. There is also a lack of research regarding the role of support in the experience of job insecurity (Büssing, 1999).

The following research questions arise, based on the above-mentioned description of the research problem:

- How are job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health conceptualised in literature?
- What is the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals?
- Are there differences in the levels of job insecurity of participants from various demographic variables (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications)?
- Does job insecurity hold predictive value with regard to job satisfaction?
- Does job insecurity hold predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment?
- Does job insecurity hold predictive value with regard to general health?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives can be divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research were:

- To conceptualise job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health from the literature.
- To determine the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals.

- To determine whether there are differences in the levels of job insecurity of participants from various demographic variables (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications).
- To determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction.
- To determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment.
- To determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to general health.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method consisted of a literature review and an empirical study. The literature review focused on the conceptualisation of job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health and the possible relationships between these constructs.

1.3.1 Research design

A cross-sectional design was utilised to describe the information on the population collected at a specific time. This design (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997) was also used to evaluate interrelationships among variables within a population. According to Shaughnessy and Zeichmeister (1997), this design is ideally suited to describe and predict functions associated with correlative research.

1.3.2 Study population

The entire population of approximately 200 Human Resources Professionals working in a chemical industry were used in this research. The participants included workers from various levels, ranging from level 8 (C-Lower) up to level 3 (E-Lower) (Patterson band grading). The B Bands (Human Resources Administrators and Clerks) were excluded, because the study only focused on Human Resources Professionals namely, HR Practitioners, HR Generalists, HR

Consultants and HR Managers. The sample was representative, and included employees of different genders, racial groups, ages, qualifications, job levels and years in the company.

1.3.3 Measuring instruments

The following measuring instruments were used in this study:

The ***Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ)*** (De Witte, 2000) was used as a measure of job insecurity. This 11-item questionnaire was used to measure the perceived job insecurity of participants. It encapsulated both cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and was arranged along a 5-point scale, varying from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example of an item relating to cognitive job insecurity would be: "I am sure I can keep my job", whereas an example of an item relating to affective job insecurity would be: "I am worried about keeping my job". The items of the JISQ, measuring global job insecurity, were 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 measuring affective job insecurity displaying a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 (De Witte, 2000). Buitendach and Rothmann (2004) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,90 for items measuring cognitive job insecurity and a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 for items measuring affective job insecurity.

The ***Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ)*** of House and Wells (1978) was used to measure work-based support of the participants. The questions aimed to distinguish between two types of support – emotional (questions 1, 2, 5 and 6) and instrumental (questions 3 and 4) from four different sources – work supervisors, co-workers ("others at work"), spouses, and a combined category of friends and relatives. An example of a question relating to emotional support would be: "How much is each of the following people willing to listen to your work-related problems?" An example of a statement relating to instrumental support would be: "My supervisor is competent in doing his or her job". Validity and reliability evidence for the scale has been provided by a number of studies on occupational stress and health. The items of the Social

Support Questionnaire are reported to have a high Cronbach alpha coefficient on both scales (House, 1981).

The ***Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)*** (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) was used to measure job satisfaction. It taps affective responses to various aspects of one's job (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2001). The MSQ can be used to measure two distinct components, namely intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000). An example of an item relating to intrinsic job satisfaction would be: "The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities", whereas an example of an item relating to extrinsic job satisfaction would be: "The competence of my supervisor in making decisions". The response format varied on five-point intensity scale ranging from (*very dissatisfied*) to (*very satisfied*). Hirschfeld (2000) found that a two-factor model (intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction) is superior to a one-factor model (total job satisfaction). Alpha coefficients were found to be ranging from 0,87 to 0,95, a finding which supports the internal consistency of the scale (Liam, Bauman, & Pine, 1998; Hirschfeld, 2000). Selepe (2004) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,92 (intrinsic scales) and 0,86 (extrinsic scales), while Rannona (2004) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,90 (intrinsic scales), and 0,86 (extrinsic scales).

The ***Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)*** of Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) was used to measure the organisational commitment of the participants. In order to achieve this, it was decided to use 6 items to measure the affective commitment from the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). The emphasis on affective commitment has been mostly due to the evidence that affective commitment has the strongest and most consistent relationship with desirable outcomes (Arzu Wasti, 2003). As a consequence, researchers such as Buitendach and De Witte (2005) restricted the measurement of organisational commitment to affective commitment, leaving the two other components aside. Participants' responses to this scale was scored on a five-point Likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree* and *5 = strongly agree*). Two examples of the items relating to affective commitment are: "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation" and "I do not feel like part of the

family at my organisation". In South African studies, Khwela (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,87 for affective commitment, Rannona (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,70 for affective commitment, and Selepe (2004) reported an alpha coefficient of 0,75 for affective commitment.

The *General Health Questionnaire* (GHQ) of Goldberg and Hillier (1979) was used to measure the participants' general health. For the purposes of this study, the 28-item version was used. Responses were scored on a four point Likert-type scale. The four subscales measured the degree of 1) somatic symptoms; 2) anxiety and insomnia; 3) social dysfunction and 4) severe depression. An example of a question relating to somatic symptoms would be: "Have you recently been feeling perfectly well and in good health?", whereas an example of a question relating to anxiety and insomnia would be: "Have you recently lost much sleep over worry?" An example of a question relating to social dysfunction would be: "Have you ever been taking longer over the things you do?", whereas an example of a question relating to severe depression would be: "Have you ever been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?" A high value on the GHQ is indicative of a high level of distress, where a low score implies a low level of distress, in other words indicating a high level of general health. Snoer (2005) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,86 (somatic symptoms), 0,93 (anxiety and insomnia), 0,82 (social dysfunction), 0,94 (severe depression) and 0,94 (general health total). Janse van Rensburg (2003) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,85 (somatic symptoms), 0,92 (anxiety and insomnia), 0,78 (social dysfunction), 0,82 (severe depression) and 0,93 (general health total).

1.3.4 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the SPSS program (SPSS, 2003). Descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) was used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients and confirmatory factor analysis were used to determine the internal consistency, reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationship between the variables. A cut-off point of 0,30, which represents a medium effect, (Cohen, 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the significance of differences between job insecurity and various demographic groups, such as age, years in company, years in position, job level, qualifications, gender and race. MANOVA tests are used to determine whether mean differences among groups on a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In the use of MANOVA a new dependent variable that maximises group differences is created from the set of dependent variables. One-way analysis is then performed on the newly created dependent variable. Wilk's Lambda was used to test the significance of the effects. Wilk's Lambda is a likelihood ratio statistic that tests the likelihood of the data under the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups against the likelihood under the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups. When an effect was significant in MANOVA, ANOVA was used to discover which dependent variables were affected. Tukey tests were done to indicate which groups differed significantly when ANOVA's were done.

Lastly, the multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the percentage of variance in the dependent variables predicted by the independent variables. The effect sizes (which indicate practical significance) in the case of multiple regression are given by the following formula (Steyn, 1999):

$$f^2 = R^2 / 1 - R^2$$

A cut-off point of 0,10 (medium effect) (Steyn, 1999) was set for practical significance of f^2 .

1.4 CHAPTER DIVISION

The chapters are presented as follows in this mini-dissertation:

- Chapter 1: Introduction, problem statement and research objectives
- Chapter 2: Research article
- Chapter 3: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided details of the motivation for the present study and the methodology to be employed. In addition to the problem statement, the aims of the study and the research method were discussed. Finally, a prospective chapter division was indicated.

In Chapter 2, job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health as well as the relationship between these constructs are discussed.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

**JOB INSECURITY, WORK-BASED SUPPORT, JOB SATISFACTION, ORGANISATIONAL
COMMITMENT AND GENERAL HEALTH OF HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS IN A
CHEMICAL INDUSTRY**

N.F RANI

J.H. BUITENDACH

*Work Well: Research Unit for People, Policy & Performance, Vanderbijlpark Campus, North-West University,
South Africa*

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals ($N = 114$) in a chemical industry. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ), Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ), Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), Affective Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (AOCQ), General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) and a biographical questionnaire were administered. The results indicated that affective and cognitive job insecurity demonstrated a correlation with emotional social support (supervisor and others), job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic) and General Health (somatic symptoms, anxiety/insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression). Affective commitment correlated with cognitive job insecurity. Regression analysis indicated that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction subscales and general health subscales.

OPSOMMING

Die doelwit van hierdie studie was om die verband tussen werksonsekerheid, werksgebaseerde ondersteuning, werkstevredenheid, organisasieverbondenheid en algemene gesondheid van Menslike Hulpbronpraktisyns ($N=114$) in 'n chemiese nywerheid te ondersoek. 'n Dwaarsnee opname-ontwerp is gebruik. Die Werksonsekerheidsvraelys (JISQ), die Sosiale Ondersteuningsvraelys (SSQ), die Minnesota Werkstevredenheidsvraelys (MSQ), die Affektiewe Organisasieverbondenheidvraelys (AOCQ), die Algemene Gesondheidsvraelys (GHQ) en 'n biografiese vraelys is afgeneem. Die resultate het aangetoon dat affektiewe en kognitiewe werksonsekerheid met emosioneel sosiale ondersteuning (toesighouer en ander), werkstevredenheidsubskale (intrinsieke en ekstrinsieke) en Algemene Gesondheidsubskale (somatiese simptome, angstigheid en slapeloosheid, sosiale disfunksie en ernstige depressie). Affektiewe verbondenheid het slegs met kognitiewe werksonsekerheid gekorreleer. Die regressie-ontledings het getoon dat werksonsekerheid 'n mate van voorspellingswaarde het met betrekking tot die werkstevredenheidsubskale en algemene gesondheidsubskale.

Over the past four decades of the 20th century, the nature of work has changed dramatically. The 1960s and 1970s saw the introduction of new technology, particularly the use of computers, into the workplace (Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001). This was followed in the 1980s by a huge shift towards globalisation, with many organisations undergoing mergers, acquisitions, strategic alliances and privatisations. This entrepreneurial period resulted in increased economic competitiveness and international markets for those countries that embraced it (Cooper & Jackson, 1997). In the 1990s, a major restructuring of work started to take place. Organisations in countries hit by recession were downsizing or delayering in an effort to survive. During the last decade, this trend towards restructuring and downsizing has continued in many organisations, together with an increase in subcontracting and outsourcing, thereby enabling them to compete successfully in the increasingly competitive global market (Sparks, et al., 2001).

The exposure of South African organisations to the effects of the world economy, technological advancement and fierce international competition (Marais & Schepers, 1996) resulted in organisations focusing more on their profitability and sustainability. In order for organisations to gain competitive advantage, they need to determine sources of cost-savings such as economies of scale, technology, access to raw materials and salaries and wages, with the latter being the largest immediate source of cost-savings (Marais & Schepers, 1996). Furthermore, the implications of these changes along with projects to cut costs have particular relevance in organisations. It is perceived as disruptive and demanding, leading to stress reactions, and feelings of anxiety among employees (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989).

Changes within organisations are also regarded as events that bring about threat and uncertainty, leading to perceptions of job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989). Job insecurity in turn, results in both reduced organisational commitment and job satisfaction. In the long run all this may have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of employees (Ashford et al., 1989; Davy, Kinicki, & Scheck, 1997; De Witte, 1997; Heymans, 2002; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). House (1981) indicates that the right kind of support from the right kind of people can be of significant value in reducing occupational stress, improving health, and buffering the impact of stress on health. Thus, it is important that researchers and practitioners understand the potential

contributions of support provided by supervisors and work colleagues in alleviating the strains associated with job insecurity (Lim, 1997).

Job Insecurity

De Witte (1999) points out that job insecurity is usually defined in different ways, while Mauno and Kinnunen (1999) indicate that literature usually conceptualises job insecurity from three general points of view, namely (i) a global or (ii) multi-dimensional concept, and (iii) a job stressor. In most instances, job insecurity has been defined according to the global viewpoint, signifying the threat of job loss or of job discontinuity (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, & Van Vuuren, 1991). Generally, this definition has been applied in the context of organisational crisis or change in which case job insecurity is considered as a first phase on the process of job loss (Ferrie, 1997; Joelson & Wahlquist, 1987).

Researchers who have adopted the multi-dimensional definition of job insecurity argue that job insecurity refers not only to the degree of uncertainty, but also to the continuity of certain dimensions of the job, such as opportunities for promotion (Elbert, 2002). De Witte (1999) indicates that from a multifaceted perspective, job insecurity is viewed as encompassing aspects such as the perceived threat to various job features, as well as the individual's ability to counteract these threats.

According to De Witte (1999) and Van Vuuren (1990), job insecurity consistently presents itself as a stressor. With regard to possible consequences, a distinction is made between stress reactions and coping behaviour. According to Van Vuuren (1990), stress reactions refer to the effects of the stressor on psychological well-being, while coping refers to the way in which a person deals with stress. Within the context of the stress theories, a stressor leads to some type of strain reaction, which holds consequences for the health and well-being of the individual, as well as the individual's work-related attitudes and behaviour (Sverke, Hellgren, Näswall, Chirumbolo, De Witte, & Goslinga, 2004).

Stress is often described with the help of a model, and the model presented in this research is the International Survey Research (ISR) Model, developed by Katz and Kahn (1978). This model is characterised by the notion of stress as a process, originating in the interaction between the individual and the environment. A stressor is considered to arise when an individual experiences signals in the environment that indicate the presence of a threat. The perceived risk of losing one's job can be such a threat, which the individual interprets as something negative and thus tries to counteract (Sverke et al., 2004). It may turn out that individuals feel that they do not have access to the necessary resources, or that they are not able to utilise these resources in a way that would eliminate the threat to employment. If that is the outcome of the evaluation, the individual will experience stress, which in this case is job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Just as the term suggests, job insecurity implies a great deal of uncertainty.

Job insecurity has been defined as an individual's expectations about continuity in a job situation (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002; Van Vuuren, 1990). Within this definition job insecurity is **firstly** perceived as a subjective (affective) experience or perception. Different employees might perceive the same situation differently. Some will feel insecure even when there is no objective reason to feel that way, while others may feel secure when their jobs are in fact threatened. **Secondly**, job insecurity implies uncertainty (cognitive) about the future. For the individual concerned job insecurity is a feeling of uncertainty whether he or she will be able to continue to work or whether his or her position will be made redundant. **Thirdly**, job insecurity entails doubts with regard to the continuation of employment as such. This aspect is central to job insecurity.

In summary, job insecurity arises out of a negative reaction to perceived fundamental and involuntary change in the situation after a cognitive or subjective appraisal of events in the organisation. It appears that anxiety is aroused by ambiguity and lack of information. Based on the above discussion, job insecurity is regarded as a stressor caused by workplace changes and it is potentially detrimental to the individual's job attitudes and behaviours. Job insecurity impacts strongly on employee health. In this section the conceptualisation of the construct of job insecurity was dealt with. In the next section the antecedents of job insecurity are outlined.

Job insecurity has its own particular antecedents and is manifested in actions and attitudes (Jacobson, 1991). Furthermore, it is important to determine differences between the job insecurity levels of demographic groups, given that findings in this regard differ between various studies conducted previously. In some studies researchers found age, gender, race, qualifications and tenure to be related to variations in levels of job insecurity, whilst other research did not replicate these findings.

A South African study conducted by Buitendach and Rothmann (2004) indicated a positive relationship between age and job insecurity. The study revealed that employees in the age group 36 to 45 experienced the highest levels of job insecurity. It can be speculated that this age is a very difficult period of time. During this time, important decisions need to be made. It is time when employees must decide whether they want to make a career change or stay with their current career (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004).

As far as gender is concerned, Näswall, Sverke, and Hellgren (2001) indicated that men exhibited a stronger relation between the experience of job insecurity and its negative outcomes than women. These results are in contrast with research done by Elbert (2002), Buitendach and Rothmann (2004); and Rannona (2003), where no significant differences were found between males and females.

Regarding the relationship between job insecurity and race, the findings of Rannona (2003) seem to suggest that black respondents experienced higher levels of job insecurity than their white counterparts. These results are in contrast with the findings of Buitendach and Rothmann (2004), who found that white employees experienced higher levels of job insecurity than black employees. One possible explanation for higher levels of job insecurity in whites is that the implementation of the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) created new job opportunities for blacks, while whites (and especially white males) face less employment opportunities (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2004).

Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson, and Hartley (1991) mentioned that individuals with higher levels of education tend to experience lower levels of job insecurity. It has been suggested that

since white-collar workers and professionals usually have higher qualification levels, they will be less vulnerable to job loss than employees with lower levels of qualifications (Schaufeli, 1992). In contrast, Elbert (2002) and Rannona (2003) found no significant differences between qualification and job insecurity.

In this section, antecedents of job insecurity were discussed. It was noted that job insecurity is caused by various variables, based on the interpretation of events. Also, it became apparent that a person's reaction depends on his or her individual circumstances such as age, gender, race and level of education. The next section will focus on the consequences of job insecurity.

Research on job insecurity focused primarily on negative effects relating to individuals and organisations (Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti, & Happonen, 2000; Petzall, Parker, & Stoelberk, 2000). Hence, from the available literature it is evident that job insecurity has an impact on three crucial variables namely, psychological well-being, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (De Witte, 1997, 1999).

Probst and Brubaker (2001) have shown that job insecurity among employees leads to job dissatisfaction, an increase in negative physical health outcomes and lower reports of psychological well-being. In addition, employees with perceptions of low job security are more likely to engage in work withdrawal behaviours and report lower organisational commitment, which in turn often leads to employee turnover (Probst & Brubaker, 2001). People with feelings of job insecurity do indeed exhibit avoidance behaviour by psychologically withdrawing from their work (Van Vuuren et al., 1991). Avoidance behaviour includes poor motivation to go to work, which manifests itself in employee propensity to be absent from work, no interest in own work, no dedication and no interest in the company situation (Van Vuuren et al., 1991).

Soehnlein (1998) conducted research in a telecoms company in America and indicated that employees often react to a threat of job loss by decreased work effort and increased resistance to change, and that such employees are more likely to leave the organisation. It is, however, reasonable to assume that a radical change in working conditions – from having been secure to being insecure – will have an influence not only on employee's health status, but also on their

attitudes and behaviours in relation to the organisation itself. As Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984, p. 438) phrased it, “workers react to job insecurity, and their reactions have consequences for organisational effectiveness”. Long-term, ominous job insecurity is likely to have severe consequences for an employee’s overall life situation in that economic and other highly valued aspects of life will be perceived as threatened (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991).

Based on the above arguments it can be concluded that the consequences of job insecurity have serious implication for both the individual and the organisation. Workers experiencing job insecurity may undermine the effectiveness of the organisation through absence due to illness and possibly even engaging in individual action.

Work-Based Support

To the extent that job insecurity has become a relatively permanent state for increasing numbers of employees, and that it has been shown to have a negative effect on individuals’ job attitudes, work behaviours and psychological health, it is important to identify the factors that may reduce or eliminate the strains associated with job insecurity (Lim, 1997). In this study, one specific potential moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and its outcomes has been examined, i.e. work-based support.

According to Probst (2003), work-based support is defined as support provided by supervisors and work colleagues. These sources of support have been examined because they were likely to be those that are readily available to the individual employee in the context of the workplace. Work-related sources of support (work supervisors and co-workers) are most effective in both reducing occupational stress and buffering the impact of such stress on health. In some occupational settings supervisors are likely to be the most effective sources of support, while co-workers are most effective in others. Thus, it is important to specify the relevant stressors and health outcomes in order to know which sources of support are likely to be most the effective (House, 1981).

Work-based support has occupied a central role in the stress literature and has often been identified as a factor that helps to buffer the individual against the negative effects of stressful events, in this research job insecurity (Cohen & Willis, 1985; George, Reed, Ballard, Collin, & Fielding, 1993). Consistent with findings in the literature on stress and work-based support, it is suggested that work-based support may play a critical role in moderating the relationship between job insecurity and its consequences, i.e. work-based support interacts with job insecurity in predicting its outcomes (Lim 1997).

Lim (1997) reports that supervisor support and work colleague support significantly moderated relationships - firstly between job insecurity and job satisfaction, and secondly between job insecurity and non-compliant behaviour. The companionship and emotional functions performed by support from supervisor and work colleagues may create a supportive and conducive work atmosphere in the organisation, thereby mitigating the individual's feelings of job dissatisfaction even when their job security is at stake. Supervisors and work colleagues may also assist the individual to re-evaluate the work situation so that it becomes more manageable and less threatening. By making the work situation appear less threatening, support provided by supervisor and work colleagues may be able to buffer the individual against a sense of dissatisfaction with his or her job in the context of job insecurity (Lim, 1997).

House (1981) considers work-based support to be more important in the context of job insecurity. As any stressor, perceived job insecurity affects individuals negatively. The negative feelings that job insecurity evokes may prompt employees to seek out the support of each other, to express their frustration or fears, but also to seek alternatives and strategies for coping with the negative situation (Callan, 1993). Armstrong-Stassen (1993) found that support from supervisors during restructuring served as a moderator of the effect of job insecurity on organisational attitudes. She suggests that it is vital for the organisation to proactively provide support in order to prevent employees' attitudes towards the organisation from deteriorating.

In the light of the above arguments, the researcher came to a conclusion that within the context of job insecurity, it is conceivable that support derived from others at the workplace can contribute significantly in buffering occupational stress (job insecurity, job dissatisfaction and

low organisational commitment) and improve employees' general health. Organisations should play an important role in channelling efforts towards enhancing work-based to assist individuals in coping with job insecurity in a manner that is less detrimental to both the individual and the organisation.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the most often-researched work attitude in the organisational behaviour literature (Blau, 1999). Although there are some variations in the definitions of job satisfaction, there seems to be general consensus that job satisfaction can be described as an affective or emotional reaction to a job resulting from a comparison of actual outcomes with the required outcomes (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992; Hirschfeld, 2000; Locke, 1976). Schneider and Snyder (1975), on the other hand, define job satisfaction as a personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job. Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967) explain this comparison further by stating that employees seek to achieve and maintain correspondence with their environment. This can be described in terms of the individual fulfilling the requirements of the environment, and the environment fulfilling the requirements of the individual (Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr, 1981). This means that employees will experience job satisfaction if they feel that their individual capacities, experience and values can be organised in their work environment and that the work environment offers them opportunities and rewards (Dawis, 1992; Roberts & Roseanne, 1998).

The above is supported by the Effort-Reward Imbalance Model which states that individuals put a certain amount of effort into their work in order to be rewarded accordingly (Sverke et al., 2002). According to Siegrist (1996), important rewards for balancing effort are money (salary), self-esteem and secure employment.

For the purposes of this study, job satisfaction can be described as an internal appraisal of the expected outcome against the individual's ideal criteria. If the outcome received, for example payment, is less than the inputs, such as time and effort, then the individual would be

dissatisfied. However, if the real perceived outcome is greater or equal to individual's inputs, the individual would be satisfied.

Job satisfaction is an important construct because of its relevance to the physical and mental well-being of employees (Khwela, 2001). As work is an important aspect of people's lives, job satisfaction is important because of its implications to job-related behaviours such as productivity, absenteeism or turnover (Robbins, 2001). Milkovich and Boudreau (1997) indicated in their research that organisations in general prefer employees who are satisfied with their work because it makes for a better work environment, which has an overall positive effect on production.

One of the organisational determinants of job satisfaction is job security. Job security helps employees to satisfy their safety and security needs. During periods of high unemployment, people value job security more than when jobs are plentiful (Grant, 1984). The question of job security is fundamental to job satisfaction, since the unlimited changes to which employees are exposed could impact on both the employee and employer. It is assumed that organisations could unknowingly harm job satisfaction by engaging in unduly change activities, which creates feelings of job insecurity. A lack of understanding of such activities and the resulting job insecurity leads to the development of an alienated workforce, deprivation of organisational commitment and a reluctance to do more than the minimum input (Hunt, Chonko, & Wood, 1995). In addition, attitudinal reactions towards job insecurity, i.e. intentions to quit, reduced job satisfaction and organisational commitment, were found to be related to job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; Borg & Elizur, 1992; Davy, et al., 1997; Heaney, Israel, & House, 1994; Lim, 1996; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996; Yousef, 1998).

Organisational Commitment

Wagner and Hollenbeck (1995) conceptualised organisational commitment as the identification with one's employer that includes the willingness to work hard on behalf of the organisation, and the intention to remain with the organisation for an extended period of time. Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) and Bagraim (2003) regard this identification as a psychological bond between

the employer and employing organisation. Organisational commitment is described as a motivational response to a positive approach of the work environment. It is also an attachment to or identification with the organisation (Matheiu & Zajac, 1990). Chow (1994) defined organisational commitment as the extent to which employees identify with their organisation and managerial goals, show a willingness to invest effort, participate in decision-making and internalise organisational values.

The multidimensional approach of organisational commitment encompasses affective, continuance and normative commitment (Suliman & Iles, 2000). Affective commitment is concerned with the extent to which the individual identifies with the organisation. Continuance commitment, on the other hand, is more calculative. Finally, normative commitment is commitment to the organisation. This implies that people stay with the organisation because they want to (affective), because they need to (continuance), or because they feel they ought to (normative) (McDonald & Makin, 2000).

Despite these differences in conceptualisation and the increasing consensus that organisational commitment is a multidimensional construct, much of the empirical research has focused on the affective perspective. The emphasis on affective commitment has been mostly due to the evidence that affective commitment has the strongest and most consistent relationship with desirable outcomes (Arzu Wasti, 2003). As a consequence, researchers such as Buitendach and De Witte (2005) restrict the measurement of organisational commitment to affective commitment, leaving the two other components aside. The present study will also measure only affective commitment.

Previous research has related the experience of job insecurity to lower levels of commitment to the organization (Armstrong-Stassen, 1993; Borg & Elizur, 1992; McFarlane, Shore & Tetrick, 1991). This can be put into the context of the psychological contract (Davy et al., 1997; Rosseau, 1989). The employee may perceive job insecurity as a breach of the psychological contract, especially if he or she entered the employment relationship under the implicit understanding that a job well done would guarantee continued employment. Job insecurity would then be a signal that the organisation is not keeping its end of the deal (Sverke et al.,

2004). As a consequence, the employee may then be lowering his or her level of commitment, or also by getting the feeling that the employer can no longer be trusted. Lowered commitment result in an organisation's employees no longer feeling they want to exert themselves for the benefit of the organisation.

General Health

According to Constitution of the World Health Organisation (2000), "general health" can be defined as state of complete physical, social and mental well-being; it is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is a resource for everyday life, not the object of living. It is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities.

From the perspective of behavioural theory, well-being rests both in the environment and in the individual. This view is similar to the view expressed in Katz and Kahn's (1978) International Survey Research Model, and Moos's (1994) model according to which stressors are experienced from within the individual, but could also be a factor in the environment. Well-being is associated with long-established characteristics in the individual, i.e. a learned sense of competence in life's tasks (Brodksy, 1988; Maddi, 1989; Moller, 1993).

The presence of certain job characteristics like role ambiguity, various environmental factors and perceived control at work may lead to job insecurity (Barling & Kelloway, 1996; Reisel, 1998). De Witte (1999) found four specific job characteristics in his study that showed a significant correlation with well-being. The first is skill utilisation – individuals who can use their skills report a higher level of well-being. Secondly, high workload is associated with a lower state of well-being. Thirdly, job insecurity is associated with distress, and, finally the amount of autonomy in the work correlates with higher levels of psychological well-being (De Witte, 1999). Although this study is not intended to measure the job characteristics *per se* that influence well-being, it is important to be aware of certain job characteristics that have an effect on well-being. Organisations should address these to ensure that undesirable job characteristics are removed from the working environment in order to create the optimal working environment.

McDonough (2000) found perceived job insecurity to be associated with lower scores in self-rated general health and increases in both distress and the use of medications among a national sample of Canadian workers. Borg, Kristensen, and Burr (2000) analysed data from 5001 Danish employees over a five-year period and found that high levels of perceived job insecurity were significantly related to lowered self-rated general health. A study among 2000 Swiss employees by Domenighetti, D'Avanzo, and Bisig (2000) found that psychosocial stress induced by perceived job insecurity, had negative effects on 10 different self-reported indicators of health and health-related behaviours (Sparks et al., 2001).

In a South African study conducted by Janse van Rensburg (2003), two factors, namely anxiety and depression, showed significant relationships with job insecurity. A possible explanation for this could be that when employees experience high levels of job insecurity, it can result in anxiety and depression. This seems to support Burchell's (1999) theory that there is a causal link between job insecurity and psychological well-being in the form of anxiety and depression. This also supports the research conclusions of De Witte (1999) that job insecurity leads to decreased psychological well-being. The results furthermore confirm the findings of other authors like Probst and Brubaker (2001) that job insecurity leads to anxiety and depression. From these results one might speculate that if job insecurity is reduced, psychological well-being will increase, specifically in terms of the reduction of anxiety and depression.

Within this section, the concept of general health was conceptualised from the literature. Also, the importance and the relationship between general health and job insecurity were discussed.

From the literature review it would appear that, in research conducted thus far, there is a relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health. House (1981) considers work-based support to be more important in the context of job insecurity. Consistent with findings in the literature on stress and work-based support, it is suggested that work-based support may play a critical role in moderating the relationship between job insecurity and its consequences, i.e. work-based support interacts with job insecurity in predicting its outcomes (Lim 1997). Hence, from the available literature it is evident that job insecurity has an impact on three crucial variables,

namely psychological well-being, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (De Witte, 1997). Job insecurity reduces the levels of psychological well-being, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (De Witte, 1999).

The objective of this study is to identify any relationship that may exist between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health among Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Human Resources Professionals were selected in this study because their roles have changed tremendously during the last few years. The new roles call for less emphasis on Human Resources processing and administration; it requires a greater focus on strategic or value-added Human Resources activities.

The introduction of new technology and integrated Human Resources systems have resulted in some of the functional areas to be centralised, e.g. the recruitment service. People in redundant positions had to accept alternative employment positions or relocate to other business units or geographical areas in order to retain their jobs. More work has to be done with fewer employees in order for the industry to manage its cost to income ratio, which in turn places a lot of extra pressure on employees, especially in terms of work/life balance. All these drastic changes cause discomfort, frustration, stress and above all, job insecurity in some employees.

The present study makes a valuable contribution to a better understanding of how these drastic changes mentioned above can affect job security, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Furthermore, this study will also contribute to understanding whether work-based support (support from supervisors and co-workers) is most effective in reducing job insecurity as well as buffering the impact of such stress on health.

Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₁: There is a practically and statistically significant relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry.

- H₂: Differences exist between the experience of job insecurity of participants from various demographic groups (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications).
- H₃: Job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction of the participants.
- H₄: Job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment of the participants.
- H₅: Job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to general health of the participants.

METHOD

Research design

A cross-sectional design was used to describe the information on the population collected at that particular point in time. According to Shaughnessy & Zechmeister (1997) this design can be used to evaluate interrelationships among variables within a population and is also ideally suited to describe and predict functions associated with correlative research.

Study population

The entire population of approximately 200 Human Resources Professionals working in a chemical industry was used, although a response rate of 114 participants was obtained. The participants included workers graded at various levels, ranging from level 8 (C-Lower) up to level 3 (E-Lower) (Patterson band grading). The characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Study Population (N = 114)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	55	48%
	Female	59	52%
Race	Black	43	38%
	White	71	62%
Age	24 – 35 years	39	34%
	36 – 45 years	47	41%
	46 and older	28	25%
Marital Status	Married	84	74%
	Single	29	25%
Years in company	Less than 1 year	7	6%
	1 – 10 years	35	31%
	10 – 20 years	48	42%
	Longer than 20 years	23	20%
Years in current position	Less than 1 year	30	26%
	1 – 10 years	56	49%
	10 – 20 years	27	24%
	Longer than 10 years	1	1%
Job level	Level 8	9	8%
	Level 7	15	13%
	Level 6	39	34%
	Level 5	36	32%
	Level 4	13	11%
	Level 3	1	1%
Level of qualification	Grade 12	2	2%
	3-year diploma / degree	46	40%
	Post-graduate qualification	65	57%

Table 1 indicates that the total population consisted mainly of females (52%). More than half (62%) of the participants are whites, while (38%) are from other races (African, Asian & Coloured). The majority of the respondents (41%) are in their middle age (36 to 45 years), followed by respondents who are between 24 and 35 years of age (34%). A high percentage (74%) of the participants is married, and only 25% is single. The majority of the respondents (42%) have continuous service of 10 to 20 years. There is an indication that 49% of the participants have been in their current positions for a period of 1 to 10 years, and the majority of the participants (34%) are on level 6, followed by (32%) on level 5. The industry follows the Paterson band grading system (e.g. level 8, which is the lowest, is C-Lower, and level 3, which is the highest, is E-Lower). More than half (57%) of the population have a post-graduate

qualification, followed by 40% who have a three-year diploma or degree. The conclusions can be made regarding the demographic variables with small numbers, for example job level, but they are only applicable on this specific sample, no generalisation.

Measuring instruments

The following measuring instruments were used in this study:

The ***Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ)*** (De Witte, 2000) was used as a measure of job insecurity. The JISQ consists of 11 items and was used to measure the perceived job insecurity of participants. It encapsulates both cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and is arranged along a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example of an item relating to cognitive job insecurity would be: "I am sure I can keep my job", whereas an example of an item relating to affective job insecurity would be: "I am worried about keeping my job". The items of the JISQ, measuring global job insecurity, are reported to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,92. Furthermore, 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; while the five items measuring affective job insecurity displaying a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 (De Witte, 2000). Buitendach and Rothmann (2004) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,90 for items measuring cognitive job insecurity, and 0,85 for items relating to affective job insecurity.

The ***Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ)*** of House and Wells (1978) was used to measure work-based support of the participants. The questions aimed to distinguish between two types of support – emotional (questions 1, 2, 5 and 6) and instrumental (questions 3 and 4) from four different sources – work supervisors, co-workers ("others at work"), spouses, and a combined category of friends and relatives. An example of a question relating to emotional support would be: "How much is each of the following people willing to listen to your work-related problems?" An example of a statement relating to instrumental support would be: "My supervisor is competent in doing his/her job". Validity and reliability evidence for the scale has been provided by a number of studies on occupational stress and health. The items of the Social Support

Questionnaire are reported to have a high Cronbach alpha coefficient on both scales (House, 1981).

The ***Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)*** (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) was used to measure job satisfaction. It taps affective responses to various aspects of one's job (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2001). The MSQ can be used to measure two distinct components, namely intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000). An example of an item relating to intrinsic job satisfaction would be: "The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities", whereas an example of an item relating to extrinsic job satisfaction would be: "The competence of my supervisor in making decisions". The response format varied on a five-point intensity scale from (*very dissatisfied*) to (*very satisfied*). Hirschfeld (2000) found that a two-factor model (intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction) is superior to a one-factor model (total job satisfaction). Alpha coefficients were found to be ranging from 0,87 to 0,95, a result which supports the internal consistency of the scale (Liam, Bauman, & Pine, 1998; Hirschfeld, 2000). Selepe (2004) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,92 (intrinsic scales) and 0,86 (extrinsic scales), while Rannona (2004) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,90 (intrinsic scales) and 0,86 (extrinsic scales).

The ***Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)*** of Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993) was used to measure the organisational commitment of the participants. In order to achieve this in the present study, it was decided to use six items to measure the affective commitment from the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Meyer, Allen, and Smith, 1993). The emphasis on affective commitment has been mostly due to the evidence that affective commitment has the strongest and most consistent relationship with desirable outcomes (Arzu Wasti, 2003). As a consequence, researchers such as Buitendach and De Witte (2005) restricted the measurement of organisational commitment to affective commitment, leaving the two other components aside. Responses to this scale were scored on a five-point Likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree* and *5 = strongly agree*). The following are examples of the items relating to the affective commitment: "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this

organisation" and "I do not feel like part of the family at my organisation". In South African studies, Khwela (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,87 for affective commitment, Rannona (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,70 for affective commitment, and Selepe (2004) reported an alpha coefficient of 0,75 for affective commitment.

The ***General Health Questionnaire*** (GHQ) of Goldberg and Hillier (1979) was used to measure the participants' general health. For the purposes of this study, the 28-item version was used. Responses were scored on a four-point Likert-type scale. The four subscales measure the degree of 1) somatic symptoms; 2) anxiety and insomnia; 3) social dysfunction and 4) severe depression. An example of a question relating to somatic symptoms would be: "Have you recently been feeling perfectly well and in good health?", whereas an example of a question relating to anxiety and insomnia would be: "Have you recently lost much sleep over worry?" An example of a question relating to social dysfunction would be: "Have you ever been taking longer over the things you do?", whereas an example of a question relating to severe depression would be: "Have you ever been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?" A high value on the GHQ is indicative of a high level of distress, where a low score implies a low level of distress, in other words indicating a high level of general health. Snoer (2005) obtained Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,86 (somatic symptoms), 0,93 (anxiety and insomnia), 0,82 (social dysfunction), 0,94 (severe depression) and 0,94 (general health total). Janse van Rensburg (2003) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,85 (somatic symptoms), 0,92 (anxiety and insomnia), 0,78 (social dysfunction), 0,82 (severe depression) and 0,93 (general health total).

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the SPSS program (SPSS, 2003). Descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) were used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients and confirmatory factor analysis were used to determine the internal consistency, reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationship between the variables. A cut-off point of 0,30, which represents a medium effect (Cohen, 1988), was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the significance of differences between job insecurity and various demographic groups, such as age, years in company, years in position, job level, qualifications, gender and race. MANOVA tests are used to determine whether mean differences among groups on a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In the use of MANOVA, a new dependent variable that maximises group differences is created from the set of dependent variables. One-way analysis is then performed on the newly created dependent variable. Wilk's Lambda was used to test the significance of the effects. Wilk's Lambda is a likelihood ratio statistic that tests the likelihood of the data under the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups against the likelihood under the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups. When an effect was significant in MANOVA, ANOVA was used to discover which dependent variables were affected. Tukey tests were done to indicate which groups differed significantly when ANOVA's were done.

Lastly, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the percentage of variance in the dependent variables predicted by the independent variables. The effect sizes (which indicate practical significance) in the case of multiple regression is given by the following formula (Steyn, 1999):

$$f^2 = R^2 / 1 - R^2$$

A cut-off point of 0,10 (medium effect) (Steyn, 1999) was set for practical significance of f^2 .

RESULTS

Construct validity of the measuring instruments

A simple principal component analysis was conducted to determine the reliability and validity of the 11 items of the JISQ on the total sample of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that two factors, which

explained 58,22% of the total variance, could be extracted. Therefore the two factors were used and represented as job insecurity (cognitive) and job insecurity (affective). The principal component matrix of JISQ is reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Principal Component Matrix for the Items of the JISQ

Item	Description	F ₁	F ₂
JIS1	I am afraid I will get fired / be dismissed	0,73	0,15
JIS2	I am worried about keeping my job	0,83	0,13
JIS3	I fear I will lose my job	0,76	0,17
JIS4	The fact that I might become unemployed frightens me	0,75	-0,05
JIS5	I feel insecure about the future of my job	0,84	0,10
JIS6	The chance I will get fired is small	0,33	-0,09
JIS7	I think I might get fired in the near future	0,07	0,86
JIS8	Chances are I will soon lose my job	0,13	0,85
JIS9	I think I can continue working for my organisation	0,55	0,22
JIS10	I am sure I can keep my job	0,73	0,29
JIS11	I feel secure about my job	0,81	0,18

A Factor labels: F₁ Cognitive Factor, F₂ Affective

Inspection of Table 2 indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11 loaded correctly on the first factor, which can be labelled *Cognitive*. Items loading on this factor relate to aspects such as being afraid of getting fired or dismissed, being worried about keeping the job, and being frightened about the possibility of becoming unemployed. Items 5 and 9 loaded incorrectly on the first factor. Items 7 and 8 loaded correctly on the second factor, which is representative of *Affective*, comprising aspects such as being insecure about the future of the job, the chance of getting fired is small, having the thought of getting fired in the near future. Item 6 was problematic and did not load on either component. This item, "The chance I will get fired is small" might be interpreted differently by participants because of a lack of job security and uncertainty.

A simple principal component analysis was conducted on the 20 items of the *MSQ* on the total sample of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that two factors, which explained 48,27% of the total variance, could be extracted. Therefore two factors were used and represented as job satisfaction

(intrinsic) and job satisfaction (extrinsic). The principal component matrix of MSQ is reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Principal Component Matrix for the Items of the MSQ

Item	Description	F ₁	F ₂
MSQ1	Being able to keep busy all the time	0,66	0,31
MSQ2	The chance to work alone on a job	0,58	-0,14
MSQ3	The chance to do different things from time to time	0,72	0,22
MSQ4	The chance to be "somebody" in the community	0,59	0,20
MSQ5	The way my boss handles his/her workers	0,17	0,76
MSQ6	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	0,11	0,82
MSQ7	Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience	0,35	0,38
MSQ8	The way my job provides for steady employment	0,42	0,47
MSQ9	The chance to do things for other people	0,66	0,28
MSQ10	The chance to tell people what to do	0,28	0,32
MSQ11	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	0,68	0,37
MSQ12	The way company policies are put into practice	0,43	0,25
MSQ13	My pay and the amount of work I do	0,09	0,59
MSQ14	The chances for advancement on this job	0,27	0,60
MSQ15	The freedom to use my own judgement	0,62	0,45
MSQ16	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job	0,70	0,33
MSQ17	The working conditions	0,49	0,62
MSQ18	The way my co-workers get along with each other	0,20	0,61
MSQ19	The praise I get for doing a good job	0,45	0,68
MSQ20	The feeling of accomplishment I get from my job	0,62	0,51

A Factor labels: F₁ Intrinsic Factor₂ Extrinsic

Inspection of Table 3 indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 15, 16, and 20 loaded correctly on the first factor, which can be labelled *Intrinsic*. Items loading on this factor relate to people's feelings about the nature of the job the job tasks themselves. Items 5, 6, 13, 14, 17, 18, and 19 loaded correctly on the second factor, which is representative of *Extrinsic*. Items loading on this factor relate to people's feelings about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself. Item 8 loaded incorrectly on the second factor. Items 7, 10, and 12 were problematic, did not load on either component. Item 7, "Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience ", Item 10 "The chance to tell people what to do ", and Item 12 "The way company policies are put into practice" are ambiguous and might be interpreted differently by participants.

A component matrices was conducted on the 6 items (Affective) of the OCQ on the total sample of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that only one factor could be extracted, also due to the fact that only affective sub-scale of the questionnaire was used, explaining 34.06 of the total variance. The component matrix of the affective organisational commitment questionnaire is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Component Matrix for the Items of the AOCQ

Item	Description	F ₁
AOCQ1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation	0,68
AOCQ4	I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	0,60
AOCQ7	I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organisation	0,37
AOCQ10	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organisation	0,69
AOCQ13	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	0,80
AOCQ16	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	0,68

A Factor label: F₁ Affective

The results indicate that items 1, 4, 10, 13, and 16 loaded correctly. Item 7 was problematic and did not load on either component. Item 7, "I do not feel like part of the family at my organisation", is ambiguous and might be interpreted differently by participants. Items loading on this factor relate to an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation.

A simple principal component analysis was conducted on the 28 items of the *GHQ* on the total sample of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that four factors, which explained 60,47% of the total variance, could be extracted. Therefore four factors were used and represented as General Health (Somatic Symptoms), General Health (Social Dysfunction), General Health (Anxiety/Insomnia) and General Health (Severe Depression). The principal component matrix of GHQ is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Principal Component Matrix for the Items of the GHQ

Item	Description	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₄
HAVE YOU RECENTLY					
GHQA1	Been feeling perfectly well and in good health?	0,67	0,13	0,35	-0,07
GHQA2	Been feeling in need of a good tonic?	0,71	0,06	0,24	0,19
QHQA3	Been feeling run down and out of sorts?	0,71	0,05	0,39	0,21
GHQA4	Felt that you are ill?	0,67	0,01	0,36	0,21
GHQA5	Been getting any pains in your head?	0,67	-0,12	0,05	0,45
GHQA6	Been getting a feeling of tightness or pressure in your head?	0,72	-0,05	0,02	0,43
GHQA7	Been having hot or cold spells?	0,69	0,82	0,11	0,01
GHQB1	Lost much sleep over worry?	0,75	0,24	0,21	0,01
GHQB2	Had difficulty in staying asleep once you are off?	0,74	0,28	0,17	0,03
GHQB3	Felt constantly under strain?	0,67	0,14	0,26	0,23
GHQB4	Been getting edgy and bad-tempered?	0,58	-0,09	0,31	0,39
GHQB5	Been getting scared or panicky for no good reason?	0,53	0,07	0,21	0,55
GHQB6	Found everything getting on top of you?	0,45	-0,03	0,38	0,53
GHQB7	Been feeling nervous and strung-up all the time?	0,67	0,07	0,34	0,35
GHQC1	Been managing to keep yourself busy and occupied?	0,18	-0,15	0,04	0,09
GHQC2	Been taking longer over things you do?	0,24	-0,00	0,57	0,32
GHQC3	Felt on the whole you were doing things well?	0,15	-0,05	0,86	0,08
GHQC4	Been satisfied with the way you've carried out your task?	0,21	0,03	0,84	0,08
GHQC5	Felt that you are playing a useful part in things?	0,29	0,19	0,67	0,20
GHQC6	Felt capable of making decisions about things?	0,28	0,12	0,67	0,24
GHQC7	Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?	0,36	0,10	0,70	0,18
GHQD1	Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	0,21	0,17	0,30	0,74
GHQD2	Felt that life is entirely hopeless?	0,15	0,76	0,24	0,29
GHQD3	Felt that life is not worth living?	-0,05	0,74	0,21	0,10
GHQD4	Thought of the possibility that you might do away with yourself?	-0,00	0,50	-0,00	0,39
GHQD5	Found at times you couldn't do anything because your nerves were too bad?	0,18	0,16	0,32	0,71
GHQD6	Found yourself wishing you were dead and away from it all?	0,14	0,72	0,05	-0,23
GHQD7	Found that the idea of taking your own life kept coming into your mind?	0,23	0,54	-0,21	0,07

A Factor labels: F₁ Somatic Factor₂ Anxiety/Insomnia Factor₃ Social Dysfunction Factor₄ Severe Depression

Inspection of Table 5 indicates that items A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 and A7 loaded accordingly on the first factor, which can be labelled *Somatic Symptoms*. Items loading on this factor relate to aspects such as been feeling in need of a good tonic, been feeling run down and out of sorts, been getting any pains in your head, and been having hot or cold spells. Items B1, B2, B3, B4 and B7 loaded incorrectly on the first factor. Items D2, D3 and D4 loaded accordingly on the second factor, which is representative of *Anxiety/Insomnia*, comprising aspects such as having difficulty in staying asleep once you are off, been getting edgy and bad-tempered, been getting scared or

panicky for no good reason, and been feeling nervous and strung-up all the time. Items D6 and D7 loaded incorrectly on the second factor.

Items C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C7 loaded correctly on the third factor, which is representative of *Social Dysfunction*, consisting of aspects such as been managing to keep yourself busy and occupied, been satisfied with the way you have carried out your task, felt that you are playing a useful part in things, and felt capable of making decisions about things. Items D1 and D5 loaded correctly on the fourth factor, which can be labelled *Severe Depression*. Items loading on this factor relate to aspects such as been thinking of yourself as a worthless person, felt that life is entirely hopeless or is not worth living, and found yourself wishing you were dead and away from it all. Items B5 and B6 loaded incorrectly on the fourth factor.

Item C1 was problematic and did not load on either component. Item C1 "Been managing to keep yourself busy and occupied" might be interpreted differently by participants, as it all depends on the type of activities that the individual is busy with at that stage. For the purposes of this study, all the items that loaded incorrectly will not be removed from the questionnaire because the sample is too small.

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients and the inter-item correlation coefficients of the JISQ, SSQ, MSQ, AOCQ and GHQ were determined for Human Resources Professionals (N = 114) working in a chemical industry. The results are presented in Table 6.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 6

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

Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	$r(\text{Mean})$	α
JISQ (Affective)	1,88	0,76	0,77	0,74	0,55	0,86
JISQ (Cognitive)	1,71	0,51	0,27	-0,73	0,28	0,68
SSQ (Emotional - Supervisor)	2,26	0,78	-1,16	0,64	0,71	0,91
SSQ (Emotional - Other)	2,00	0,58	-0,31	0,41	0,32	0,71
MSQ (Intrinsic)	4,01	0,55	-1,44	5,07	0,39	0,88
MSQ (Extrinsic)	3,59	0,69	-0,94	0,75	0,41	0,84
AOCQ (Affective)	3,46	0,81	-0,76	0,48	0,46	0,83
GHQ (Somatic symptoms)	1,90	0,69	0,87	-0,06	0,57	0,90
GHQ (Anxiety/Insomnia)	1,83	0,67	0,70	-0,17	0,59	0,91
GHQ (Social dysfunction)	1,84	0,52	0,64	0,23	0,46	0,84
GHQ (Severe depression)	1,12	0,24	2,14	4,21	0,30	0,74

With regard to the internal consistency of the scales, Table 6 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients varying from 0,68 to 0,91 were obtained for the scales, with the exception of the cognitive job insecurity subscale, which fell slightly below the 0,70 cut-off point (see Nunally & Bemstein, 1994). The mean inter-item correlations were consistent with the guideline of $0,15 < r < 0,50$, as suggested by Clark and Watson (1995). The inter-item correlations of four scales, namely affective job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor), somatic symptoms, and anxiety/insomnia were somewhat high. The information reflected indicates that the scores on all subscales are normally distributed.

Next, Pearson correlation coefficient between the JISQ, SSQ, MSQ, AOCQ and GHQ are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients of the JISQ, SSQ, MSQ, AOCQ and GHQ dimensions

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
JOB INSECURITY											
1. JISQ (Affective)	-										
2. JISQ (Cognitive)	0,64***	-									
WORK-BASED SUPPORT											
3. SSQ - Emotional (Supervisor)	-0,13*	-0,16 *	-								
4. SSQ – Emotional (Other)	-0,21*	-0,16*	0,23*	-							
JOB SATISFACTION											
5. MSQ (Intrinsic)	-0,37*+	-0,34*+	0,54***	0,21*	-						
6. MSQ (Extrinsic)	-0,23*	-0,27*	0,77***	0,32*+	0,74***	-					
AFFECTIVE ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT											
7. OCQ (Affective)	-0,05	-0,12*	0,42*+	0,18*	0,43*+	0,48*+	-				
GENERAL HEALTH											
8. GHQ (Somatic Symptoms)	0,22*	0,23*	-0,34*+	-0,09*	-0,26*	-0,31*+	-0,11*	-			
9. GHQ (Anxiety/Insomnia)	0,34*+	0,33*+	-0,38*+	-0,15*	-0,37*+	-0,42*+	-0,17*	0,78***	-		
10. GHQ (Social Dysfunction)	0,19*	0,14*	-0,31*+	-0,03	-0,31*+	-0,32*+	-0,05	0,60***	0,63***	-	
11. GHQ (Severe Depression)	0,27*	0,29*	-0,25*	-0,01	-0,24*	-0,26*	-0,10*	0,46*+	0,54***	0,49*+	-

* Correlation is statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$ + Correlation is practically significant $r > 0,30$ (medium effect)++ Correlation is practically significant $r > 0,50$ (large effect)

Table 7 shows a statistically significant negative correlation between job insecurity (affective and cognitive) and emotional social support (supervisor and other). It can be deduced that job insecurity and its facets (affective and cognitive) is related to emotional social support (support from supervisor and other). This implies that job insecurity increases due to a lack of emotional social support.

Intrinsic job satisfaction showed a practically and statistically significant negative correlation of medium effect with affective and cognitive job insecurity. A practically and statistically significant positive correlation of a large effect with emotional social support (supervisor). A statistically significant positive correlation with emotional social support (other). Extrinsic job satisfaction demonstrated a statistically significant negative correlation with affective and cognitive job insecurity. A practically and statistically significant positive correlation of large effect with emotional social support (supervisor). A practically and statistically significant positive correlation of medium effect with emotional social support (other). It can be deduced that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction is related to affective and cognitive job insecurity and emotional social support (supervisor and other). The results indicate that lower levels of job satisfaction will increase job insecurity, while higher levels of social support will increase job satisfaction.

Affective commitment demonstrated a statistically significant negative correlation with cognitive job insecurity. A statistically significant positive correlation with emotional social support (other). A practically and statistically significant positive correlation of medium effect with emotional social support (supervisor) and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. It can be deduced that affective commitment is related to cognitive job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor and other) and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. The results indicate that lower levels of affective commitment will increase cognitive job insecurity. The above also indicates that higher levels of social support and job satisfaction will decrease affective commitment.

A statistically significant positive correlation was obtained between somatic symptoms and affective and cognitive job insecurity. A statistically significant negative correlation was also obtained between somatic symptoms, emotional social support (other), intrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment. A practically and statistically significant negative correlation of medium effect was obtained between somatic symptoms, emotional social support (supervisor) and extrinsic job satisfaction. It can be deduced that somatic symptoms are related to affective and cognitive job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor and other), intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment. This implies that higher levels of somatic

symptoms will increase job insecurity, while it will also decrease emotional social support, job satisfaction and affective commitment.

Anxiety and insomnia showed a practically and statistically significant positive correlation of medium effect with affective and cognitive job insecurity, while it showed a statistically and practically significant negative correlation of medium effect with emotional social support (supervisor) and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. A statistically significant negative correlation was obtained between anxiety/insomnia, emotional social support (other) and affective commitment. It can be deduced that anxiety/insomnia is related to affective and cognitive job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor and other), intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment. This implies that higher levels of anxiety/insomnia will increase job insecurity, while it will also decrease emotional social support, job satisfaction and affective commitment.

The social dysfunction scale demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation with affective and cognitive job insecurity scales. A practically and statistically significant negative correlation of medium effect with emotional social support (supervisor) scale, and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction scales. It can be deduced that social dysfunction is related to affective and cognitive job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor) and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. This implies that higher levels of social dysfunction will increase job insecurity, while it will also decrease emotional social support (supervisor) and job satisfaction.

The severe depression scales showed a statistically significant positive correlation with affective and cognitive job insecurity scales. A statistically significant negative correlation with the emotional social support (supervisor) scale, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction scales and affective commitment scale. It can be deduced that severe depression is related to affective and cognitive job insecurity, emotional social support (supervisor), intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment. This implies that higher levels of severe depression will increase job insecurity, while it will also decrease emotional social support (supervisor), job satisfaction and affective commitment.

Hypothesis 1, stating that there is a practically and statistically significant relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry, is partially accepted on the basis of the above findings.

Next, MANOVA and ANOVA analyses were followed to determine the relationship between job insecurity and various demographic characteristics, such as age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications. Demographic characteristics were analysed for statistical significance using Wilk's Lambda statistics. The results of these comparisons are reflected in Table 8.

Table 8

MANOVA of Job Insecurity (affective and cognitive) of Age, Years in Company, Years in Position, Job Level, Qualifications, Gender and Race

Variable	Value	F	Df	P
Age	0,89	2,24	6	0,04
Years in company	0,92	1,02	9	0,42
Years in position	0,92	1,64	6	0,14
Job level	0,88	1,60	9	0,11
Qualifications	0,96	0,81	6	0,56
Gender	0,96	1,18	3	0,32
Race	0,96	1,61	3	0,19

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

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values ($p < 0,01$), no indication of statistically significant differences were obtained for age, years in company, years in position, job level, qualifications gender and race. Hypothesis 2, stating that differences exist between the experience of job insecurity of participants from various demographic groups (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualification), is rejected on the basis of the above findings.

Next, a series of multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health. The results are reported in Table 9 to Table 15.

For the purpose of this research, job insecurity is an independent variable and intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment, somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression are dependent variables.

Table 9

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Intrinsic Job Satisfaction

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,14	Source of variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,02					
Adjusted R ²	Regression	4	0,64	0,16	
Standard Error: 0,55	Residual	108	32,65	0,30	
	F = 0,53	p = 0,715			
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,44	Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,19					
Adjusted R ² : 0,14	Regression	6	6,35	1,06	
Standard Error: 0,50	Residual	106	26,94	0,25	
	F = 4,16	p = 0,000*			
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	T	p
Gender	-0,07	0,11	-0,06	-0,59	0,554
Race	0,13	0,12	0,12	1,17	0,246
Age	-0,08	0,07	-0,11	-1,04	0,301
Qualification	-0,05	0,10	-0,05	-0,49	0,626
Gender	-0,07	0,10	-0,06	-0,66	0,508
Race	0,15	0,11	0,14	1,44	0,154
Age	-0,04	0,07	0,05	-0,54	0,591
Qualification	-0,08	0,09	-0,08	-0,89	0,373
Job Insecurity (Affective)	-0,23	0,08	-0,33	-2,77	0,007*
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	-0,14	0,13	-0,13	-1,06	0,290

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

The regression analysis reflected in Table 9 indicates that the demographic variables have no predictive value with regard to intrinsic job satisfaction (adjusted R²: 0%). An R-value of 0,14 was obtained, which falls below the practical significance cut-off point (0,30) and the model was not found to be statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 14%. An R-value of medium effect (0,44) was obtained.

Table 10

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Extrinsic Job Satisfaction

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,18	Source of variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,03					
Adjusted R ²	Regression	4	1,67	0,42	
Standard Error: 0,69	Residual	108	51,55	0,48	
F = 0,88 p = 0,481					
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,32	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,10					
Adjusted R ² : 0,05	Regression	6	5,51	0,92	
Standard Error: 0,67	Residual	106	47,71	0,45	
F = 2,04 p = 0,066					
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	t	p
Gender	-0,21	0,14	-0,15	-1,47	0,146
Race	0,01	0,15	0,01	0,08	0,934
Age	-0,13	0,09	-0,14	-1,37	0,172
Qualification	0,01	0,13	0,01	0,09	0,932
Gender	-0,21	0,14	-0,15	-1,50	0,137
Race	0,01	0,14	0,01	0,05	0,961
Age	-0,08	0,10	-0,09	-0,82	0,414
Qualification	-0,02	0,12	-0,02	-0,17	0,862
Job Insecurity (Affective)	-0,11	0,11	-0,12	-0,95	0,343
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	-0,25	0,17	-0,19	-1,45	0,150

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

Table 10 indicates that the demographic variables have no predictive value with regard to extrinsic job satisfaction (adjusted R²: 0%). An R-value of 0,18 was obtained, which falls below the practical significance cut-off point (0,30) and the model was not found to be statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 5%. An R-value of medium effect (0,32) was obtained.

Based on the above research findings, hypothesis 3 stating that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction of the participants can be accepted.

Table 11

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Affective Commitment

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,31	Source of variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,10					
Adjusted R ² : 0,07	Regression	4	7,28	1,82	
Standard Error: 0,78	Residual	108	66,50	0,62	
	F = 2,96	p = 0,023			
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,35	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,12					
Adjusted R ² : 0,07	Regression	6	8,86	1,48	
Standard Error: 0,78	Residual	106	64,92	0,61	
	F = 2,41	p = 0,032			
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	T	p
Gender	0,39	0,16	0,24	-2,44	0,016*
Race	0,39	0,16	0,23	2,34	0,021*
Age	0,07	0,11	0,06	-0,62	0,539
Qualification	0,19	0,14	0,12	-1,33	0,187
Gender	0,39	0,16	0,24	-2,42	0,017*
Race	0,36	0,17	0,22	2,16	0,033*
Age	0,02	0,11	0,02	-0,17	0,865
Qualification	0,21	0,14	0,14	-1,47	0,143
Job Insecurity (Affective)	0,04	0,13	0,04	0,30	0,766
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	0,27	0,20	0,17	-1,38	0,170

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

As indicated by Table 11, gender and race predicted 7% of the variance in affective commitment. An R-value of medium effect (0,31) was obtained and the model was statistically significant. The inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity had no impact on the adjusted R², implying that affective and cognitive job insecurity have no predictive value with regard to affective commitment. In the second step, the impact of gender and race remained statistically significant. An R-value of medium effect (0,35) was obtained.

Based on the above research findings, hypothesis 4 stating that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment of the participants can be rejected.

Table 12

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Somatic Symptoms

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,30	Source of variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,09					
Adjusted R ² : 0,06	Regression	4	4,79	1,20	
Standard Error: 0,67	Residual	108	48,04	0,44	
	F = 2,69 p = 0,035				
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,39	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,15					
Adjusted R ² : 0,11	Regression	6	8,15	1,36	
Standard Error: 0,65	Residual	106	44,68	0,42	
	F = 3,22 p = 0,060				
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	t	P
Gender	0,25	0,14	0,19	1,86	0,066
Race	0,18	0,14	0,13	1,29	0,198
Age	0,13	0,09	0,14	1,40	0,165
Qualification	0,22	0,12	0,17	1,79	0,076
Gender	0,25	0,13	0,18	1,89	0,062
Race	0,20	0,14	0,14	1,41	0,161
Age	0,07	0,09	0,08	0,78	0,437
Qualification	0,25	0,12	0,19	2,10	0,038*
Job Insecurity (Affective)	0,06	0,11	0,06	0,54	0,592
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	0,29	0,10	0,21	1,78	0,086

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

Table 12 demonstrates that qualification predicted 6% of the variance in somatic symptoms. An R-value of medium effect (0,30) was obtained and the model was statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 5%. In the second step, the impact of qualification became statistically significant, implying that the impact of qualification on somatic symptoms runs through affective and cognitive job insecurity. An R-value of medium effect (0,39) was obtained.

Table 13

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Anxiety and Insomnia

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,33	Source of variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,11					
Adjusted R ² : 0,08	Regression	4	5,65	1,41	
Standard Error: 0,65	Residual	108	45,04	0,42	
	F = 3,39 p = 0,012				
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,49	Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,24					
Adjusted R ² : 0,19	Regression	6	11,97	1,99	
Standard Error: 0,60	Residual	106	38,72	0,37	
	F = 5,46 p = 0,000				
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	t	p
Gender	0,15	0,13	0,11	1,10	0,274
Race	0,35	0,14	0,25	2,57	0,012*
Age	0,11	0,09	0,13	1,27	0,207
Qualification	0,14	0,12	0,11	1,24	0,219
Gender	0,14	0,12	0,11	1,16	0,247
Race	0,35	0,13	0,25	2,72	0,008*
Age	0,05	0,09	0,06	0,58	0,565
Qualification	0,19	0,11	0,15	1,68	0,095
Job Insecurity (Affective)	0,15	0,10	0,17	1,53	0,129
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	0,29	0,15	0,22	1,90	0,060

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

Table 13 indicates that race predicted 8% of the variance in anxiety and insomnia. An R-value of medium effect (0,33) was obtained and the model was statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 11%. In the second step, the impact of race remained statistically significant, implying that the impact of race on anxiety and insomnia runs through affective and cognitive job insecurity. An R-value of medium effect (0,49) was obtained.

Table 14

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Social Dysfunction

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,32	Source of variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,10					
Adjusted R ² : 0,07	Regression	4	3,07	0,77	
Standard Error: 0,51	Residual	108	27,62	0,26	
	F = 3,00 p = 0,022				
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,36	Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,13					
Adjusted R ² : 0,08	Regression	6	4,04	0,67	
Standard Error: 0,50	Residual	106	26,66	0,25	
	F = 2,67 p = 0,019				
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	t	p
Gender	0,21	0,10	0,20	2,10	0,047*
Race	0,19	0,11	0,18	1,78	0,078
Age	0,09	0,07	0,13	1,32	0,190
Qualification	0,08	0,09	0,08	0,85	0,400
Gender	0,21	0,10	0,20	2,04	0,044*
Race	0,18	0,11	0,16	1,65	0,101
Age	0,08	0,07	0,12	1,11	0,269
Qualification	0,09	0,09	0,09	0,99	0,327
Job Insecurity (Affective)	0,11	0,08	0,16	1,33	0,187
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	0,03	0,13	0,03	0,21	0,837

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

Table 14 indicates that gender predicted 7% of the variance in social dysfunction. An R-value of medium effect (0,32) was obtained and the model was statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 1%. In the second step, the impact of gender remained statistically significant, implying that the impact of gender on social dysfunction runs through affective and cognitive job insecurity. An R-value of medium effect (0,36) was obtained.

Table 15

Regression Analysis - Job Insecurity and Demographic Variables: Severe Depression

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
Model 1 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,22	Source of variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,05					
Adjusted R ² : 0,01	Regression	4	0,31	0,08	
Standard Error: 0,24	Residual	108	6,26	0,06	
	F = 1,35	p = 0,255			
Model 2 : Demographic variables					
R: 0,37	Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	
R ² : 0,14					
Adjusted R ² : 0,09	Regression	6	0,90	0,15	
Standard Error: 0,23	Residual	106	5,68	0,05	
	F = 2,79	p = 0,015			
VARIABLES IN THE EQUATION					
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	B	SEB	Beta	t	p
Gender	0,05	0,05	0,10	0,98	0,328
Race	0,06	0,05	0,12	1,16	0,248
Age	0,02	0,03	0,07	0,65	0,517
Qualification	-0,04	0,04	-0,09	-0,97	0,335
Gender	0,05	0,05	0,10	1,01	0,314
Race	0,06	0,05	0,12	1,22	0,225
Age	0,00	0,03	0,01	0,05	0,957
Qualification	-0,03	0,04	-0,07	-0,71	0,480
Job Insecurity (Affective)	0,04	0,04	0,14	1,13	0,262
Job Insecurity (Cognitive)	0,09	0,06	0,20	1,59	0,116

*Statistically significant $p \leq 0,05$

Table 15 indicates that the demographic variables contributed towards 1% of the variance in severe depression. An R-value of 0,22 was obtained, which falls below the practical significance cut-off point (0,30) and the model was not found to be statistically significant. Upon inclusion of affective and cognitive job insecurity, the adjusted R² increased by 8%. An R-value of medium effect (0,37) was obtained.

Based on the above research findings, hypothesis 5 stating that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to general health of the participants can be accepted.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine whether a relationship exists between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry.

With regard to the internal consistency, all scales presented with adequate levels of reliability, with the exception of the cognitive job insecurity subscale (0,68), which fell slightly below the 0,70 cut-off point, which is the guideline provided by Nunally and Bernstein (1994). Nevertheless, this score still fell within acceptable parameters. The mean inter-item correlations were consistent with the guideline of $0,15 < r < 0,50$, as suggested by Clark and Watson (1995). The inter-item correlations of four scales, namely affective job insecurity (0,55), emotional social support (supervisor) (0,71), somatic symptoms (0,57), and anxiety and insomnia (0,59) were somewhat high. Regarding skewness and kurtosis all scores were distributed normally.

The results obtained in this study confirmed the two-factor model of the JISQ as well as internal consistency for both of the subscales. The first factor represented cognitive job insecurity and the second factor represented affective job insecurity. The analysis showed that Item 5 and Item 9 loaded on the wrong component, but were not removed from the data. Previous study done by Elbert (2002) reported that Item 9 was disregarded due to poor factor loadings. Item 6 was problematic, and did not load on either component. This finding corresponds with the findings reported by Heymans (2002) where the very same item did not load on either component. This item needs attention since very low internal consistency with other items was found.

The results obtained confirmed the two-factor model of the MSQ. The first factor represented intrinsic job satisfaction and the second factor represented extrinsic job satisfaction. Item 8 loaded incorrectly on the second factor. A possible explanation for this could be that the participants found it difficult to determine whether their jobs provide for steady employment due to a lot of changes that are taking place and a lack of stability in the world of work. In a study conducted by Buitendach and Rothmann (2004), items 15, 16 and 20 loaded incorrectly and were

removed on conceptual grounds. Items 7, 10, and 12 were problematic and did not load on either component. Further research needs to be done to identify the possible cause of these results.

Regarding the affective organisational commitment, only one factor could be extracted due to the fact that only the affective component of the questionnaire was used, and this subscale also obtained internal consistency. In a study done by Laba (2004), results also reported that the subscale obtained internal consistency. Item 7 was problematic and did not load on either component. A possible explanation for this could be that this questionnaire might be ambiguous and might have been interpreted differently by participants.

The four-factor model for the GHQ, consisting of somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression, was supported in this study. Construct equivalence was not established for the questionnaire due to the incorrect factor loadings of the second subscale, anxiety and insomnia, and the fourth subscale, severe depression. A possible explanation for this could be that different people and different races experience anxiety/insomnia and severe depression differently. The study was undertaken in a big chemical industry, which could also imply that each of the participants might have experienced the various health problems differently.

The analysis of Pearson correlations in this study showed that affective and cognitive job insecurity demonstrated a statistically significant negative correlation with emotional social support (supervisor and other). The assumption can therefore be made that higher levels of emotional social support result in lower levels of job insecurity. This finding is supported by the results of Lim (1997), which revealed that supervisor and work colleagues support significantly moderate or buffer job insecurity.

Affective and cognitive job insecurity also correlated practically and statistically negatively with intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. The results indicate that lower levels of job satisfaction will increase job insecurity. This finding is contrary to the study by Heymans (2002) where he found that job insecurity and its facets (affective and cognitive) are not related to job satisfaction.

Affective organisational commitment demonstrated a statistically significant negative relationship with cognitive job insecurity, implying that lower levels of affective commitment will increase cognitive job insecurity. These findings are contradictory to the study done by Buitendach and Rothmann (2004), who indicated that no correlation was found between job insecurity and organisational commitment.

With regard to affective and cognitive job insecurity and general health, a statistically significant positive correlation was obtained for somatic symptoms, social dysfunction and severe depression, and practically significant positive correlation for anxiety and insomnia. These findings indicate that higher levels of job insecurity can increase the occurrence of somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression. In a study conducted by Janse van Rensburg (2002), two factors, namely anxiety/insomnia and severe depression, reported a significant relationship with job insecurity. These findings support the research conclusions of De Witte (1999) that job insecurity leads to decreased psychological well-being. The results furthermore confirm the findings of other authors like Probst and Brubaker (2001) and Kivimäki, Vahtera, Thomson, Griffiths, Cox, and Pentti (1997) that job insecurity leads to anxiety/insomnia and severe depression. From these results one might speculate that, if job insecurity is reduced, psychological well-being will be increased, especially relating to the reduction of anxiety/insomnia and severe depression.

Hypothesis 1, which states that there is a practically and statistically significant relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry, is partially supported on the basis of the researcher's findings.

No statistically or practically significant differences regarding job insecurity and various demographic characteristics, such as age, years in company, years in position, job level, qualifications, gender and race were obtained. Manski and Straub (2000), however, found that the level of job insecurity differ with regard to age, qualifications, race and tenure. A possible explanation for this could be that the participants have tertiary qualifications and due to the growing nature of the organisation, there are numerous opportunities which are open to all.

Hypothesis 2, stating that differences exist between the experience of job insecurity of participants from various demographic groups (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualification) is therefore rejected.

The regression analysis indicated that job insecurity has some predictive value with regard to intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and general health subscales, namely somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression. With regard to the two components of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic, job insecurity can predict 14% and 5% respectively of the variance. Nevertheless, biographical variables did not have some predictive value with regard intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. In a study conducted by Rannona (2003), the results demonstrated that 44% of the variance in job insecurity can be explained by job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Hypothesis 3, stating that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction of the participants, is thus accepted.

With regard to affective organisational commitment, job insecurity has no predictive value. The biographical variables (gender and race in particular) predicted 7% of the variance. In a study conducted by Laba (2004), the results demonstrated that 39% of the variance of affective commitment can be explained by job insecurity. Hypothesis 4, stating that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment of the participants, is thus rejected.

With regard to general health, job insecurity can predict 5%, 11%, 1% and 8% respectively of the variance of the four components of general health, namely somatic symptoms (GHA), anxiety and insomnia (GHB), social dysfunction (GHC) and severe depression (GHD). Nevertheless, for somatic symptoms biographical variables (qualification in particular) predicted 6% of the variance. Anxiety and insomnia, the biographical variables (race in particular) predicted 8% of the variance. Social dysfunction, the biographical variables (gender in particular) predicted 7% of the variance. Severe depression, the biographical variables contributed 1% of the variance. In a study conducted by Snoer (2005), the results indicated that 5% (somatic symptoms) of the variance can be explained by job insecurity, 10% (social dysfunction) of the variance can be explained by job insecurity, and 12% (severe depression) of

the variance can be explained by job insecurity. Janse van Rensburg's (2003) results indicated that 41% of the variance in psychological well-being (coping and general health) can be explained by job insecurity. Based on the above findings, Hypothesis 5, which states that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to the general health of the participants, can be accepted.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the major limitations of this study was the size of the study population, which limits the generalisation of the findings. It might be useful to extend the study population by involving more employees in a chemical industry. Another limitation of this research is that it was conducted in a homogeneous sample, consisting of employees in a particular organisation. It may be argued that the specific organisation may have some distinctive characteristics, for example a mutually accepted organisational culture, which might have influenced the responses of the respondents. Results can thus not be generalised to other contexts or professions. The study population should be extended to include employees working in various chemical industries.

The present study relied on self-report measures. According to Schaufeli, Enzmann, and Girault (1993), the exclusive use of self-report measures in validation studies increases the likelihood that at least part of the shared variance between measures can be attributed to method variance. Regarding the research design, future studies should focus on longitudinal designs which will make it possible to draw causal inferences. The use of longitudinal studies may provide insight into the development of job insecurity and its impact on work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health of employees over time.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter encompasses conclusions regarding the literature study and the results of the empirical research. The limitations of the study are highlighted and recommendations are made for further studies.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

In this section, conclusions are drawn in terms of specific theoretical objectives and the results of the empirical study.

3.1.1 Conclusions regarding the specific theoretical objectives

In terms of the specific theoretical objectives, the following conclusions are drawn:

Job insecurity was conceptualised from the literature, as being a subjective phenomena reflected in the individual's fear or concern regarding involuntary job loss (Davy, Kinicki, & Scheck, 1997). In this research, job insecurity was viewed as consisting of an affective and cognitive dimension, i.e. distinguishing between concern regarding job loss and fear of job loss. Job insecurity was shown to be an important stressor (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Van Vuuren, 1990), which has emerged in modern working life, holding negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation, for example, organisational commitment and an increase in absenteeism, turnover and general ill-health (Edwards, Caplan, & Van Harrison, 1998).

Work-based support was conceptualised as a support provided by supervisors and work colleagues. Work-related sources of support (work supervisors and co-workers) are most effective in both reducing occupational stress and buffering the impact of such stress on health (Probst, 2003). Lim (1997) reported that supervisor support and work colleague support significantly moderated relationships - firstly between job insecurity and job satisfaction, and

secondly between job insecurity and non-compliant behaviour. The companionship and emotional functions performed by support from supervisor and work colleagues may create a supportive and conducive work atmosphere in the organisation, thus mitigating individuals' feelings of job dissatisfaction even when their job security is at stake. Supervisors and work colleagues may also help the individual to re-evaluate the work situation so that it becomes more manageable and less threatening. By making the work situation appear less threatening, support provided by supervisor and work colleagues may be able to buffer the individual against a sense of dissatisfaction with his or her job in the context of job insecurity (Lim, 1997).

Job satisfaction was conceptualised as an attitudinal output, which forms the criteria for job security since the result of the internal assessment between the real outcome and the ideal outcome would indicate whether employees' needs are met by their jobs. Employees will experience job satisfaction if they feel their individual capabilities and values are utilised in their work environment, and that their work environment offers them opportunities and rewards them accordingly. Job satisfaction can be used to measure two distinct components, namely intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000).

Organisational commitment was conceptualised as a strong belief in the organisation's goals, values, and a willingness to exert a considerate effort on behalf of the organisation and a strong desire to remain a member of the organisation. According to Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993), organisational commitment has three components, namely affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment relates to emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation. Continuance commitment relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation, while normative commitment relates to a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation.

General Health was conceptualised as a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. General health was shown to be a

resource for everyday life, not the object of living. It is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources, as well as physical capabilities. Mohren, Swaen, Van Amelsvoort, Borm, and Galama (2003) found a cross-sectional relationship between job insecurity and common infections or health complaints. Significant effects of job insecurity on physiological parameters, such as increased blood pressure levels were found in a number of longitudinal studies (Ferrie, 2001; Heaney, Israel, & House, 1994).

3.1.2 Conclusions regarding the specific empirical objectives

In terms of the specific empirical objectives, the following conclusions are drawn:

The first empirical objective was to determine the relationship between job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of Human Resources Professionals. A relationship was found between affective and cognitive job insecurity and emotional social support (supervisor and other), intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and with all general health subscales (somatic symptoms, anxiety/insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression). Affective organisational commitment demonstrated a relationship with cognitive job insecurity, but not with affective job insecurity. Lim (1997) found a relationship between job insecurity and work-based support. Tshabalala (2004), however, found a relationship between total job insecurity and total organisational commitment, and between total organisational commitment and total job satisfaction. Snoer (2005) did not find a relationship between cognitive job insecurity and all general health subscales, whereas affective job insecurity demonstrated a relationship with all general health subscales. A possible explanation for the results could be that work-based support decreases the feelings of job insecurity and increases the feelings of job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health.

The second empirical objective was to determine whether there were differences in the levels of job insecurity of participants from various demographic variables (e.g. gender, race, age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualification). No statistically or practically significant differences were obtained regarding job insecurity and various demographic characteristics, such

as age, years in company, years in position, job level and qualifications. However, Manski and Straub (2000) found that the levels of job insecurity differ with regard to age, qualifications, race and tenure. Research findings of Jones, Huxtable, and Hodgson (2001) demonstrated that rates of work-related illness are generally higher with regard to older employees. Snoer (2004) found no statistically significant differences between job insecurity and age, culture and tenure. A possible explanation for this could be that Human Resources Professionals feel secure and that they do not experience job insecurity in their jobs.

The third empirical objective was to determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction. The results indicated that job insecurity has some predictive value with regard to job satisfaction. The results are supported by Rannona (2003), his results demonstrated that 44,00% of the variance in job insecurity can be explained by job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

The fourth empirical objective was to determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to affective organisational commitment. The results indicated that job insecurity has no predictive value with regard to affective commitment. The results are in contradiction to the results of Rannona (2003), who demonstrated that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

The fifth empirical objective was to determine whether job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to general health. The results indicated that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to general health. Snoer (2004) revealed that affective job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to social dysfunction and severe depression.

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Firstly, a major limitation of this study was the size of the study population, specifically the distribution of cultural groups and the sampling method. Future studies could benefit by making use of random, stratified sampling with the appropriate inclusion of cultural groups.

A further limitation of this study was its reliance on self-report measures. According to Schaufeli, Enzmann, and Girault (1993), the exclusive use of self-report measures in validation studies increases the likelihood that at least part of the shared variance between measures can be attributed to method variance. Respondents could have had reservations concerning their confidentiality, which may have had some influence on a number of the results.

Thirdly, the use of longitudinal studies may provide insight into the development of job insecurity and its impact on work-based support, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health of employees over time. The cross-sectional nature of this study limits the causal interpretation of the above-mentioned findings. One may argue that less healthy people are more likely to be the first that are threatened with potential job loss, or more likely to be selected into insecure and poor quality jobs. Ill-health may be therefore a cause, rather than a consequence of job insecurity.

Lastly, the research was conducted in a homogeneous sample, consisting of employees in a particular organisation. It may be argued that the specific organisation may have some distinctive characteristics, for example a mutually accepted organisational culture, which might have influenced the responses of the respondents. Results can thus not be generalised to other contexts or professions. The study population should be extended to include employees working in various chemical industries.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the participating organisation and for future research are made in this section.

3.3.1 Recommendations for the organisation

The findings indicated that work-based support assists the participants to deal with their stress, in this case job insecurity. Based on that fact, it is recommended that the organisation should continue to provide work-related support structures to all employees. Those support structures

will assist employees to maintain their high levels of job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and general health.

To the extent that job insecurity has been shown to be detrimental to outcomes that are valued by the employee as well as the employer (Greenhalgh, 1991, Roskies and Louis-Guerin, 1990, Schweiger and Lee, 1993), organisations can play an important role in channelling efforts towards enhancing work-based support to assist individuals in coping with job insecurity in a manner that is less detrimental to both the individual and the organisation. The work-based support should be accessible and available to all employees.

The finding that there were no significant differences in terms of job insecurity and the demographic characteristics such as age, years in company and position, job level, qualifications, gender and race need further investigation.

Job insecurity, work-based support, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health should be researched in relation with other outcomes such as productivity, performance and quality work life.

3.3.2 Recommendations for future research

Several issues merit further study. First and most pressing is the need to provide additional replication of the present study in different samples in order to corroborate the findings and assess their generalisability. The sample in this study consisted of Human Resources Professionals in a chemical industry. The low response rate implies that results of this study should be interpreted with this limitation in mind and cannot be generalised to other professional groups. Thus, attempts to examine this topic in the future could be directed towards using samples consisting of members of other professionals groups and chemical industries.

Secondly, it is recommended that a more powerful sampling method be used and that the longitudinal design be employed so as to enable causal inferences. Thirdly, future studies should

make use of Long-version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire that will allow the researcher to measure aspects such as salary, achievement, recognition and feedback.

Fourthly, future research can increase our knowledge of the buffering effects of work-based support on job insecurity and its consequences (job satisfaction, organisational commitment and general health) by a further investigation of the nature of the work-based support construct. The sources of work-based support investigated in this study originated from supervisor and work colleagues. However, as noted by House (1981), work-based support can also be provided in more formal ways by the organisations, unions or government agencies. A consistent finding in studies of job insecurity is that individuals experience elevated levels of anxiety as a result of the prevalence of rumours and uncertainty associated with it (Greenhalgh & Jick, 1989). Thus, organisations may play a crucial role in providing support by communicating regular, systematic and accurate information either to the workforce or to unions to quell any rumours that may circulate and allay the individual's fears and suspicions.

3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter conclusions regarding the theoretical and empirical objectives were drawn. The limitations of the research were pointed out and recommendations were made for the participating organisation as well as for future research. All theoretical and empirical objectives formulated for this research have been achieved.

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