

**JOB INSECURITY , BURNOUT, JOB ENGAGEMENT AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF WORKERS AT A
GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION**

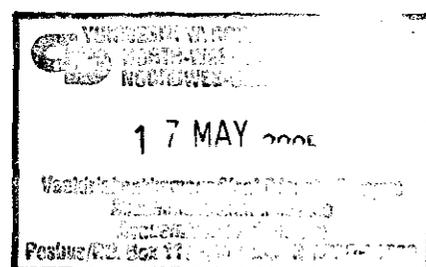
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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

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

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SUMMARY

Subject: Job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation.

Key terms: Job insecurity, burnout, job engagement, psychological well-being and government organisation.

The effect of globalisation and the changing world of work place demands on organisations for better performance and competitiveness. The result is large-scale workforce reductions, outsourcing and unemployment, which is taking its toll on the emotional well-being of employees. In an attempt to reduce costs, organisations put pressure on employees who remain at work to modify their jobs, accept alternative employment conditions/positions, or to relocate, all of which are strengthening job insecurity, and leads to employees working harder in order to keep their jobs (Büssing, 1999). These factors will lead to tired employees. Shirom (1989) claims that exhaustion is the most important dimension regarding burnout.

Internationally, the changing work environment is causing people to experience higher levels of job insecurity. In South Africa we do not only have the impact of globalisation, but our country has also gone through major political changes. Celebrating 10 years of democracy the workers at government organisations are faced with numerous challenges that has an impact on job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being.

The primary objective of this research was to examine the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation. The measuring instruments that were used are the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), the Utrecht Work Job engagement Scale (UWES), and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ).

A cross-sectional survey design was conducted among 500 employees of a government organisation. A response of 296 completed questionnaires was received.

Results demonstrated a practical significance between Job Insecurity and Job engagement as well as between Job Insecurity and General Health and between Job Insecurity and the exhaustion/disengagement scale of the OLBI. It was found that increased job insecurity is associated with decreased work job engagement and poorer general health.

Multiple regression analysis indicated that 22% of the variance in job engagement as measured by the OLBI was predicted by job insecurity and 8% of the variance in exhaustion as measured by the OLBI was explained by job insecurity. Further it indicated 14% of the variance in job engagement as measured by the UWES was predicted by job insecurity. A total of 17% of the variance in general health can be explained by job insecurity.

Levels of job insecurity, as well as burnout were found to be average. Positive results for job engagement were found, measuring slightly above average. Results indicated good health as measured by this study.

Recommendations for the organisation and future research were made.

OPSOMMING

Onderwerp: Werksonsekerheid, uitbranding begeestering en psigologiese welstand van werknemers in 'n regerings organisasie.

Sleutelterm: Werksonsekerheid, uitbranding, begeestering, psigologiese welstand en regerings organisasie.

Die effek van globalisering en die veranderende werksomgewing plaas druk op organisasies om beter te presteer en meer kompetend te wees. Die resultaat hiervan is grootskaalse werksnemerskorps vermindering, uitplasing en werksloosheid, wat 'n tol eis op die emosionele welstand van werknemers. In 'n poging om koste te sny, word meer druk op werknemers wat oorbly in die organisasie geplaas om hul werk aan te pas, alternatiewe werksomstandighede te aanvaar asook alternatiewe posisies, of om verplaas te word, alles faktore wat bydrae tot werksonsekereid, wat daartoe lei dat werknemers harder moet werk om hul poste te behou (Büssing, 1999). Hierdie faktore lei tot moeë werknemers. Shirom (1989) voer aan dat uitputting een van die belangrikste dimensies ten opsigte van uitbranding is.

Internasionaal veroorsaak die veranderende werksomgewing dat mense hoër vlakke van werksonsekerheid ervaar. In Suid-Afrika beleef ons nie net globalisering nie, maar ons land het ook deur omvattende politieke veranderinge gegaan. Met die viering van tien jaar van demokrasie staar die werknemers van regerings organisasies verskeie probleme in die gesig wat 'n invloed het op hul werksonsekerheid, uitbranding, begeestering en psigologiese welstand.

Die hoofdoelstelling van hierdie navorsing was om die verhouding tussen werksonsekerheid, uitbranding, begeestering en psigologiese welstand van werknemers in 'n staatsorganisasie te bestudeer. Die meetinstrumente wat gebruik is, is die Werksonsekerheidvraelys (JISI), die Oldenburg Uitbrandingsvraelys (OLBI), die Utrecht-Werksbegeesteringskaal (UWES) en die Algemene Gesondheidsvraelys (GHQ).

'n Dwarssnee opname-ontwerp was gebruik. Die studiepopulasie was 500 werknemers van 'n staatsorganisasie. 'n Respons koers van 296 vraelyste is behaal. Resultate dui op praktiese beduidenheid tussen werksonsekerheid en begeestering sowel as tussen werksonsekerheid en algemene gesondheid en tussen werksonsekerheid en die uitputting skaal van die OLBI. Dit is gevind dat verhoogde werksonsekerheid verband hou met 'n afname in werksbegeestering en verswakte algemene gesondheid.

Multi regressie analise dui daarop dat 22% van die variansie in begeestering soos gemeet deur die OLBI, deur werksonsekerheid voorspel kan word, en 8% van die variansie in uitputting deur die OLBI gemeet deur werksonsekerheid verduidelik kan word. Verder wys dit dat 14% van die variansie van begeestering soos deur die UWES gemeet, toegeskryf kan word aan werksonsekerheid. 'n Totaal van 17% van die variansie in algemene gesondheid kan deur werksonsekerheid verduidelik word.

Vlakke van werksonsekerheid, sowel as uitbranding was gemiddeld. Positiewe resultate vir begeestering is gevind, en meet effens hoër as gemiddeld. Resultate dui op goeie gesondheid soos gemeet in hierdie studie.

Aanbevelings vir die organisasie sowel as vir toekomstige navorsing is gedoen.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This article relates to job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Internationally the effect of globalisation and the changing world of work, place demands on organisations for better performance and competitiveness. The result is large-scale workforce reductions, outsourcing and unemployment, which is taking its toll on the emotional well-being of employees. In an attempt to reduce costs, organisations put pressure on employees who remain at work to modify their jobs, accept alternative employment conditions/positions, or to relocate, all of which are strengthening job insecurity, and leads to employees working harder in order to keep their jobs (Büssing, 1999).

For many employees, the changes in worklife witnessed over the past two decades have caused feelings of insecurity concerning the nature and future existence of their jobs (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van Vuuren, 1991).

More and more literature suggests that perceptions of **job insecurity** may hold detrimental consequences for employees attitudes (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989; Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997; Rosenblatt, Talmud & Ruvio, 1999; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002); and it is further indicated that organisational commitment has also been found to have moderating effects on the stressor-health relationship (Siu, 2002; Steers, 1977); well-being (Barling & Kelloway, 1996; De Witte, 1999; Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti & Happonen, 2000; Mohr, 2000); employee mental health and family well-being (Larson, Weilson & Beley, 1994); leads to negative physical health outcomes (Dooley, Rook & Catalano, 1987; Hellgren & Sverke, 2003; Mohren, Swaen, van Amelsvoort, Borm & Galama, 2003; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990) and higher reports of psychological distress (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Probst, 2000). Employees with perceptions of low job security are more likely to engage in work withdrawal behaviour (Probst, 1999) and job insecurity is often reported to result in reduced

psychological well-being, characterised by symptoms such as anxiety, depression, irritation or strain-related psychosomatic complaints (Catalano, Rook & Dooley, 1986; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfield & Smith, 1998; Joelson & Wahlquist, 1987; Kuhnert, Sims & Lahey, 1989).

Job insecurity refers to an employee's negative feelings towards changes relating to their jobs. Job insecurity has been defined as an individual's "expectations about continuity in a job situation" (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997); "overall concern about the future existence of the job" (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996); "perception of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job" (Heany, Israel & House, 1994) and "powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation" (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), to give a few examples.

Job insecurity has been conceptualised from different viewpoints, being a global or multidimensional construct or as a job stressor (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Most of the job insecurity has been defined according to the global view, signifying the threat of job loss or job discontinuity (Hartley et al., 1991). The global viewpoint is concerned with the threats of imminent job loss. These unidimensional measures typically focus on either the perceived probability (Mohr, 2000; Van Vuuren, 1990) or fear of job loss (Johnson, Messe & Crano, 1984). An interesting aspect that Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) mention is, that if the content of the job changes due to technological or educational upgrading, it is also seen as job insecurity. For reasons of clarity this aspect will not be included in the definition of job insecurity for the purposes of this study. The researcher agrees with the viewpoint of French, Caplan and Van Harrison (1982) that the term 'future job ambiguity' seems more suitable and covers a different construct.

Mauno and Kinnunen (1999) state that the most sophisticated implementation of multidimensional job insecurity have been proposed by Ashford et al. (1989). These researchers describe five components of job insecurity as being 1) the severity of the threat concerning job continuity or aspects of the job; 2) the importance of the job feature to the individual; 3) the perceived threat of the occurrence of a total negative affect of the job situation; 4) the total importance of the changes mentioned above, and 5) powerlessness and inability of the individual to control the above mentioned factors. In this research, use will be made of a measuring instrument (JISI) that measures cognitive as well as affective job insecurity.

The researcher is of the opinion that the main factor is the uncertainty of not knowing what to expect. The anticipation of a negative change in the individual's job position causes greater stress than the actual change itself. Any perceived changes could cause job insecurity because the individual is not in control of the changes. The researcher agrees with the view of Sverke and Hellgren (2002), that different individuals will have different intensity levels of job insecurity even if they are exposed to the same kind of threat. Generally, the underlying theme of the various definitions is that job insecurity is a subjective phenomenon, i.e. based on the individual's perceptions and interpretations of the immediate work environment (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Hartley et al., 1991).

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

As noted, job insecurity is also viewed as a stressor. Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll (2001) state that stress is a transaction in the relationship between the individual and the organisation. Stress arises when the demands of a particular encounter are appraised by the individual as exceeding the resources available, thereby threatening the well-being (Lazarus, 1991) and bringing about change in the person's psychological or physiological condition in order to cope with the encounter (Cooper et al., 2001; Siu, 2002). Stress is therefore an ongoing process that involves the individual transacting with the environment, while assessing the encounters while trying to cope with the issues that arise. Job insecurity is seen as a stressor (De Witte, 1999; Van Vuuren, 1990). The symptoms of stress can be seen as burnout, job engagement, work intensification and physical wellness and a general feeling of powerlessness (Mohren, Swaen, Van Amelvoort, Borm & Galama, 2003).

Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) explain that the use of the term **burnout** arose with some regularity during the 1970's in the United States, especially among people working in the human services. The concept has since been extended to include all other professional

and occupational groups (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998). Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998, p. 36) define burnout as “a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in 'normal' individuals that is primarily characterised by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work.”

According to Maslach, et al. (2001) the exhaustion component of job burnout relates to the basic individual stress aspect of burnout, referring to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources. The cynicism or depersonalisation component represents the interpersonal context dimension of burnout, referring to negative, callous, or excessively detached responses to various aspects of the job. The reduced efficacy or accomplishment component is linked to the self-evaluation dimension of burnout, referring to feelings of incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity at work.

Job engagement, although related to burnout, is viewed as the theoretical antithesis of burnout. Accordingly job engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy. Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzáles-Romá and Bakker (2002) explain that vigour (opposite pole of mental exhaustion) is characterised by high energy levels, mental resilience when working, willingness to exert effort into one's work and to persist even in the face of adversity; dedication (the opposite pole of cynicism) is related to enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, challenge and a sense of significance; and absorption refers to a state where time passes quickly and where the individual has difficulty in detaching him- or herself from work.

Psychological well-being is a complex construct, consisting of various dimensions. According to Brodsky (1988), psychological well-being has four specific characteristics, being that it 1) is subjective and emotional, 2) is a state as opposed to a continuous part of who we are, 3) is a product of personal endeavour, and 4) is more than the absence of negative affect and personal conflict, but comes from moving toward desired life goals. Brodsky (1988) identifies various antecedents of psychological well-being including, stress, physical health, work and career paths as well as work environment. De Witte (1999), identifies four specific job characteristics, which correlates with well-being. They are 1) skill utilisation, 2) work load, 3) job insecurity, and 4) autonomy. The available research clearly suggests that perceived job insecurity is detrimental for employee well-being. This can have a

costly effect on organisations who need to consider the financial implications associated with employees who are being affected by perceived job insecurity which in turn lead to illness.

Now more than ever before are South African companies exposed to the effects of the world economy, advanced technology and international competition. Change in South Africa over the last 10 years was not only economical but also political. The once stable, predictable and controlled environment has become complex, out of control and unpredictable. These changes are ongoing and combined with a shrinking labour market, leads to increased job insecurity. This specifically relates to the government organisation where this research was undertaken.

In summary, it is clear that the experience of job insecurity is not only a reality in South Africa but is also experienced worldwide. No programmes were implemented in the past to address this problem. There is also a lack of research regarding the causal factors of job insecurity and the relationship with burnout and stress within South African industries. The objective of this research is to determine the relationship of job insecurity with burnout, job job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation in South Africa.

The information obtained in this study can be of value when creating career management, development, selection support and training programmes at companies where high levels of job insecurity exists. Problems experienced by the government organisation that participated in this research were high absenteeism. Symptoms noticed by the Human Resources team were low levels of vigour and dedication as well as feelings of job insecurity. It is important that the source of these problems be further researched to ensure effective interventions.

Based on the problem statement, the following research questions are identified:

- How are job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being and the relationship between these constructs conceptualised in the literature?
- What are the levels of job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation?
- What are the relationships between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation?

- Does job insecurity hold any predictive value with regard to burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to determine the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific research objectives are:

- To conceptualise job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being and the relationship between these constructs from the literature;
- To determine the levels of job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation;
- To determine the relationships between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation;
- To determine whether job insecurity can predict burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method will consist of a literature review and an empirical study. The article option will be followed in this study.

1.3.1 Research design

A cross-sectional survey design will be used to reach the objectives of the research. According to Burns and Grove (1993), this design is ideally suited when the aim of the study is predictive and descriptive by nature.

1.3.2 Study population

The total population of 500 government workers in Gauteng were used. This included people from all levels, ranging from semi-skilled employees to professional level employees.

1.3.3 Measuring battery

Four questionnaires will be used, namely, the Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) (De Witte, 2000), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2003), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2002), and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979).

The *Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI)* will be used (De Witte, 2000). It is an 11-item questionnaire, which measures the perceived job insecurity of the participants. The items have both cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 = strongly agree, 3 = unsure and 5 = strongly disagree. A typical question on the cognitive scale is “I think I will be able to continue working here” and a typical question on the affective scale is “I feel uncertain about the future of my job”. The items of the JISI measuring global job insecurity are reported to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,92 in total and 0,85 for the affective scale and 0,90 for the cognitive scale, using the same instrument (De Witte, 2000). Heymans (2002), obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,81 in total and 0,86 for the affective scale. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the cognitive scale measured 0,47, which is below the accepted standard but still acceptable for further analysis. Elbert (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.84 for the JISI. The JISI was translated from Dutch to English and used for the first time in South Africa in the research of Heymans (2002). Although Heymans (2002) recommended some refinements, he concluded that the JISI seems to have satisfactory internal consistency and construct validity.

The *Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI)* (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2003), is a recently developed alternative to the customarily used Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which was used as a measure of burnout. The OLBI includes both core dimensions of burnout, known as exhaustion and disengagement (cynicism/depersonalisation). The exhaustion subscale includes items on the affective, physical and cognitive aspects of burnout, for example, "There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work", and the disengagement subscale includes items that relate to distancing one from one's work, for example "I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well". The disengagement scale's phrases are turned around when scoring the instrument. The OLBI includes each scale both positively and negatively phrased so as to avoid answering bias. Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou and Kantas (2002) investigated the convergent validity of the MBI and OLBI, using multitrait-multimethod analyses, it was found that the latent variables representing both instruments are highly correlated and that all exhaustion and distancing/disengagement items of both instruments load on the same single factor. In this regard, Schaufeli (2003) is of the opinion that these encouraging results suggest that the OLBI might be considered an alternative for the MBI-GS.

The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzáles-Romá & Bakker, 2002) will be utilised as a measure of work engagement. This 17- item questionnaire is arranged along a 7-point frequency scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (daily). This measure of job engagement has three scales, namely vigour (6 items, for example, "I feel strong and vigorous in my job", dedication (5 items), for example, "I always persevere at work, even when things do not go well", and absorption (6 items), for example, "In my job, I can continue working for very long periods at a time". High levels of vigour, dedication and job engagement point to an individual who experiences a high level of job engagement. Regarding internal consistency, Cronbach coefficients have been determined between 0,68 and 0,91 (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Storm (2002) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,78 for vigour, 0,89 for dedication and 0,78 for absorption for the UWES in a sample of 2396 members of the South African Police Services .

The *General Health Questionnaire (GHQ)* (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979), will be used to measure psychological well-being. For the purpose of this study the 28-item version will be used. Responses are given on a 4- point Likert-type scale, with the total scale ranging from 28

to 112. Four subscales measure the degree of somatic symptoms, for example, “Been getting any pains in your head?”; anxiety and insomnia, for example, “Lost much sleep over worry?”; social dysfunction, for example, “Felt capable of making decisions about things?” and severe depression, for example, “Felt that life isn’t worth living?”. A high value on the GHQ is indicative of a high level of psychological distress, where as a low score implies a low level of psychological distress, in other words indicating a high level of psychological well-being. Isaksson & Johansson (2000), obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.86 for the GHQ. Oosthuizen (2001) obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.89 for the GHQ.

1.3.4 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis will be carried out with the help of the SPSS-programme (SPSS Inc., 2003). The SPSS-programme will be used to carry out statistical analysis regarding reliability and validity of the measuring instruments, descriptive statistics, T-tests, MANOVA, ANOVA, analysis of variance, correlation coefficients, predictive bias and multiple regression analyses.

Cronbach alpha coefficients, inter-item correlation coefficients and factor analysis will be used to assess the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation will be used to carry out factor analysis. Target rotations and analyses of covariance structures will be used to assess the predictive bias of the measuring instruments (on item level and construct level) for various language and race groups. Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, range, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics will be used to analyse the data. A cut-off point of $p = 0,05$ will be set for statistical significance of the results. Effect sizes (Cohen, 1998) will be used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients will be used to specify the relationships between the variables. A cut-off point of 0,30 (medium effect, Cohen, 1988) will be set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients. T-tests and analysis of variance will be used to determine the differences between the groups. MANOVA and ANOVA analysis will be used to determine the relationship between JISI and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure. A stepwise multiple regression analysis will be conducted to determine the percentage of the variance in the dependant variables (burnout,

job engagement and psychological well-being) that is predicted by the independent variable (job insecurity).

1.4 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 2 deals with the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation. Chapter 3 provides conclusions regarding research objectives, discuss the limitations of this research, and makes recommendations for the organisation as well as for future research.

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided a discussion of the problem statement and various research objectives. An explanation regarding the measuring instruments and research method was given, followed by a brief overview of the chapters to follow.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

JOB INSECURITY, BURNOUT, JOB ENGAGEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF WORKERS AT A GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this research was to examine the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being of workers at a government organisation. The measuring instruments that were used was the JISI, the OLBI, the UWES, and the GHQ. A cross-sectional survey design was conducted among 500 employees at a government organisation. A response of 296 completed questionnaires was obtained. Results demonstrated a practical significance between Job Insecurity and Job engagement as well as between Job Insecurity and General Health but not between Job Insecurity and the exhaustion/disengagement scale of the OLBI.

OPSOMMING

Die hoofdoelstelling van hierdie navorsing was om die verhouding tussen werksonsekerheid, uitbranding, begeestering en psigologiese welstand van werknemers in 'n staatsorganisasie te bestudeer. Die meetinstrumente wat gebruik is, is die JISI, die OLBI, die UWES en die GHQ. 'n Dwarssneeopname-ontwerp was gebruik. Deelnemers van die navorsing was 500 werknemers van 'n staatsorganisasie. 'n Respons koers van 296 voltooide vraelyste is ontvang. Resultate dui op praktiese beduidenheid tussen Werksonsekerheid en Begeestering sowel as tussen Werksonsekerheid en Algemene Gesondheid maar nie tussen Werksonsekerheid en die Uitputting skaal van die OLBI.

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The effect of globalisation and the changing world of work place demands on organisations for better performance and competitiveness. The result is large-scale workforce reductions, outsourcing and unemployment, which is taking its toll on the emotional well-being of employees. In an attempt to reduce costs, organisations put pressure on employees who remain at work to modify their jobs, accept alternative employment conditions/positions, or to relocate, all of which are strengthening job insecurity, and leads to employees working harder in order to keep their jobs (Büssing, 1999). These factors will lead to tired employees. Shirom (1989) claims that exhaustion is the most important dimension regarding burnout.

For many employees, the changes in work life witnessed over the past two decades have caused feelings of insecurity concerning the nature and future existence of their jobs (Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van Vuuren, 1991).

Job insecurity refers to an employee's negative feelings towards changes relating to their jobs. Job insecurity has been defined as an individual's "expectations about continuity in a job situation" (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997); "overall concern about the future existence of the job" (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996); "perception of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job" (Heany, Israel & House, 1994) and "powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation" (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), to give a few examples.

Job insecurity has been conceptualised from different viewpoints, being a global or multidimensional construct or as a job stressor (Mauno & Kinnunen, 1999). Most of the job insecurity has been defined according to the global view, signifying the threat of job loss or job discontinuity (Hartley et al., 1991). The global viewpoint is concerned with the threats of imminent job loss. These unidimensional measures typically focus on either the perceived probability (Mohr, 2000; Van Vuuren, 1990) or fear of job loss (Johnson, Messe & Crano, 1984).

Mauno and Kinnunen (1999) state that the most sophisticated implementation of multi-dimensional job insecurity has been proposed by Ashford, Lee and Bobko, (1989). These researchers describe five components of job insecurity, being 1) the severity of the threat concerning job continuity or aspects of the job; 2) the importance of the job feature to the individual; 3) the perceived threat of the occurrence of a total negative effect of the job

situation; 4) the total importance of the changes mentioned above, and 5) powerlessness and inability of the individual to control the above mentioned factors. According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984), job insecurity only occurs in the case of involuntary loss. An individual, who gave up valued job features having left a job by choice, might experience a sense of loss, but because he would not be powerless to maintain continuity, he will not experience job insecurity.

The researcher is of the opinion that the main factor is the uncertainty of not knowing what to expect. The anticipation of a negative change in the individual's job position causes greater stress than the actual change itself. Any perceived changes could cause job insecurity because the individual is not in control of the changes (Jacobson, 1991). The researcher agrees with the views of Sverke and Hellgren (2002), that different individuals will have different intensity levels of job insecurity even if they are exposed to the same kind of threat. Generally, the underlying theme of the various definitions is that job insecurity is a subjective phenomenon, i.e. based on the individual's perceptions and interpretations of the immediate work environment (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Hartley et al., 1991).

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

More and more literature suggests that perceptions of job insecurity may hold detrimental consequences for employees attitudes (Ashford et al., 1989; Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997; Rosenblatt, Talmud & Ruvio, 1999; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002); and it is further indicated that well-being (Barling & Kelloway, 1996; De Witte, 1999; Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti & Happonen, 2000; Mohr, 2000); has been found to have moderating effects on the stressor-health relationship as well as employee mental health and family well-being (Larson, Weilson & Beley, 1994); and leads to negative physical health outcomes (Dooley, Rook & Catalano, 1987; Mohren, Swaen, van Amelsvoort, Borm & Galama, 2003; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990) and higher reports of psychological distress (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995;

Probst, 2000). Employees with perceptions of low job security are more likely to engage in work withdrawal behaviour (Probst, 1999) and job insecurity is often reported to result in reduced psychological well-being, characterised by symptoms such as anxiety, depression, irritation or strain-related psychosomatic complaints (Catalano, Rook & Dooley, 1986; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfield & Smith, 1998; Joelson & Wahlquist, 1987; Kuhnert, Sims & Lahey, 1989).

As noted job insecurity is also viewed as a stressor. Stress is a transaction in the relationship between the individual and the organisation (Cooper, Dewe & O'Driscoll, 2001). Stress arises when the demands of a particular encounter are appraised by the individual as exceeding the resources available, thereby threatening the well-being (Lazarus, 1991) and bringing about change in the person's psychological condition in order to cope with the encounter (Cooper et al. 2001; Siu, 2002). Stress is therefore an ongoing process that involves the individual transacting with the environment, while assessing the encounters, trying to cope with the issues that arise.

Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) explain that the use of the term **burnout** arose with some regularity during the 1970's in the United States, especially among people working in the human services. The concept has since been extended to include all other professional and occupational groups (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Burnout is define by Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), as "a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in 'normal' individuals that is primarily characterised by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work."

Exhaustion is considered to be the most important dimension of burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1990; Pines & Aronson, 1981; Shirom, 1989). According to Maslach et al. (2001) the exhaustion component of job burnout relates to the basic individual stress aspect of burnout, referring to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources. It is characterised by a lack of energy. Frustration and tension increase as the individual realise that he cannot give of himself as before or that he cannot be as responsible as before. Dreading to face another day at work is a common symptom of exhaustion. The cynicism or depersonalisation component represents the interpersonal context dimension of burnout, referring to negative, callous, or excessively detached responses to various aspects

of the job. Visible signs of cynicism include the use of abstract language, intellectualisation of the situation and strict compartmentalisation of professional lives. The reduced efficacy or accomplishment component is linked to the self-evaluation dimension of burnout, referring to feelings of incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity at work. The more negative the self-talk the more feelings of incompetence and perception of lack of progress will surface.

Burnout components have been linked with mental and physical health problems and Burke and Deszca (1986) and Maslach and Pines (1977) found that the measure of psychosomatic symptoms was positively related to burnout. Deterioration of mental health is characterised by decreased feelings of self-esteem, depression, irritability, helplessness, or anxiety (Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Kahill, 1988). Catalano et al. (1986) also state that job insecurity has often been reported to result in reduced psychological well-being, characterised by phenomena such as anxiety, depression, and irritation or in strain-related psychosomatic complaints. Furthermore, the threat of redundancy has been shown to have adverse effects on self-reported physical and psychological morbidity, sickness related absence, use of health services, and clinical measurements among individuals (Ferrie, 1997).

Job engagement, although related to burnout, it is viewed as the theoretical antithesis of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Accordingly job engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy. Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzáles-Romá and Bakker (2002) explain that vigour (opposite pole of mental exhaustion) is characterised by high energy levels, mental resilience when working, willingness to exert effort into one's work and to persist even in the face of adversity; dedication (the opposite pole of cynicism) is related to enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, challenge and a sense of significance; and absorption refers to a state where time passes quickly and where the individual has difficulty in detaching him- or herself from work. Another view emerged after two studies on Spanish employees and on Spanish and Dutch students (Schaufeli, Taris, Le Blanc, Peeters, Bakker & de Jonge, 2001). They found that burnout and job engagement are, in their total, opposite concepts that need to be measured independently. The researcher agrees with this view, as people can become fatigue from work but it can be a positive, satisfied tiredness. Scutte, Toppinen, Kalimo and Schaufeli, (2000) define job engagement as an energetic state in which the employee is dedicated to excellent performance at work and is confident of his or her effectiveness. This

definition seems to fit the statement that job engagement is a different concept than only the opposite of burnout.

Psychological well-being is a complex construct, consisting of various dimensions. According to Brodsky (1988), psychological well-being has four specific characteristics, being 1) is subjective and emotional, 2) is a state as opposed to a continuous part of who we are, 3) is a product of personal endeavour, and 4) is more than the absence of negative affect and personal conflict, but comes from moving toward desired life goals. Brodsky (1988) identifies various antecedents of psychological well-being including, stress, physical health, work and career paths and work environment. De Witte (1999), identifies four specific job characteristics, which correlates with well-being. They are 1) skill utilisation, 2) work load, 3) job insecurity, and 4) autonomy. As mentioned, literature indicates that job engagement can make a person feel energised and generates positive feelings of well-being (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001; Turner, Barling & Zacharatos, 2002). It seems that work could lead to illness, as well as good health. On the one hand work requires effort and is associated with negative feelings and a lack of freedom. On the other hand work gives energy, enable development and generates positive feelings (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001; Turner et al., 2002). In this research general health is conceptualised by the theory of Goldberg and Hillier (1979), looking at four concepts, 1) somatic symptoms; 2) anxiety and insomnia; 3) social dysfunction; and 4) severe depression.

Now more than ever before South African companies are exposed to the effects of the world economy, advanced technology and international competition. Change in South Africa over the last 10 years was not only economical, but also political. The once stable, predictable and controlled environment has become complex, out of control and unpredictable. These changes are ongoing and this, together with a shrinking labour market, tends to increase job insecurity. This relates specifically to the government organisation where this research was undertaken.

In summary, it is clear that the experience of job insecurity is a reality in the South African context and even worldwide. No programmes were implemented in the past to address the problem. There is also a lack of research regarding the causal factors of job insecurity and the relationship with burnout and stress in South African industries. The objective of this

research is to determine the relationship of job insecurity with burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation in South Africa.

The information obtained in this study can be of value when creating career management, development, selection support and training programmes in companies where high levels of job insecurity exists. Problems experienced by the government organisation that participated in this research were high absenteeism. Symptoms noticed by the Human Resources team were low levels of vigour and dedication as well as feelings of job insecurity. It is important that the source of these problems are researched to ensure effective interventions. Based on the above problem statement, the following hypothesis are proposed:

- H1: A practicaly significant relationship exist between job insecurity and burnout.
- H2: A practicaly significant relationship exist between job insecurity and job engagement.
- H3: A practicaly significant relationship exist between job insecurity and general health.
- H4: Job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to burnout, job engagement and general health.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this research is to determine the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being at a government organisation.

METHOD

Research design

A cross-sectional survey design was used to reach the objectives of the research. According to Burns and Grove (1993), this design is ideally suited when the aim of the study is predictive and descriptive by nature. Structural equation modelling was used to test causal models of job insecurity, burnout, job engagement and general health. According to Byrne (2001) structural equation modelling takes a hypothesis-testing approach to the analysis of structural theory based on some phenomenon.

Study population

The total population of 500 government workers in Gauteng were used, although a response rate of only 296 participants was obtained. The population includes workers from different levels, i.e. ranging from a semi-skilled employees to professional employees. The lowest skilled level employees have a level of literacy adequate to allow for valid completion of questionnaires. The biographical characteristics of the study population are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1
Compilation of the Study Population (n = 296)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural group	Black (1)	185	62.3
	White (2)	56	18.9
	Other (3)	34	11.4
	Total	275	92.6
Gender	Male (1)	145	48.8
	Female (2)	142	47.5
	Total	286	96.3
Age	24 years and younger (1)	27	9.1
	25 – 35 years (2)	105	35.4
	36 – 45 years (3)	69	23.2
	46 – 55 years (4)	47	15.8
	56 years and older (5)	17	5.7
	Total	265	89.2
Tenure	Less than 1 year (1)	47	15.8
	2 – 5 years (2)	74	24.9
	6 – 10 years (3)	68	22.9
	11 – 20 years (4)	59	19.9
	Longer than 20 years (5)	37	12.5
	Total	285	96.0

Table 1 indicates that 67% of the study population was from black cultural groups. An almost equal percentage of males and females participated. The age group 25-35 years were the highest representing (39%) with age group 56 years and older, the least being (6%). The

tenure of the participants were rather equally spread with people working for 2-5 years in the majority with 26%.

Measuring battery

The Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI) (De Witte, 2000), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2003), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzales-Roma & Bakker, 2002) and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979) were used in this study. Biographical information regarding race, age, qualification, tenure and gender was also gathered.

- The *Job Insecurity Survey Inventory (JISI)* was used (De Witte, 2000). It is an 11-item questionnaire, which measures the perceived job insecurity of the participants. The items have both cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 = strongly agree, 3 = unsure and 5 = strongly disagree. The items of the JISI measuring global job insecurity are reported to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,92 in total and 0,85 for the affective scale and 0,90 for the cognitive scale, using the same instrument (De Witte, 2000). Heymans (2002), obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,81 in total and 0,86 for the affective scale. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the cognitive scale measured 0,47, which is below the accepted standard but till acceptable for further analysis. Elbert (2002) obtained an alpha coefficient of 0,84 for the JISI. The JISI was translated from Dutch to English and was used for the first time in South Africa in the research of Heymans (2002). Although Heymans (2002) recommended some refinements, he concluded that the JISI seems to have satisfactory internal consistency and construct validity.
- The *Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI)* (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou & Kantas, 2003), is a recently developed alternative to the customarily used Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which was used as a measure of burnout. The OLBI includes both core dimensions of burnout, known as exhaustion and disengagement (cynicism/depersonalisation). The exhaustion subscale includes items on the affective, physical and cognitive aspects of burnout and the disengagement subscale includes items

that relate to distancing one from one's work. The OLBI includes each scale both positively and negatively phrased so as to avoid answering bias. Demerouti et al. (2003) investigated the convergent validity of the MBI and OLBI, using multitrait-multimethod analyses, it was found that the latent variables representing both instruments are highly correlated and that all exhaustion and distancing/disengagement items of both instruments load on the same single factor. In this regard, Schaufeli (2003) is of the opinion that these encouraging results suggest that the OLBI might be considered as an alternative for the MBI-GS.

- The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzáles-Romá & Bakker, 2002) was used as a measure of work engagement. This 17-item questionnaire is arranged along a 7-point frequency scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (daily). This measure of job engagement has three scales, namely vigour (6 items), dedication (5 items), and absorption (6 items). High levels of vigour, dedication and job engagement point to an individual who experiences a high level of job engagement. Regarding internal consistency, Cronbach coefficients have been determined between 0,68 and 0,91 (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Storm (2002) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,78 for vigour, 0,89 for dedication and 0,78 for absorption for the UWES in a sample of 2396 members of the South African Police Services (SAPS).
- The *General Health Questionnaire (GHQ)* (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979), was used to measure psychological well-being. For the purpose of this study the 28-item version was used. Responses are given on a 4-point Likert-type scale, with the total scale ranging from 28 to 112. Four subscales measure the degree of somatic symptoms; anxiety and insomnia; social dysfunction and severe depression. A high value on the GHQ is indicative of a high level of psychological distress, whereas a low score implies a low level of psychological distress, in other words indicating a high level of psychological well-being. Goldberg and Hillier (1979) reported internal consistency coefficients of 0,69 to 0,90. Goldberg, Grater, Sartorius, Usten, Piccinelli, Gureje & Rutter (1997) report good reliability and validity indices for the GHQ across different cultures. In South Africa, Isaksson and Johansson (2000), obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,86 and Oosthuizen (2001) obtained a reliability coefficient of 0,89 for the GHQ, which make the use of this instrument applicable in a South African context.

DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical analysis was carried out with the help of the SPSS-programme (SPSS Inc, 2003). Means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis were determined to describe the data.

Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlation coefficients were used to assess the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was used to carry out factor analysis. Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, range, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. Effect sizes (Cohen, 1988) were used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. A cut-off point of $p = 0,05$ will be set for statistical significance of the results. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationships between the variables. MANOVA and ANOVA analysis will be used to determine the relationship between JISI and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the percentage of the variance in the dependant variables (burnout, job engagement and psychological well-being) that can be predicted by the independent variable (job insecurity).

RESULTS

Construct validity of the measuring instruments

Job Insecurity

A simple principal components analysis was conducted on the 11 items of the JISI on the total sample of employees at a government organisation. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that three factors could be extracted. However, because the obtained pattern matrices for a three-factor solution was not logical and literature (De Witte, 2000) indicates that job insecurity as measured by the JISI has a two-factor structure, it was

decided to specify two factors. Next, principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was used in carrying out factor analysis.

Table 2

Pattern Matrix of the JISI for Employees in a Government Organisation (N = 296)

	Component	
	1	2
1. I think that I will be able to continue working here	0,078	0,73
2. There is only a small chance that I will become unemployed	-0,06	0,04
3. I am certain/sure of my job environment	0,167	0,72
4. I am very sure that I will be able to keep my job	0,18	0,66
5. It makes me anxious that I might become unemployed	0,61	0,10
6. I feel uncertain about the future of my job	0,58	0,35
7. I worry about the continuation of my career	0,61	-0,21
8. I fear that I might lose my job	0,72	0,26
9. I fear that I might get fired	0,70	0,30
10. There is a possibility that I might lose my job in the near future	0,73	0,25
11. I think that I might be dismissed in future	0,68	0,35

Inspection of Table 2 indicated that item 2 was problematic, not loading on either component. Upon closer inspection of the item, it was noted that the sentence can be interpreted in either a positive or negative manner, i.e. placing focus on either “small chance” or on “unemployed”. Furthermore, upon examination the individual item loadings, it appeared that only items 1, 3, and 4 loaded on the cognitive subscale, whereas items 10 and 11, which are supposed to load on the cognitive subscale loaded heavily on the affective job insecurity subscale. All remaining items loaded correctly on the affective job insecurity subscale.

Burnout and Job engagement

A simple principal components analysis was conducted on the 16 items of the OLBI on the total sample of employees at a government organisation. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that four factors could be extracted. However, because the obtained pattern matrices for a four factor solution was not logical and previous research (Demerouti et al. 2003) found that burnout as measured by the OLBI has a two-factor structure, with exhaustion and

disengagement as separate but correlated dimensions, it was decided to specify two factors. Next, principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was used in carrying out factor analysis.

Table 3

Pattern Matrix of the OLBI for Employees in a Government Organisation (N = 296)

	Component	
	1	2
1. <i>I always find new and interesting aspects in my work</i>	0,60	-0,01
2. <i>There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work</i>	0,06	0,56
3. <i>It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way</i>	0,33	0,55
4. <i>After work, I tend to need more time than in the past in order to relax and feel better</i>	-0,155	0,51
5. <i>I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well</i>	0,53	0,05
6. <i>Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically</i>	-0,01	0,46
7. <i>I find my work to be a positive challenge</i>	0,54	0,14
8. <i>During my work, I often feel emotionally drained</i>	0,12	0,64
9. <i>Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work</i>	-0,07	0,50
10. <i>After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities</i>	0,58	0,16
11. <i>Sometime I feel sickened by my work tasks</i>	0,18	0,56
12. <i>After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary</i>	-0,04	0,51
13. <i>This is the only type of work that I can imagine myself doing</i>	0,12	-0,03
14. <i>Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well</i>	0,54	-0,12
15. <i>I feel more and more engaged in my work</i>	0,71	-0,03
16. <i>When I work, I usually feel energized</i>	0,65	0,15

Inspection of Table 3 indicated that item 13 was problematic, not loading on either component. This might be due to the fact that the item can be understood in different ways, i.e. “this is the only work that I want to do” or “this is the only work I can do”. Furthermore, upon examining the individual item loadings, it appeared that what had emerged were not two scales being representative of disengagement and exhaustion as expected, but rather, Factor 1 as being representative of job engagement (all positively phrased items) and Factor 2 as comprising of both disengagement and exhaustion items.

Naudé and Rothmann (2004), noted regarding the UWES, that although studies in Spain and the Netherlands confirmed the three-factor structure of work engagement, the results of their study pointed toward a two-factor model namely Vigour/Dedication and Absorption. Absorption however showed poor internal consistency, leading to the researchers’ recommendation that the Absorption scale should not be used. Given these results it was decided to exclude the items representing the Absorption scale (Naudé & Rothmann, 2004). A simple principal components

analysis was conducted on the remaining 11 items of the UWES representing the vigour and dedication scales.

Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that only one factor could be extracted, explaining 52.58% of the total variance.

Given the above findings with regard to the OLBI and UWES, it was decided to conduct a simple principal components analysis of the 15 items of the OLBI (excluding item 13) and the 11 items of the UWES. Analysis of eigenvalues and scree plot showed two factors that explained 37,05% of the total variance. Next, principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was used in carrying out factor analysis. The pattern matrices are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Pattern Matrix of the OLBI and UWES for Employees in a Government Organisation (N = 296)

	Component	
	1	2
<i>OLBI</i>		
1. I always find new and interesting aspects in my work	-0,51	0,13
2. There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work	-0,04	-0,47
3. It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way	-0,37	-0,47
4. After work, I tend to need more time than in the past in order to relax and feel better	0,10	-0,47
5. I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well	-0,46	0,08
6. Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically	-0,05	-0,46
7. I find my work to be a positive challenge	-0,50	-0,07
8. During my work, I often feel emotionally drained	-0,08	-0,56
9. Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work	0,04	-0,47
10. After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities	-0,46	0,02
11. Sometime I feel sickened by my work tasks	-0,19	-0,51
12. After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary	-0,03	-0,48
14. Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well	-0,48	0,22
15. I feel more and more engaged in my work	-0,62	0,21
16. When I work, I usually feel energized	-0,58	-0,01
<i>UWES</i>		
1. I am bursting with energy in my work	0,64	0,13
2. I find my work full of meaning and purpose	0,71	0,32
4. I feel strong and vigorous in my job	0,66	0,34
5. I am enthusiastic about my job	0,62	0,34
7. My job inspires me	0,70	0,33
8. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	0,56	0,45
10. I am proud of the work I do	0,65	0,28
12. In my job, I can continue working for very long periods at a time	0,61	0,34

<i>13. To me, my work is challenging</i>	0,69	0,30
<i>15. I am very resilient, mentally, in my job</i>	0,51	0,35
<i>17. I always persevere at work, even when things do not go well</i>	0,45	0,43

Inspection of Table 4 indicated that all items of the UWES, as well as items 1, 5, 7, 14, 15, and 16 loaded on the first factor, which can be labelled “Engagement” with items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12, loading on the second factor, which can be labelled “Exhaustion/Disengagement”. It should be noted that a higher score on the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI is indicative of lower level of job engagement, whereas a higher score on the UWES indicates more job engagement, hence the negative loading of the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI on the first factor.

Subsequently, the three factors of the OLBI and the UWES were subjected to a second-order principal component analysis. Only one factor, which explained 58,80% of the total variance, was extracted, although the eigenvalues of the second factor was noted to only fall very slightly below 1, with the first two factors together, explaining 76,06% of the total variance.

General Health

A simple principal components analysis was conducted on the 28 items of the GHQ on the total sample of the employees at a government organisation. Analysis of eigenvalues (larger than 1) and scree plot indicated that six factors could be extracted. However, because the obtained pattern matrices for a six-factor matrix was not logical and previous research (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979) indicates that general health as measured by the GHQ has a four-factor structure; it was decided to specify a four-factor extraction. Next, because an oblique rotation showed that the factors were not strongly correlated, it was decided to use principal component analysis with a varimax rotation for carrying out factor analysis.

Table 5

Pattern Matrix for the Items of the GHQ for Employees in a Government Organisation ($N = 296$)

		Component			
		1	2	3	4
A1	<i>Been feeling perfectly well and in good health?</i>	0,61	0,06	-0,21	0,30
2.	<i>Been feeling in need of a good tonic?</i>	0,40	0,32	0,03	0,15
3.	<i>Been feeling run down and out of sorts?</i>	0,46	0,09	0,28	0,31
4.	<i>Felt that you are ill?</i>	0,27	0,18	0,19	0,59
5.	<i>Been getting any pains in your head?</i>	0,57	0,16	0,18	0,08
6.	<i>Been getting a feeling of tightness or pressure in your head?</i>	0,56	0,19	0,24	0,17
7.	<i>Been having hot or cold spells?</i>	0,61	0,14	0,41	0,05
B1	<i>Lost much sleep over worry?</i>	0,03	0,20	0,16	0,69
2.	<i>Had difficulty in staying asleep once you are off?</i>	0,27	0,23	0,31	0,40
3.	<i>Felt constantly under strain?</i>	0,42	0,20	0,20	0,45
4.	<i>Been getting edgy and bad-tempered?</i>	0,42	0,18	0,20	0,50
5.	<i>Been getting scared or panicky for no good reason?</i>	0,30	0,12	0,58	0,27
6.	<i>Found everything getting on top of you?</i>	0,19	0,12	0,29	0,53
7.	<i>Been feeling nervous and strung-up all the time?</i>	0,33	0,24	0,18	0,59
C1	<i>Been managing to keep yourself busy and occupied?</i>	0,23	0,21	0,63	0,02
2.	<i>Been taking longer over the things you do?</i>	0,12	0,41	0,36	0,30
3.	<i>Felt on the whole you were doing things well?</i>	0,36	0,22	0,40	0,14
4.	<i>Been satisfied with the way you've carried out your task?</i>	0,04	0,13	0,58	0,35
5.	<i>Felt that you are playing a useful part in things</i>	0,04	0,22	0,58	0,30
6.	<i>Felt capable of making decisions about things?</i>	0,08	0,29	0,37	0,27
7.	<i>Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?</i>	0,39	0,12	0,42	0,32
D1	<i>Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?</i>	0,39	0,43	0,30	0,20
2.	<i>Felt that life is entirely hopeless?</i>	0,20	0,49	-0,08	0,33
3.	<i>Felt that life isn't worth living?</i>	0,30	0,64	0,07	0,06
4.	<i>Thought of the possibility that you might do away with yourself?</i>	0,01	0,64	0,18	0,23
5.	<i>Found at times you couldn't do anything because your nerves were too bad?</i>	0,09	0,63	0,35	0,22
6.	<i>Found yourself wishing you were dead and away from it all?</i>	0,12	0,51	0,22	0,25
7.	<i>Found that the idea of taking your own life kept coming into your mind?</i>	0,29	0,66	0,35	-0,05

After inspection of Table 5 it was indicated that item A4 loaded on factor 4, B5 on factor 3 and C2 on factor 2, which was not the intended factors of these items. All remaining items loaded correctly even though some were slightly below preferred cut-off point of 0,45.

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlation coefficients of the JISI, OLBI, UWES and GHQ for employees ($N = 296$) working at a government organisation are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Inter-Item Correlation Coefficients of the Measuring Instruments for Employees Working at a Government Organisation.

Test and subscales	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Inter-item r	α
JISI Cognitive job insecurity	296	2,51	0,85	0,26	-0,24	0,33	0,60
JISI Affective job insecurity	296	2,78	0,82	0,00	0,24	0,35	0,73
OLBI Exhaustion/Disengagement	296	2,45	0,50	0,08	0,58	0,19	0,66
OLBI Engagement	296	2,27	0,56	0,26	0,23	0,26	0,71
UWES Engagement	296	3,85	1,36	-0,35	-0,34	0,47	0,95
GHQ – Somatic Symptoms	296	0,29	0,28	0,60	-0,62	0,29	0,71
GHQ – Anxiety and Insomnia	296	0,31	0,32	0,65	-0,71	0,38	0,79
GHQ – Social Dysfunction	296	0,27	0,29	0,74	-0,69	0,33	0,74
GHQ – Severe Depression	296	0,25	0,28	0,88	-0,39	0,36	0,80

Table 6 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained on all the measuring scales, with exception of the JISI Cognitive subscale and the OLBI Exhaustion/Disengagement subscale, which fell marginally below the 0,70 cut-off point (see Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The poor internal consistency of the JISI Cognitive subscale could be related to the fact that the scale only consists of three items. All of the inter-item correlation coefficients were acceptable (Clark & Watson, 1995). Scores on all the dimensions seem to be distributed normally (skewness and kurtosis were smaller than one),

Regarding the mean scores of the measuring instruments, a score for the JISI falling in the region of 3 is considered average. Scores obtained by the participants on the total job insecurity scale, as well as its subscales fall slightly below what is considered average. A high score on the JISI suggest high levels of job insecurity, with the converse being true for a low score. Participants thus experience slightly lower than average levels of job insecurity.

Regarding the OLBI a score varying between 2 and 3 is considered average. Scores obtained by the participants on the OLBI exhaustion/disengagement and engagement subscales fall within average ranges, suggesting that burnout levels are not very high or low.

Scores falling in the region of 3 is considered average on the UWES. Participants obtained scores slightly above average, suggesting positive results.

Score on the GHQ vary from 0 to 1, with “0” representing good health and “1” representing poor health. A score below 0,5 is in other words considered to be indicative of good health. A score above 0,5 indicates poor health. Scores obtained by participants on all subscales of the GHQ fall below the 0,5 level, suggesting good health.

Job insecurity and biographical characteristics

Next, MANOVA and ANOVA analyses followed to determine the relationship between scores the JISI and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure, the results of which are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

MANOVA’S – Differences in Job Insecurity levels of Demographic Groups

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

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

In an analysis of Wilk’s Lambda values ($p < 0,01$), statistically significant differences were obtained for culture, but not for qualifications, tenure, and age. The relationship between job insecurity and culture was further analysed to determine practical significance using ANOVA, followed by Tukey HSD tests.

The ANOVA of differences in job insecurity of the different cultural groups are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

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

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

* Statistically significant difference: $p < 0,01$ ^a Practically significant differences from type (in row) where b (medium effect, $d \geq 0,5$) or c (large effect, $d \geq 0,8$) are indicated

Table 8 demonstrates that statistically significant differences were obtained between the cognitive and affective job insecurity scores of the various culture groups. Practically significant differences were obtained between the cognitive job insecurity scores of the White and Black cultural groups, where the White participants obtained a higher mean cognitive job insecurity score compared to the Black participants.

Burnout and Biographical Characteristics

Next, MANOVA and ANOVA analyses followed to determine the relationship between scores on the OLBI and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure, the results of which are reported in Table 9.

Table 9

MANOVA'S – Differences in Burnout levels of Demographic Groups

Variable	Value	F	Df	Den Df	p
Culture	0,95	3,62	2	271	0,00*
Age	0,95	0,50	10	514	0,13
Qualifications	0,93	3,42	6	578	0,00*
Tenure	0,89	4,13	8	556	0,00*

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

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values ($p < 0,01$), statistically significant differences were obtained for culture, qualifications and tenure, but not for age. The relationship between burnout and the three demographic variable levels that showed a statistically significant difference was

further analysed to determine practical significance using ANOVA, followed by Tukey HSD tests.

The ANOVA of differences in burnout levels of the different cultural groups are reported in Table 10.

Table 10

ANOVA'S – Differences in Burnout Levels of Cultural Groups

	Black	White	Other	p	Root MSE
OLBI engagement	2,19 ^a	2,51 ^b	2,26	0,00 [*]	0,54
OLBI exhaustion/disengagement	2,45	2,50	2,45	0,82	0,50

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

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

Table 10 demonstrates that there are statistically significant differences between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the OLBI) of Black and White participants. The White participants experience less job engagement (considering that a higher score is indicative of lower job engagement) than their Black counterparts (medium effect).

The ANOVA of differences in burnout levels of participants with different educational qualifications are reported in Table 11.

Table 11

ANOVA'S – Differences in Burnout Levels of Participants with Different Qualifications

	Standard 8	Diploma	Degree	Post-graduate	p	Root MSE
	- 10					
OLBI engagement	2,29	2,14 ^a	2,48 ^b	2,11 [*]	0,00 [*]	0,55
OLBI exhaustion/disengagement	2,48	2,42	2,54	2,19	0,03	0,50

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

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

Table 11 demonstrates that there are statistically significant differences between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the OLBI) of participants with a degree and diploma, and

with a degree and post-graduate degree. Participants with a degree tended to experience lower levels of job engagement (higher scores) as opposed to participants with post-graduate degrees (medium effect) and diplomas (medium effect).

The ANOVA of differences in burnout levels of participants with different levels of tenure are reported in Table 12.

Table 12

ANOVA'S – Differences in Burnout Levels of Participants with Different Levels of Tenure

	Less than 1 year	2 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 20 years	Longer than 20 years	p	Root MSE
OLBI engagement	2,00 ^a	2,20 ^a	2,38 ^b	2,27 ^b	2,48 ^{b/c}	0,00 [*]	0,53
OLBI exhaustion/disengagement	2,43	2,44	2,34	2,60	2,52	0,06	0,48

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

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

Table 12 demonstrates that there are statistically significant differences between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the OLBI) of participants who had been working for the organisation for one year or less compared to persons who had been working for the organisation for 6 – 10 years, 11 – 20 years and in excess of 20 years. Participants who had been working for the organisation for one year or less, experienced higher levels of job engagement (lower scores) when compared to persons who had been working for the organisation for 6 to 10 years (medium effect), 11 – 20 years (medium effect) and in excess of 20 years (large effect). Persons who had been working for the organisation for a longer period of time experienced lower levels of job engagement. It was also indicated that persons who had been working for the organisation for 2 – 5 years were more engaged than persons who had been working for the organisation for longer than 20 years.

Job engagement and biographical characteristics

The ANOVA of differences in job engagement levels (as measured by the UWES) of participants from different cultures are reported in Table 13.

Table 13

ANOVA'S – Differences in Job engagement Levels of Participants from Different Cultures

	Black	White	Other	p	Root MSE
UWES TOTAL	4,05	3,43	3,46	0,00 [*]	1,36

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

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

Table 13 demonstrates that statistically significant differences exist between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the UWES) as experienced by different cultural groups. However, none of these differences were practically significant (d values falling below the 0,05 level). ANOVA indicated that no statistically significant differences exist with regard to the mean scores of participants falling in different age groups.

The ANOVA of differences in job engagement levels (as measured by the UWES) of participants with different qualifications are reported in Table 14.

Table 14

ANOVA'S – Differences in Job engagement Levels of Participants with Different Qualifications

	Standard 8 – 10	Diploma	Degree	Post-graduate	p	Root MSE
UWES TOTAL	3,73 ^a	4,05	3,48 ^a	4,51 ^b	0,01	1,37

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

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

Table 14 demonstrates that marginal statistically significant differences exists between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the UWES) as experienced by participants with different qualifications. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between persons with a Grade 10 – Grade 12 level of education and persons with post-graduate qualifications, and between persons with a degree and persons with a post-graduate level of education. Participants with a Grade 10 – Grade 12 level of education, experience lower levels of job engagement compared to participants with post-graduate qualifications. Similarly, participants with degrees experience a decreased level of job engagement as compared to persons with post-graduate qualifications.

Table 15

ANOVA'S – Differences in Job engagement Levels of Participants with Different Levels of Tenure

	Less than 1 year	2 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 20 years	Longer than 20 years	p	Root MSE
UWES TOTAL	4,50	3,85 ^b	3,89	3,37 ^a	3,64 ^a	0,00 [*]	1,34

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

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

Table 15 demonstrates that statistically significant differences exist between the levels of job engagement (as measured by the UWES) as experienced by participants with different levels of tenure. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between the levels of job engagement of persons who have been working for the organisation for less than one year and those working for the organisation in excess of 20 years, with those participants with a short tenure experiencing higher levels of job engagement. A practically significant relationship of large effect was obtained with regard to participants, who have been working for the organisation for less than one year and those who have been working for the organisation between 11 and 20 years, with those participants who have recently joined the organisation experiencing a higher level of job engagement.

General Health and Biographical Characteristics

Next, MANOVA and ANOVA analyses followed to determine the relationship between scores the GHQ and various demographic characteristics, such as culture, age, qualifications and tenure, the results of which are reported in Table 16.

Table 16

MANOVA'S – Differences in General Health Levels of Demographic Groups

Variable	Value	F	Df	Den Df	p
Culture	0,89	3,80	8	504	0,00*
Age	0,92	1,31	16	736,90	0,19
Qualifications	0,93	1,62	12	701,42	0,08
Tenure	0,87	2,21	16	785,79	0,00*

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

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values ($p < 0,01$), statistically significant differences were obtained for culture and tenure but not for qualifications and age. The relationship between general health and culture was further analysed to determine practical significance using ANOVA, followed by Tukey HSD tests.

The ANOVA of differences in general health of the different cultural groups are reported in Table 17.

Table 17

ANOVA'S – Differences in General Health Levels of Cultural Groups

	Black	White	Other	P	Root MSE
GHQ SS	0,26	0,38	0,33	0,01	0,28
GHQ AS	0,25 ^a	0,45 ^b	0,40	0,00*	0,31
GHQ SDY	0,22 ^a	0,40 ^b	0,34	0,00*	0,28
GHQ SDE	0,19 ^a	0,34 ^b	0,38 ^b	0,00*	0,28

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

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

Table 17 demonstrates that statistically significant differences were obtained between all general health subscale scores of the various culture groups with exception of the somatic symptoms scale. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between the anxiety and sleeplessness subscale scores of the White and Black cultural groups, where the White participants obtained a poorer level of health in this regard compared to the Black participants. A similar relationship was established with regard to the social dysfunction subscale with the White group again demonstrating poorer health. Regarding severe depression the White participants as

well as the participants falling in the “Other” category obtained poorer health scores than the Black participants.

The ANOVA of differences in general health of persons with different levels of tenure are reported in Table 18.

Table 18
ANOVA'S – Differences in General Health Levels of Tenure

	Less than 1 year	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	More than 20 years	p	Root MSE
GHQ SS	0,15 ^a	0,30 ^b	0,39 ^c	0,30 ^b	0,33 ^b	0,00 [*]	0,27
GHQ AS	0,13 ^a	0,29	0,42 ^c	0,35 ^b	0,36 ^b	0,00 [*]	0,31
GHQ SDY	0,12 ^a	0,27 ^b	0,36 ^c	0,27 ^b	0,34 ^c	0,00 [*]	0,27
GHQ SDE	0,08 ^a	0,25 ^b	0,32 ^c	0,28 ^b	0,33 ^c	0,00 [*]	0,28

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

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

Table 18 demonstrates that statistically significant differences were obtained between all general health subscales in terms of their levels of tenure. Practically significant differences were obtained between the somatic symptoms subscale, with participants working for the organisation less than one year demonstrating higher levels of health in this regard. Persons working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated lower levels of anxiety and insomnia than participants working in the organisation for six years and longer. Participants working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated less social dysfunction than participants working in the organisation for two years and longer. Lastly participants working in the organisation for two years and longer demonstrated higher levels of severe depression compare to those who have been working for the organisation for less than one year.

The correlation coefficients between the JISI, GHQ, OLBI and UWES are reported in Table 19.

Table 19

Correlation Coefficients between the JISI, GHQ, OLBI and UWES

Correlations

	JI Cog	JI Aff	OLBI Eng	OLBI Dep/Exh	UWES Eng	GHQ Som Sym	GHQ Anx/Ins	GHQ Soc Dys	GHQ Sev Dep
JI Cog	1								
JI Aff	0,44*+	1							
OLBI Eng	-0,42*+	-0,36*+	1						
OLBI Dep/Exh	0,26*	0,24*	-0,23*	1					
UWES Eng	-0,36*+	-0,28*	0,53*++	-0,45*+	1				
GHQ Som Sym	0,34*+	0,32*+	-0,47*+	0,33*+	-0,46*+	1			
GHQ Anx/Ins	0,27*	0,30*+	-0,45*+	0,33*+	-0,45*+	0,67*++	1		
GHQ Soc Dys	0,36*+	0,30*+	-0,47*+	0,23*	-0,51*++	0,60*++	0,65*++	1	
GHQ Sev Dep	0,29*	0,26*	-0,44*+	0,22*	-0,48*+	0,61*++	0,63*++	0,67*++	1

* Statistically significant $p \leq 0,01$

+ Correlations is practically significantly $r \geq 0,30$ (medium effect)

++ Correlations is practically significantly $r \geq 0,50$ (large effect)

Table 19 indicates practically significant negative correlations of medium effect between cognitive job insecurity and job engagement as measured by both the OLBI and UWES, and also positive correlations of medium effect between cognitive job insecurity and somatic symptoms and social dysfunction scales on the GHQ. Increased cognitive job insecurity is thus related to decreased job engagement and increased somatic symptoms and social dysfunction.

The affective job insecurity subscale demonstrated practically significant negative correlations of medium effect with job engagement as measured by the OLBI, implying that increased affective job insecurity is associated with decreased job engagement. No practically significant correlations were however found with regard to affective job insecurity and job engagement as measured by the UWES. Affective job insecurity also indicates

significant positive correlations with somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia and social dysfunction as measured by the GHQ. This implies that an increased feeling of job insecurity related to decreased job engagement and increased somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia and social dysfunction. It is interesting to note that an increased feeling of affective job insecurity is associated with anxiety and insomnia, this relationship was not found between the cognitive scale of job insecurity and anxiety and insomnia.

Table 19 further shows, significant negative correlation coefficients of large effect between job engagement as measured by the UWES and social dysfunction as measured by GHQ. Also evident is a significant positive correlation coefficients of large effect between the job engagement scales of the OLBI and UWES.

In summary, increased levels of job insecurity are associated with decreased job engagement and poorer general health. Surprisingly, no significant correlation was found between job insecurity and the exhaustion/disengagement scale of the OLBI.

The regression analysis of job insecurity (cognitive and affective) and the OLBI Engagement scale indicates, that $r^2 = 0,217$, which implies that 21,7% of the variance in job engagement, as measured by the OLBI is predicted by job insecurity. The multiple correlation coefficient of 0,46 is significant (medium effect). The regression analysis of job insecurity (cognitive and affective) and the OLBI exhaustion scale indicates, that $r^2 = 0,074$ which implies that 7,4% of the variance in exhaustion as measured by the OLBI is predicted by job insecurity. The multiple correlation coefficient of 0,29 is marginally significant (medium effect). The regression analysis of job insecurity (cognitive and affective) and the UWES scale indicates, that $r^2 = 0,140$ which implies that 14% of the variance in job engagement as measured by the UWES is predicted by job insecurity. The multiple correlation coefficient of 0,38 is significant (medium effect). The regression analysis of job insecurity and the total general health indicates that the adjusted $r^2 = 0,167$, suggesting that 16,7% of the variance in general health is predicted by job insecurity. The multiple correlation of 0.42 is significant (medium effect). The regression analysis of job insecurity and the subscales of general health suggest the following: the symptomatic symptoms subscale indicates that $r^2 = 0,143$ which imply that 14,3% of the variance is explained by job insecurity. The multiple coefficient of 0,39 is significant (medium effect). The anxiety and sleeplessness subscale indicates that $r^2 = 0,109$ which imply that 10,9% of the variance is explained by job insecurity. The multiple

coefficient of 0,34 is significant (medium effect). The social dysfunction subscale indicates that $r^2 = 0,149$ which imply that 14,9% of the variance is explained by job insecurity. The multiple coefficient of 0,39 is significant (medium effect). The severe depression subscale indicates that $r^2 = 0,101$ which imply that 10,1% of the variance is explained by job insecurity. The multiple coefficient of 0,33 is significant (medium effect). The highest variance explained by job insecurity is the job engagement scale of the OLBI, while the lowest explained variance is that of the exhaustion scale of the OLBI.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, work job engagement and general health, as well as the levels of job insecurity, burnout, work engagement and general health as experienced by employees at a government organisation in South Africa.

Levels of job insecurity, as well as burnout were found to be average. Positive results for job engagement were found, measuring slightly above average. Results indicated good health as measured by this study.

Regarding the validity of the measuring instruments, the following was found: The JISI had a problematic item. Item 2 did not load on either component. Upon closer inspection of the item, it was noted that the sentence can be interpreted in either a positive or negative manner, i.e. placing focus on either “small chance” or on “unemployed”. Furthermore, upon examination the individual item loadings, it appeared that only items 1, 3, and 4 loaded on the cognitive subscale, whereas items 10 and 11, which are supposed to load on the cognitive subscale loaded heavily on the affective job insecurity subscale. All remaining items loaded correctly on the affective job insecurity subscale. With regard to the OLBI, item 13 was found to be problematic, not loading on either component. This might be due to the fact that the item can be understood in different ways, i.e. “this is the only work that I want to do” or “this is the only work I can do”. Furthermore, upon examining the individual item loadings, it appeared that what had emerged were not two scales being representative of disengagement and exhaustion as expected, but rather, Factor 1 as being representative of job engagement (all positively phrased items) and Factor 2 as comprising of both disengagement and

exhaustion items. All items of the UWES, as well as items 1, 5, 7, 14, 15, and 16 loaded on the first factor, which can be labelled “Engagement” with items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12, loading on the second factor, which can be labelled “Exhaustion/Disengagement”. It should be noted that a higher score on the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI is indicative of lower level of job engagement, whereas a higher score on the UWES indicates more job engagement, hence the negative loading of the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI on the first factor. With regard to the GHQ, it was indicated that item A4 loaded on factor 4, B5 on factor 3 and C2 on factor 2, which was not the intended factors of these items. Items might have been misinterpreted by the participants due to the formulation. All remaining items loaded correctly even though some were slightly below preferred cut-off point of 0,45.

It was found that culture has an influence in the way participants experience job insecurity on the cognitive scale, where the White participants experienced higher cognitive job insecurity than their Black counterpart. Job engagement as measured by the OLBI also indicated that White participants experienced less work engagement than the Black participants. The job engagement scale on the OLBI also indicated that participants with a degree experience lower levels of job engagement than participants with a diploma or post-graduate degree.

With regard to the OLBI total score, participants with a Grade – Grade12 level of education tended to experience more burnout than persons with a post-graduate degree. It is also indicated that participants with a diploma tend to experience less burnout than participants with degrees and that participants with post-graduate degrees tended to experience less burnout than persons with a degree, although other studies found that those with a higher level of education reported higher levels of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). In terms of tenure it has been found that participants who had been working for the organisation for one year or less, experienced higher levels of job engagement when compared to persons who had been working for the organisation for 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years and in excess of 20 years. Persons who had been working for the organisation for a longer period of time experienced lower levels of job engagement. It was also indicated that persons who had been working for the organisation for 2 to 5 years were more engaged than persons who had been working for the company for longer than 20 years.

Participants with a Grade – Grade12 level of education, experience lower levels of job engagement compared to participants with post-graduate qualifications. Similarly,

participants with degrees experienced a decreased level of job engagement as compared to persons with post-graduate qualifications. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between the levels of job engagement of persons who have been working for the company for less than one year and those working for the organisation in excess of 20 years, with those participants with a short tenure experiencing higher levels of job engagement. A practically significant relationship of large effect was obtained with regard to participants, who have been working for the organisation for less than one year and those who have been working for the organisation between 11 and 20 years, with those participants who have recently joined the organisation experiencing a higher level of job engagement.

With regard to the general health of the participants a practical significant relationship was obtained between the anxiety and sleeplessness subscale scores of the White and Black cultural groups, where the White participants obtained a poorer level of health in this regard than compared to the Black participants. A similar relationship was established with regard to the social dysfunction subscale with the White group again demonstrating poorer health. Regarding severe depression the White participants as well as the participants falling in the "Other" category obtained poorer health score than the Black participants. Practically significant differences were obtained between the somatic symptoms subscale, with participants working for the organisation less than one year demonstrating higher levels of health in this regard. Persons working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated lower levels of anxiety and insomnia than participants working in the organisation for six years and longer. Participants working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated less social dysfunction than participants working in the organisation for two years and longer. Lastly participants working in the organisation for two years and longer demonstrated higher levels of severe depression compare to those who have been working for the organisation for less than one year.

It was found that increased job insecurity is associated with decreased work engagement and poorer general health, which support hypothesis 2 and 3. Surprisingly, no significant correlation was found between job insecurity and the exhaustion/disengagement scale of the OLBI, thus not supportive of hypothesis 1.

According to the regression analysis, 21,7% of the variance in job engagement as measured by the OLBI was predicted by job insecurity. Job engagement as measured by the UWES had

14% of the variance explained by job insecurity. Exhaustion as measured by the OLBI had 7,4% of the variance explained by job insecurity. A further, 16,7% of the variance in general health as measured by the GHQ could be explained by job insecurity. It could thus be said that job insecurity holds predictive value with regard to burnout, job engagement and general health, which support hypothesis 4.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Several limitations can be reported regarding this study. Firstly, the sample was not representative of culture (race). Stratified random sampling could ensure better representation of the different groups. The sample size could be extended to various government organisations to also include different organisational cultures.

All data referred to in this study were obtained by means of self-report scales, which probably limit the generality of the findings. In future research use of qualitative methods and information obtained by the organisation for example, absenteeism could be combined with the self-report questionnaires.

Cross-sectional design, as was used in this study, is not ideal for making causal interpretations and longitudinal studies needed in future research.

Although the job insecurity levels of this government organisation are reported to be average, it is still important to look at possible interventions to even reduce the levels. Managers and employees should become aware of what job insecurity is and how it could affect their work as well as family life. Good communication strategies at all levels of the organisation can limit the experience of job insecurity. More research is needed on the causes of job insecurity

Burnout levels of this government organisation also reported to be average, but it will be ideal if it can be reduced. Managers and employees should become aware of the causes and symptoms of burnout. This could help them become aware of their own and others' emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and disengagement, and intervene before the effects of burnout are too serious. The implementation of programmes directed at the stimulation of personal growth and effective stress management can help reduce burnout levels.

Regarding the measuring instruments used in this study, the OLBI is a new instrument and has not been used in South Africa a lot. More research is needed regarding the reliability and validity of the OLBI in a South African context regarding its psychometric properties. More research regarding the relationship of the measuring instruments, UWES and OLBI, across different organisations and professions in South Africa can also be valuable.

Few studies regarding the relationship between job insecurity and general health in a South African context has been done. More research regarding this relationship is needed across different organisations and professions in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, conclusions are made regarding the specific objectives of this study. The limitations of this research are discussed, followed by recommendations for the organisation and future research.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, burnout, work engagement and general health, as well as the levels of job insecurity, burnout, work engagement and general health as experienced by employees at a government organisation in South Africa.

In line with the first theoretical objective, job insecurity was defined as the cognitive and affective perception an individual holds with regard to the continuity of his or her existing job situation and the uncertainty of what to expect from perceived changes. Burnout was conceptualised as a persistent negative feeling that causes feelings of increasing exhaustion and decreasing engagement. Job engagement, although related to burnout, is not necessarily the opposite of burnout. It can rather be defined as an energetic state in which the employee experience dedication, inspiration, vigour and pride even with a feeling of positive, satisfied fatigue. Psychological well-being was conceptualised as the general health an individual experience with regard to somatic symptoms, anxiety and sleeplessness, social dysfunction and severe depression.

With regard to the first empirical objective, levels of job insecurity, as well as burnout were found to be average. Positive results for engagement were found, measuring slightly above average. Results indicated good health as measured by this study.

Regarding the validity of the measuring instruments, the following was found: the JISI had a problematic item. Item 2 did not load on either component. Upon closer inspection of the item, it was noted that the sentence can be interpreted in either a positive or negative manner,

i.e. placing focus on either “small chance” or on “unemployed”. Furthermore, upon examination of the individual item loadings, it appeared that only items 1, 3, and 4 loaded on the cognitive subscale, whereas items 10 and 11, which are supposed to load on the cognitive subscale loaded heavily on the affective job insecurity subscale. All remaining items loaded correctly on the affective job insecurity subscale. With regard to the OLBI, item 13 was found to be problematic, not loading on either component. This might be due to the fact that the item can be understood in different ways, i.e. “this is the only work that I want to do” or “this is the only work I can do”. Furthermore, upon examining the individual item loadings, it appeared that what had emerged were not two scales being representative of disengagement and exhaustion as expected, but rather, Factor 1 was found to be representative of engagement (all positively phrased items) and Factor 2 as comprising of both disengagement and exhaustion items. All items of the UWES, as well as items 1, 5, 7, 14, 15, and 16 loaded on the first factor, which can be labelled “Engagement” with items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12, loading on the second factor, which can be labelled “Exhaustion/Disengagement”. It should be noted that a higher score on the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI is indicative of lower level of engagement, whereas a higher score on the UWES indicates more engagement, hence the negative loading of the “Engagement” scale of the OLBI on the first factor. With regard to the GHQ, it was indicated that item A4 loaded on factor 4, B5 on factor 3 and C2 on factor 2, which was not the intended factors of these items. Items might have been misinterpreted by the participants due to the formulation. All remaining items loaded correctly even though some were slightly below the preferred cut-off point of 0,45.

In line with the second empirical objective, it was found that culture has an influence in the way participants experience job insecurity on the cognitive scale. It showed that White participants experienced higher cognitive job insecurity than their Black counterpart. Engagement as measured by the OLBI also indicated that White participants experienced less work engagement than their Black participants. The engagement scale on the OLBI also indicated that participants with a degree experience lower levels of engagement than participants with a diploma or post graduate degree, although other studies found that those with a higher level of education reported higher levels of burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001).

In terms of tenure, it has been found that participants who had been working for the organisation for one year or less, experienced higher levels of engagement when compared to

persons who had been working for the organisation for 6 – 10 years, 11 – 20 years and in excess of 20 years. Persons who had been working for the organisation for a longer period of time experienced lower levels of engagement. It was also indicated that persons who had been working for the organisation for 2 – 5 years were more engaged than persons who had been working for the organisation for longer than 20 years.

Participants with a Grade 10 – Grade 12 level of education, experience lower levels of engagement compared to participants with post-graduate qualifications. Similarly, participants with degrees experienced a decreased level of engagement as compared to persons with post-graduate qualifications. Practically significant differences of medium effect were obtained between the levels of engagement of persons who have been working for the organisation for less than one year and those working for the organisation in excess of 20 years, with those participants with a short tenure experiencing higher levels of engagement. A practically significant relationship of large effect was obtained with regard to participants, who have been working for the organisation for less than one year and those who have been working for the organisation between 11 and 20 years, with those participants who have recently joined the organisation experiencing a higher level of engagement.

With regard to the general health of the participants, a practical significant relationship was obtained between the anxiety and sleeplessness subscale scores of the White and Black cultural groups, whereas White participants obtained a poorer level of health in this regard than compared to Black participants. A similar relationship was established with regard to the social dysfunction subscale with the White group again demonstrating poorer health. Regarding severe depression, the White participants as well as the Asian participants falling in the “Other” category obtained poorer health score than the Black participants. Practically significant differences were obtained between the somatic symptoms subscale, with participants working for the organisation less than one year demonstrating higher levels of health in this regard. Persons working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated lower levels of anxiety and insomnia than participants working in the organisation for six years and longer. Participants working in the organisation for less than one year demonstrated less social dysfunction than participants working in the organisation for two years and longer. Lastly participants working in the organisation for two years and longer demonstrated higher levels of severe depression compared to those who have been working for the organisation for less than one year.

It was found that increased job insecurity is associated with decreased work engagement and poorer general health, which support hypothesis 2 and 3. Surprisingly, no significant correlation was found between job insecurity and the exhaustion/disengagement scale of the OLBI, thus not supportive of hypothesis 1.

In line with the last empirical objective, the regression analysis, 21,7% of the variance in engagement as measured by the OLBI was predicted by job insecurity. Engagement as measured by the UWES had 14% of the variance explained by job insecurity. Exhaustion as measured by the OLBI had 7,4% of the variance explained by job insecurity. Further, 16,7% of the variance in general health as measured by the GHQ could be explained by job insecurity. Job insecurity thus holds predictive value with regard to burnout, engagement and general health, which support hypothesis 4.

3.2 LIMITATIONS

Several limitations can be reported regarding this study. Firstly, the sample was not representative of culture (race). Stratified random sampling could ensure better representation of the different groups. The sample size could be extended to various government organisations to also include different organisational cultures.

All data referred to in this study were obtained by means of self-report scales that has a limitation on the generality of the findings.

Cross-sectional design, as used in this study, is not ideal for making causal interpretations and longitudinal studies are needed in future research.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ORGANISATION

Although the job insecurity levels of this government organisation are reported to be average, it is still important to look at possible interventions to further reduce the levels. Managers and employees should become aware of what job insecurity is and how it could affect their work as well as family life. Career counsellors can assist employees who experiences job insecurity (Holm & Hovland, 1999). Good communication strategies at all levels of the organisation can limit the experience of job insecurity. Little is understood with regard to the linkage between job insecurity and subjectively experienced job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). More research is needed with regard to job insecurity to understand what causes this experience.

Burnout levels of this government organisation also reported to be average, but it will be ideal if it can be reduced. Managers and employees should become aware of the causes and symptoms of burnout. This could help them become aware of their own and others' emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and disengagement, and intervene before the effects of burnout are too serious. The implementation of programmes directed at the stimulation of personal growth and effective stress management can help reduce burnout levels. Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) suggests that the most effective intervention deals with not only the individual or the situation, but look at it from all areas of worklife.

Engagement levels of this organisation reported to be average, but Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) suggests that to focus on engagement allows for closer alliance with the organisational mission, especially with those aspects relating to quality of work life within the organisation. These researcher note that a work setting which is designed to sustain positive development of energy, vigour, dedication, absorption and effectiveness among its employees should be successful in promoting their well-being and productivity, lastly suggesting that the statement of a positive goal for intervention, i.e. increasing engagement rather than reducing burnout, enhances the accountability of the intervention, as assessing the presence of something is more definite than assessing the absence of its opposite.

Levels of general health of employees of this organisation reported to be just above average, which indicates relative good health. It is important however to be preventative in this

regard. The researcher suggest the following, based on research done by Nelson (2000). The organisations can divide it into three preventative efforts:

Primary preventative efforts are directed at eliminating or reducing the sources of stress or risk factors. This includes organisational politics, overload, barriers of achievement and work-home conflict. Guidelines to reduce these stressors include: flexible work schedules, telecommuting, company assistance with regard to childcare, design programs to provide social support at work.

Secondary preventative efforts focus on managing employees' responses to the inevitable demands of work and home. Explain the benefits of regular exercise, healthy eating habits and getting enough restful sleep. Learn techniques to relax and encourage them to talk to others about everyday problems and experiences.

Tertiary preventative efforts focus on professional care. Ensure that employee assistance programs provide appropriate professional care. Employees must be encouraged to use the program when ever necessary.

3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Regarding the measuring instruments used in this study, the OLBI is a new instrument and has not been used in South Africa a lot. More research is needed regarding the reliability and validity of the OLBI in a South African context regarding its psychometric properties. More research regarding the relationship of the measuring instruments, UWES and OLBI, across different organisations and professions in South Africa can be valuable.

In future research use of qualitative methods and information obtained by the organisation for example, absenteeism could be combined with the self-report questionnaires. Longitudinal studies can also provide valuable information with regard to the causal relationship of job insecurity, burnout, engagement and general health.

The sample size could be extended to various government organisations to also include different organisational cultures. Different organisations can also be included.

Few studies regarding the relationship between job insecurity and general health in a South African context has undertaken. More research regarding this relationship is needed across different organisations and professions in South Africa. As mentioned by Wissing and Van Eeden (2002), future research should focus on the origins of psychological strengths as well as the nature, dynamics and enhancement of psychological well-being.

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