

**JOB INSECURITY, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT  
AND JOB SATISFACTION OF ENGINEERS IN A  
PARASTATAL.**

By

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## REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

The references and the editorial style prescribed by the *Publication Manual (5<sup>th</sup> edition)* of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this mini-dissertation. This is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus), to use APA style in all scientific documents with effect from January 1999.

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## **SUMMARY**

**Topic:** Job Insecurity, Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction of Engineers in a parastatal.

**Key terms:** Job insecurity, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement, physical health, job attitudes, well being in the workplace.

Fierce competition and re-allocation of firms on a global scale, including processes of substantial downsizing have come to the forefront of attention. The concern is that the global scale of actions cannot be controlled on a local level and may therefore pose a threat to a wide variety of workers. Many of the changes taking place in the economies and labour markets of the industrialised countries may have increased structural job insecurity. Cutbacks and dismissals give rise to feelings of job insecurity. More often employees experience a sense that their jobs are a fragile, threatened privilege, which can be taken away at any time.

Employee perception of management efforts to maintain employment security is based on past downsizing thus raising the potential that continued downsizing will increase insecurity and therefore, will decrease both employee desire to participate in decision-making as well as employee satisfaction and commitment to the organisation. Previous research found a consistent negative relationship between perceived job insecurity and both employee satisfaction and commitment.

The empirical objective of this study was to determine the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

A survey design was used to test research hypotheses and to determine the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Data from the total population of engineers in a parastatal ( $N = 60$ ) were gathered. The Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ), Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (short version) (MSQ) were administered. The statistical analysis was carried out with the help of the SAS programme. The statistical methods utilised consisted of descriptive statistics, Cronbach Alpha coefficients, inter-item correlations, and Pearson-product moment correlations.

Results indicated that engineers do not experience high levels of job insecurity. Furthermore, engineers don't experience low levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Research findings indicated that the Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ), Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) are valid and reliable measuring instruments. The findings suggested that a relationship exist between job insecurity, organisational commitment and total job satisfaction.

Recommendations for future research were made.

## OPSOMMING

**Onderwerp:** Werksonsekerheid, Organisasie Toewyding en Werkstevredenheid van Ingenieurs in 'n parastatale instelling.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Werkssekuriteit, Organisasieverbintenis, Arbeidsvreugde, Werksprestasie, Werksbetrokkenheid, Fisiese Gesondheid, Werksgesindheid, Welstand in die werksplek.

Fel wedywering en die herposisionering van organisasies op globale skaal, insluitende wesenlike toepassings in grootte, is aan die orde van die dag. Daar bestaan kommer dat die globale omvang van hierdie stellings en aanpassings nie gekontroleer word op 'n plaaslike vlak nie en gevolglik 'n bedreiging vir verskillende werkers inhou. Die meeste van hierdie veranderings vind plaas in die ekonomiese en arbeidsmarkte van die geïndustrialiseerde lande en dit opsigself lei tot strukturele werksonstabiliteit. Besnoeiings in werkersgetalle en afdankings lei uiteraard tot onsekerheid, met die gevolg dat dit individue tentatief stem en dat hulle konstant in die vrees leef dat werkloosheid mag volg.

Werknemerspersepsie is derhalwe gebaseer op die voortgesette ingrepe van bestuur om deurlopend af te skaal en dat dergelyke afskaling 'n kontinue proses van onsekerheid tot gevolg het, met die gevolg dat werknemers stelselmatig begin onttrek aan organisatoriese prosesse soos besluitneming met 'n verdere gevolglike afname in werkstevredenheid, maar ook toewyding. Vorige navorsing het bevind dat daar 'n wesenlike korrelasie bestaan tussen negatiewe persepsies en belewenisse rondom werkssekuriteit en spontane werkstevredenheid en toewyding.

Die empiriese doelwit van hierdie studie was om vas te stel wat die verband is tussen werksekuriteit, organisasie toewyding en werkstevredenheid en om

verder te bepaal of werksonsekerheid bydra tot laer vlakke van organisasie toewyding en werkstevredenheid.

'n Opname ontwerp was gebruik om die navorsingshipotese te toets en om te bepaal of daar 'n verband is tussen werksekerheid, organisasie toewyding en werkstevredenheid. Inligting van die totale populasie van ingenieurs in 'n parastatale instelling ( $N = 60$ ) is versamel. Die Werksonsekerheid Opname Vraelys (JISQ), die Organisasie Toewydingsvraelys (OCQ) en die Minnesota Tevredenheidsvraelys (verkorte weergawe) (MSQ) was geadministreer. Die statistiese analise is uitgevoer met behulp van die SAS program. Die statistiese metodes wat gebruik is het bestaan uit beskrywende statistiek, Cronbach Alpha koëffisiënte, inter-item korrelasies, en Pearson-produk moment korrelasies.

Die resultate het getoon dat ingenieurs nie hoë vlakke van werksonsekerheid beleef nie. Verder beleef die ingenieurs ook nie lae vlakke van organisasie toegewydheid en werkstevredenheid nie. Resultate het getoon dat die Werksonsekerheid Opname Vraelys (JISQ), die Organisasie Toewydingsvraelys (OCQ) en die Minnesota Tevredenheidsvraelys (verkorte weergawe) (MSQ) geldige en betroubare instrumente is. Die bevindings veronderstel dat daar 'n verhouding bestaan tussen werksonsekerheid, organisasie toewyding en totale werkstevredenheid.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen.

## **CHAPTER 1**

This mini-dissertation focuses on the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.

This chapter contains the problem statement, research objectives and research methodology employed. It starts out with a problem statement, giving an overview of previous related research conducted on job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, linking it with this research project and its research objectives. A discussion of the research method follows, with details regarding the empirical study, research design, and study population, measuring instruments and statistical analyses. It concludes with a summary giving an overview of the chapters that comprise this mini-dissertation.

### **1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The current operating and economic conditions for organisations have had a substantial impact on employees' work demands and obligations (Kickul & Posig, 2001). Organisations everywhere are downsizing, rightsizing, outsourcing and restructuring and attempting to make more flexible use of their human labour sources through shorter tenure, temporary and part-time work and subcontracting. This almost inevitably implies the rationalisation of jobs and with the move of society into the global information era, a profound restructuring of work is taking place in order to be more competitive (Marais & Schepers, 1996).

The exposure of South African organisations to the effects of world economy, technological advancement and tough international competition (Marais & Schepers, 1996), resulted in organisations focusing more on their profitability and sustainability. In order for organisations to gain competitive advantage they need to determine the sources of cost-savings such as economies of scale, technology, access to raw materials and salaries and wages, with the latter being

the largest immediate source of cost-savings (Marais & Schepers, 1996). In an attempt to survive in difficult economic conditions and to gain competitive advantage organisations may embark in processes of downsizing, rightsizing, outsourcing and restructuring, leaving workers at all levels with feelings of stress, insecurity, misunderstanding, undervaluation and alienation. Furthermore, the implications of these changes along with projects to cut costs, has particular relevance in organisations. It is perceived as disruptive and demanding, leading to stress reactions, and feelings of anxiety among employees (Ashford, Lee & Bobko, 1989).

Changes within organisations are also seen as comprising threat and uncertainty, leading to perceptions of job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989). Job insecurity in turn, results in both reduced organisational commitment and job satisfaction. In the long run all this may have a negative impact on the organisation and on the psychological well being of employees (Ashford et al., 1989; Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997; De Witte, 1997; Heymans, 2002; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002).

The experience of job insecurity can erode the effectiveness of the organisation (De Witte, 1997). Employees may, for instance, be more likely to engage in work behaviour withdrawal and as a result higher levels of turnover may be experienced. A downward spiral is created where productivity decreases, and in such a manner the competitive strength of the organisation is undermined. The risk of further redundancy is increased which in turn increases feelings of job insecurity. The experience of job insecurity lowers job satisfaction; trust in management as well as organisational commitment. It also increases the tendency to leave the organisation, psychosomatic complaints, and depression and also spreads into negative consequences for the organisation (De Witte, 1997). Several studies have indicated that job insecurity leads to health complaints (Ashford et al., 1989; Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003; Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans & Van Vuuren, 1991; Isaksson, Hellgren & Pettersson,

1998). Probst (2003) indicated in a job insecurity model that there is a probability that an individual may experience higher incidences of physical and mental health conditions as an outcome of job insecurity, but only if the specific individual is dissatisfied with that insecurity.

Job insecurity has been defined in different ways and consensus on the exact definition has not yet been reached (De Witte, 1997; 1999; Mauno & Kinnunen, 2000). Job insecurity relates to people in the work context who fear that they may lose their jobs and become unemployed (De Witte, 1997; 1999). In general it reflects a discrepancy between the levels of security a person experiences and the level he or she might prefer (Klandermans, Van Vuuren, & Jacobson, 1991).

Van Vuuren (1990) conceptualised job insecurity as the concern felt by a person for the continued existence of his or her job. She identifies three components which are central to job insecurity. Firstly it refers to a subjective experience or perception, secondly it refers to uncertainty about the future, and thirdly central to job insecurity is the doubts concerning the continuation of one's job. Job insecurity of individual employees may decrease productivity, increase absenteeism and thus result in the undermining of the company's competitive strength (Van Vuuren, 1990).

Job insecurity applies to several large categories of workers (Hartley et al., 1991). The first category of workers consists of workers who belong to the secondary labour market, e.g. foreign workers, immigrants, older workers, temporary and seasonal workers. For this category of workers, job insecurity persists regardless of whether there are plans for cutbacks or retrenchment in the organisation they happen to be working for at a given moment.

The second category of workers is those for whom job insecurity is by definition an integral part of the work experience and consists of freelance workers and fixed term appointments. The third category of workers are made up of recruits

who may be experiencing a considerable amount of job insecurity because they still have to go through the induction stage and might view this encounter as an extremely stressful period.

The level of job insecurity experienced by these different categories of workers varies (Hartley et al., 1991). For the first two categories the discrepancy between the level of security experienced and the level that is desired is an ongoing inseparable part of their working life. For the recruits job insecurity is only a stage in the employment process willingly entered into and the level that is desired is endured temporarily with the objective of eventual permanent employment in mind (Hartley et al., 1991; Van Vuuren 1990).

Job insecurity consistently presents itself as a stressor (De Witte, 1999; Van Vuuren, 1990). With regard to the possible consequences, a distinction is made between stress reactions and coping behaviour. Stress reactions refer to the consequences of the stressor for psychological well being, while coping refers to the way in which the person deals with stress (De Witte, 1997). The growing emphasis on more flexible employment contracts may also intensify feelings of job insecurity (De Witte, 1997; 1999) and ultimately contribute to feelings of stress and anxiety.

According to Bussing (1999), studies of the employment process have revealed the necessity of considering additional variables in the study of job insecurity. Besides socio-demographic variables (e.g. gender, age and education), variables such as individual psychological differences (e.g. locus of control, job or work orientation, organisational commitment, availability of resources) should also be taken into account when studying job insecurity (Bussing, 1999). Job insecurity, as indicated above, results in lower levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The focus of this research will therefore be to study the relationship between these three constructs.

Organisational commitment is defined as a strong belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values, a willingness to exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organisation and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organisation (Chow, 1994). It is seen as the identification with one's employer that includes the willingness to work on behalf of the organisation and the intention to remain with the organisation for an extended period of time (Wagner & Hollenbeck, 1995). Organisational commitment also refers to a psychological link between the employee and the organisation that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1996). However, organisational commitment has been expanded to a more comprehensive view, consisting of three components, namely affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002; Siu, 2002).

"Affective commitment denotes an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation. Continuance commitment denotes the perceived cost associated with leaving the organisation, and normative commitment, reflects a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation" (Meyer et al., 2002, p.21).

This multidimensional commitment construct has been tested and confirmed in both Western (Meyer et al., 2002) and Non-Western countries (Suliman & Iles, 2000). However, Suliman and Iles (2000) indicated in their study among non-western employees that affectively committed employees are more likely to maintain organisational membership and contribute to the success of the organisation than continuance committed employees. Furthermore, the affectively committed employee may remain in the organisation because he or she wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate organisational goals (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1979). As long as the exchange relationship (efforts – rewards) between the individual and the organisation exist, he or she may not think of leaving the organisation to which he or she is emotionally attached. Siu (2002) suggested that top management should pay attention to workers' affective

organisational commitment as this attitudinal trait could have both direct and indirect effects on the well-being of employees. Within the context of this research, the focus will be mainly on the affective component of commitment as it refers to the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation (Mowday et al., 1979).

Siu's (2002) results showed that organisational commitment was not only related to most of the physical and psychological outcomes among workers, but also to the moderating effects on the stressor-health relationship. Organisational commitment therefore interacts with sources of stress at work to determine their outcomes. Siu (2002) argued that this indirect or moderating effect of commitment protects individuals from the negative effect of stress, due to the fact that it enables them to attach direction and meaning to their work. Organisational commitment may also provide people with stability and a feeling of belonging. However, the opposite may also be true. Given the above, it is possible that organisational commitment will moderate the experience of job insecurity on employees within a parastatal.

Regarding job satisfaction, there seems to be general consensus that it can be described as an affective or emotional reaction to a job resulting from the comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired, or expected (Cranny, Smith & Stoner, 1992; Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998). Job satisfaction is defined as the process whereby employees seek to achieve and maintain correspondence within their environment (Cranny et al., 1992; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996)

The individual worker's correspondence with the environment can be described in terms of his or her ability to fulfil the requirements of the environment, and visa versa (Cook, Hepworth, Wall & Warr, 1981). This implies that individuals will experience job satisfaction if they feel that their individual capacities and values can be utilised in their work environment and that their work environment offers them opportunities and rewards them accordingly.

Robbins (1998) describes job satisfaction as a general attitude toward one's job; the difference between the amount of rewards workers receive and the amount they believe they should receive. According to Judge, Boudreau and Bretz (1994), job satisfaction is a function of the balance between work role inputs, that is, what the individual puts into the work role (e.g. education) and work role outcomes, that is, what is received (e.g. pay). As outcomes received relative to inputs invested increase, job satisfaction is hypothesised to increase.

According to Luthans (1995), job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things, which are viewed as important. It is generally recognised in the organisational behaviour field that job satisfaction is the most important and frequently studied attitude.

Job dissatisfaction was found to be related to patterns of behaviour such as tardiness, absenteeism and high labour turnover, whereas job satisfaction was found to be related to behaviour that indicates a positive organisational orientation (Pretorius & Rothmann, 2001). Job insecurity is consistently associated with a reduced level of job satisfaction. Employees in organisations form attitudes about many things, such as pay, company of co-workers, benefits, training opportunities, job security and working hours. It is important to realise that some of these attitudes are more important than others and will to some extent determine how satisfied employees are with their jobs.

Thus, job satisfaction can be regarded as a core aspect influencing both the individual and the organisation. It follows that job insecurity, as an organisational determinant was found to have a correlation with job satisfaction (Ashford et al., 1989).

From the above discussion, it is clear that there is a relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Employees working in parastatals are also faced with organisational restructuring, mergers and downsizing (Elbert, 2002). As a result they are placed under pressure, especially in terms of stable employment. It is therefore necessary that the impact of job insecurity within parastatals and the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction be investigated. This research will contribute to the parastatals in the sense that it will provide information on the current levels of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, and will also focus on the relationship between the above-mentioned constructs.

This research will make the following contributions to the subject of Industrial Psychology and the practice thereof in organisations:

- It will result in the conceptualisation of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction according to available literature.
- The levels of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal will be determined.
- The relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal will be determined.

## **1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives are divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

### **1.2.1 General objective**

With reference to the above formulation of the problem, the general objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal and

to determine whether job insecurity contribute to lower levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

### **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

The specific research objectives are as follows:

- To conceptualise job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction from available literature.
- To determine the levels of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.
- To determine the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.
- To determine whether the JISQ, OCQ and MSQ are valid and reliable measuring instruments of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction respectively.

## **1.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method consists of a literature review and an empirical study.

### **1.3.1 Literature review**

The literature review focuses on previous research on job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction and the measurement of these constructs. An overview is given of the conceptualisation of these constructs in the literature, and on the findings in terms of the relationship between these constructs.

### 1.3.2 Research Design

A survey design was used to achieve the research objectives. For the purpose of this study it has been decided to make use of a quantitative survey design, namely a correlation design (Huysamen, 1993). The correlation design has been decided upon because the relationship between the constructs of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction will be investigated at the same point in time without any planned intervention. This research is descriptive and explanatory (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

### 1.3.3 Study population

The study population consists of the total population of engineers employed in a parastatal ( $N = 60$ ). The population consisted mainly out of males (91, 38%), between the ages 24 to 35 years (51, 73%) with a Diploma as their highest qualification (51, 72%). Of all the respondents 31, 03% had 1 to 4 years length of service with the organisation and 39, 66% are working in the Mechanical Maintenance Section power plant department.

### 1.3.4 Measuring Battery

Three questionnaires are used in the empirical study, namely the Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ) (De Witte, 2000), the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short version (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967).

The *Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire* (JISQ) (De Witte, 2000) is used to measure job insecurity. The items in the JISQ encapsulate both the cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. **Affective job insecurity** measures

the emotional experience of the possible threatening situation while **cognitive job insecurity** measures the possibility of becoming unemployed. The following Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for the JISQ: Affective job insecurity: 0, 85; and Cognitive job insecurity: 0, 90 (De Witte, 2000). Overall De Witte (2000) reported Cronbach Alpha coefficients of 0, 92 for the questionnaire. Janse van Rensburg (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 86 in her study on pilots within the airline association on the relationship between job insecurity, coping and psychological well being. Elbert (2002) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 84 in her study on job insecurity and psychological strengths of service workers in a parastatal.

The *Organisational Commitment Questionnaire* (OCQ) (Meyer et al., 1993) is used to measure the organisational commitment of managers and employees. Organisational commitment has more recently been expanded to a more comprehensive three components model, affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer et al., 2002; Siu, 2002). **Affective commitment** relates to an emotional attachment to, and identification with and involvement in the organisation. Whereas **continuance commitment** relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation and **normative commitment**, relates to a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation (Meyer et al., 2002). Moeletsli (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 84. Heymans (2002) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 80 in his study of maintenance workers in a parastatal. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was consistently found in various studies to be above 0, 80 and found to be valid and reliable in South African studies (Suliman & Iles, 2000).

The *Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short version* (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967) is used to measure the levels of job satisfaction. It taps affective responses to various aspects of one's job. The MSQ can be used to measure two distinct components, namely **intrinsic job satisfaction** and **extrinsic job satisfaction**. Intrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about the nature of the job tasks

themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000). Hlalele (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 91 in his study of engineers at Sasol. Khwela (2001) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 91. This battery was proven to be valid and reliable in South African studies. A short version will be used to measure engineer's satisfaction with their jobs.

### **1.3.5 Statistical analysis**

The statistical analysis is carried out with the help of the SAS-programme (SAS Institute, 2000). Prior to principal factor extraction, principal component extraction is done to estimate the number of factors, the presence of outliers and the factorability of the correlation matrices. Descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) are used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlations are used to determine the internal consistency, homogeneity and unidimensionality of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Coefficient alphas contain important information regarding the proportion of variance of items of a scale in terms of the total variance explained by that particular scale. According to Clark and Watson (1995), the mean inter-item correlation (which is a straightforward measure of internal consistency) provides useful information in conjunction with the alpha coefficient of a scale (which is an indication of homogeneity of a scale), but as such cannot ensure unidimensionality of a scale.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are used to specify the relationship between the variables. In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ( $p \geq 0, 05$ ). Effect sizes (Steyn, 1999) are used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. A cut-off point of 0, 30 (medium effect, Cohen, 1988) is set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients. A cut-off point of 0, 50 large effect will be used for the practical significance of differences (Cohen, 1988).

## **1.4 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

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

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction

Chapter 3: Empirical study

Chapter 4: Results & discussion

Chapter 5: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

## **1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter 1 focused on the problem statement, objectives and research method in this study. This was followed by a division of the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2 will focus on literature review with specific reference to the conceptualisation of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction and the relationships between these constructs.

## CHAPTER 2

### JOB INSECURITY, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION

In this chapter the concept job insecurity is conceptualised. Antecedents, consequences and outcomes of job insecurity are discussed.

Organisational commitment and job satisfaction is explored by conceptualising these two concepts. The causes, influencing factors and outcomes of organisational commitment are discussed. Job satisfaction is explored by focusing on the importance of job satisfaction, the causes, as well as the approaches and outcomes of job satisfaction. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

#### 2.1 JOB INSECURITY

##### 2.1.1 Conceptualisation of job insecurity

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

The perceived powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation could span from permanent loss of the job itself to loss of some important features of the job (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Petzall, Parker & Stoeberl, 2000). The loss must be involuntary, if not, the individual is powerless to maintain the continuity of the position and therefore true job insecurity would not be experienced.

Job insecurity is seen as the discrepancy between the security employees would like to feel that their jobs are providing and the level they perceive that this security do exists (Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson & Hartley, 1991). It reflects a fundamental and involuntary change concerning the continuity and security within the employing organisation (Hellgren, Sverke & Isaksson, 1999). However, an individual's reactions will depend on a number of factors, such as labour market characteristics, employability, age and gender. Employees who feel that they could easily get other jobs may view the changing nature of work positively while those who have an economic responsibility towards their family or who feel that they would have difficulties finding new jobs may react negatively (Roskies & Louis- Guerin, 1990).

Hellgren et al. (1999) collaborated on this definition by indicating that job insecurity is a subjective phenomenon based on the individual's appraisal of uncertainties in the immediate work environment, which implies that the feeling of job insecurity may differ between individuals even if they are exposed to the same objective situation. Probst (2003) defines job insecurity as the perceived stability and continuance of one's job as one knows it. Job insecurity refers to employees' negative reactions to the changes concerning their jobs.

Based on the above discussion it seems that job insecurity is a multidimensional construct. Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti and Happonen (2000) indicated that job insecurity consists of five components. These components are as follows:

- The severity of the threat concerning job continuity or aspects of the job;
- The relative importance of the job features, meaning that the fear of losing an important job feature is a cause of greater job insecurity than the threat of losing a minor job feature;
- The perceived threat of various changes which are expected to have a negative effect on an employee's total job situation, for example, being laid off;
- The total importance of the changes mentioned above; and
- Powerlessness, referring to an employee's inability to control the threats described in the previous four components.

Job insecurity is measured through the assessment of the range of work situation features that could be in jeopardy, the valence of each feature, the subjective probability of losing each feature, and the number of sources of threat (Probst, 2003). According to De Witte (1997), the phenomenon of job insecurity lies between stress and burnout on the one side and its complement, the psychological consequences of unemployment, on the other side. It relates to people who fear they might lose their jobs and become unemployed. According to De Witte (2000), the affective aspect of job insecurity, is the concern about the likelihood of losing continuity in one's job; whereas, the cognitive aspect of job insecurity relates to the individual's belief of the likelihood of losing the job. De Witte (2000) found that the overlap between both predictive factors (affective and cognitive) is significant, making it complicated to distinguish between the two dimensions.

The Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ) was developed by De Witte (2000) to measure job insecurity. The questionnaire focuses on two aspects of job insecurity, i.e. the cognitive comprehension of the possibility of job loss as well as the affective reaction to the feelings of job insecurity (De Witte, 2000).

According to Hui and Lee (2000), the experience of job insecurity can be

described as an internal process. Appraisal plays an important part in job insecurity from an objective event, if the individual subjectively perceives the threat (De Witte, 1997). The cognitive appraisal process assesses whether and when the threat will occur, what the consequences will be, and to what extent and how the individual can manage the threat (De Witte, 1997; Jacobson, 1991).

Based on the above discussion, job insecurity is regarded as a stressor caused by workplace changes and it is potentially detrimental to the individual's job attitudes and behaviours. Job insecurity impacts strongly upon employee health. Job insecurity refers to employees' negative reactions to the changes concerning their jobs like retrenchments and demotions. In this section the conceptualisation of the construct of job insecurity was dealt with. The following section is going to focus on antecedents of job insecurity.

### **2.1.2 Antecedents of job insecurity**

Job insecurity is both an antecedent and a consequence of numerous variables (Ameen, Jackson, Pasewark & Strawier, 1995; Ashford et al., 1989; Ruvio & Rosenblatt, 1999). Mauno and Kinnunen (2000) have recognised that a variety of technological, organisational and broader social changes or antecedents have changed the nature of jobs, resulting in less job security. Broader environmental antecedents will be discussed first followed by a discussion of personal antecedents.

Concerning **environmental antecedents**, Van Vuuren (1990) found that changes in work procedures, layoffs and reductions in resources led to perceived feelings of job insecurity. One of the greatest concerns experienced by employees during organisational change is uncertainty about the continuation of one's job (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995). Employees tend to feel more insecure about their jobs with onset of organisational restructuring (Orpen, 1993). Empirical evidence for the above suggests that employees attributed their

feelings of job insecurity to environmental changes such as governmental policy, economic conditions including recessions, restructuring, mergers, takeovers, small businesses, raised educational demands; employment flexibility, new technology, and management's decision making (De Witte, 1999; Hartley et al., 1991; Probst & Brubaker, 2001).

Job insecurity is a manifestation of the more general uncertainty people experience throughout their lives in modern society with the old uncertainties and stability of life, community and work disappearing and being replaced by constant change, uncertainty and insecurity (Hartley et al., 1991). Layoffs in organisations engender feelings of job insecurity among employees (Davy et al., 1997). It has been found that the levels of satisfaction of job security have lowered after an acquisition (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Hartley et al., 1991). Hence, insecurity concerning job loss and job changes leads to stress-related psychological outcomes for individuals (Heaney, Israel & House, 1994).

Probst (2003) explained the antecedents and consequences of job insecurity by developing a model of job security. According to this conceptual model one might expect an individual to experience higher incidence of physical and mental health conditions as an outcome of job insecurity only if one is dissatisfied with that insecurity (Probst, 2003). As expected, physical conditions were predicted by satisfaction with job security, but were not predicted by perceptions of security. Variables that might be expected to influence perceptions of job security, but not be directly related to satisfaction with job security operated in the anticipated manner. For example, individuals who reported having more job changes as a result of the current organisational restructuring also reported perceiving lower job security.

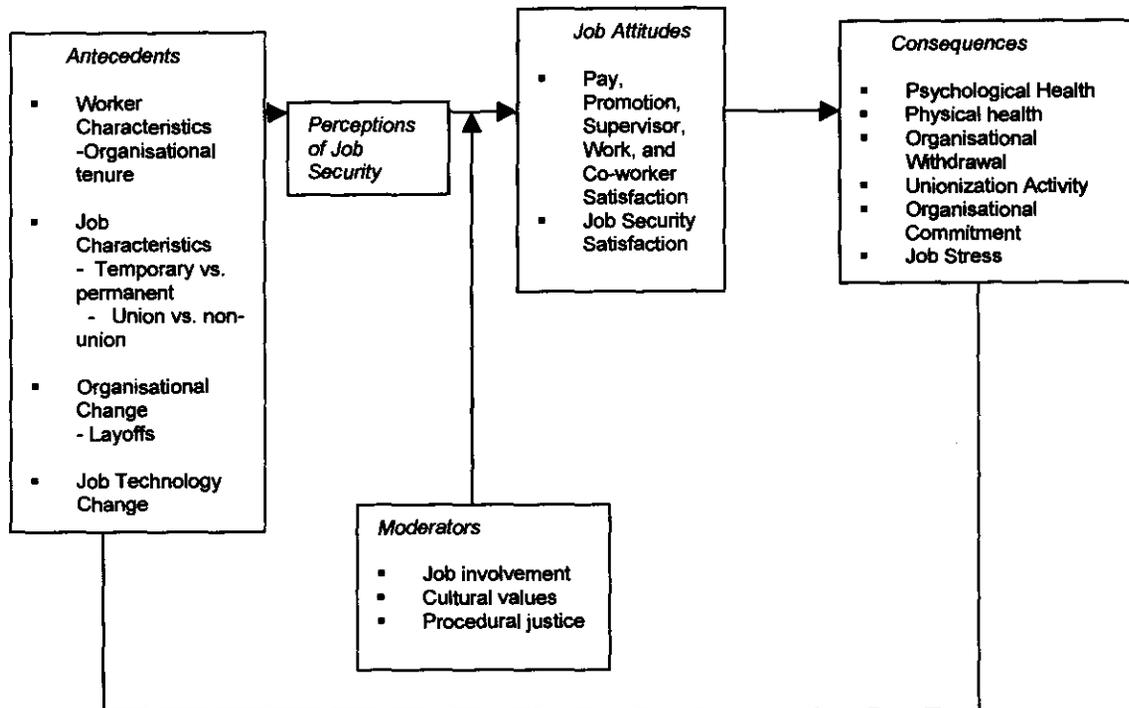


Figure 2.1. A conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of job security.

An individual experiences job insecurity regardless of the desire for continuity. However, it appears that the desire for continuity would moderate the impact that job insecurity has on outcome variables. Past research has found that job importance moderates the relationship between perceived job security and several individual outcomes such as psychological distress, physical health, and job satisfaction (Orpen, 1993; Probst, 2003). Job insecurity is not predicted to occur only when an individual perceives that the future of his or her job is uncertain and negatively reacts to it. Rather, it is assumed that job insecurity exists when the future of the individual's job is perceived to be unstable or at risk (Probst, 2003). Organisational change such as downsizing is expected to influence one's perceptions of job security. However, such change would not be expected to directly influence one's satisfaction with job security (Probst, 2003).

The structural change in industrial and labour markets that has altered the types of jobs available, and the shift in world economy from manufacturing to service

and retail industries has generated more low-skill, low wage, high turnover jobs, which are filled by contingent workers (Nasar, 1994; Tilly, 1991). Also, the use of contingent workers helps reduce costs associated with recruitment, training, and benefits (Pfeffer & Baron, 1988). Increased global competition has forced organisations to respond rapidly to fluctuations in demand, and the use of contingent workers permits this without requiring organisations to hire and lay off fulltime workers (Applebaum, 1991; Pfeffer & Baron, 1988).

Beard and Edwards (1995) concur with the above notion. They argue that contingent work arrangements are likely to generate or exacerbate perceived job insecurity since the fixed term of employment inevitably leads to termination of employment at the end of an assignment. As such the scope of threat faced by contingent workers is total job and moreover they are people who either cannot find full-time employment or need additional income to cover living expenses (Beard & Edwards, 1995).

Cooper (1999) views long hours worked as an antecedent of job insecurity. It appears that management reasons that if fewer people are employed and are given more responsibilities that it provides for a cost-effective use of human capital, despite them probably working longer hours. As a result, employees will work longer hours and experience some false sense of job security rather than not being willing to work those hours and face replacement. Longer working hours on a constant basis reflects itself in employee ill health, both physically and psychologically (Cooper, 1999; Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfeld & Smith, 1998).

Change in the experience of new psychological contracts, which employees and organisations enter into, is likely to act as an antecedent for job insecurity experiences (Smithson & Lewis, 2000). Older members of the workforce might feel that the psychological contracts, as they understand them have been violated and they may lose trust in their organisation (Smithson & Lewis, 2000).

Concerning **personal antecedents**, Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) regards role ambiguity, role conflict and locus of control as important causes of individuals experiencing job insecurity. Role ambiguity and role conflict both threaten an individual's sense of control and thereby creates perceptions of job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Role ambiguity denotes a lack of information about job requirements and procedures, and role conflict occurs when the roles that members fulfil are clouded with issues of conflict, control, expectations and security (Ashford et al., 1989).

In this section it was argued that job insecurity is both an antecedent and a consequence of numerous variables. Environmental changes, changes in the experience of psychological contracts, role ambiguity, role conflict and personal factors were identified as both antecedents and consequences of job insecurity. In the present study, organisational change, worker characteristics, job characteristics, and job technology change are viewed as antecedents of job insecurity and job stress. Mental health and physical health are viewed as a consequence of job insecurity.

### **2.1.3 Consequences of job insecurity**

Research on job insecurity focused primarily on negative effects relating to individuals and organisations (Kinnunen et al., 2000; Petzall et al., 2000). Hence, from the available literature it shows that job insecurity has an impact on three crucial variables namely, psychological well-being, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (De Witte, 1997). Ashford et al. (1989) indicates that employees who feel insecure about their future employment are more dissatisfied with their jobs compared to those who perceived their future job situation as more secure. In a similar vein, perceived job insecurity concerning one's future role in the organisation may also make the employee less inclined to remain with the organisation. Job insecurity like any stressor, could lead to a withdrawal

response as manifested in, for example, higher levels of turnover (Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Brockner, 1988; Burke & Nelson, 1998; Davy et al., 1997; Hartley et al., 1991). It appears that job insecurity is associated with impaired psychological well being characterised by such phenomena as psychological distress, anxiety, depression, irritation or strain related psychosomatic complaints (Kinnunen et al., 2000; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990).

Intuitively, one would expect feelings of work to have a strong psychological impact on those affected. A long term, ominous job insecurity is likely to have severe consequences for an employee's overall life situation in that economic and other highly valued aspects of life will be perceived as threatened (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991).

Sverke and Hellgren (2002) developed a model (as seen in Figure 2.2) to describe job insecurity as a multidimensional phenomenon, which may arise as a function of the interaction between the objective situation and subjective characteristics. Job insecurity is a phenomenon, which may have detrimental consequences for employee attitudes and well being, where such consequences may be mitigated by a number of potential moderators. Sverke and Hellgren (2002) focused on job insecurity as a consequence that may follow upon the changing nature of work. Job insecurity can be described as functions of both the objective situation e.g. labour market characteristics, organisational change and the individual's subjective characteristics e.g. family responsibility and employability (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). However, job insecurity may not be an inherent and inevitable consequence of downsizing, structural change and organisational strivings for flexibility (Burke & Nelson, 1998; Klein Hesselink & Van Vuuren, 1999).

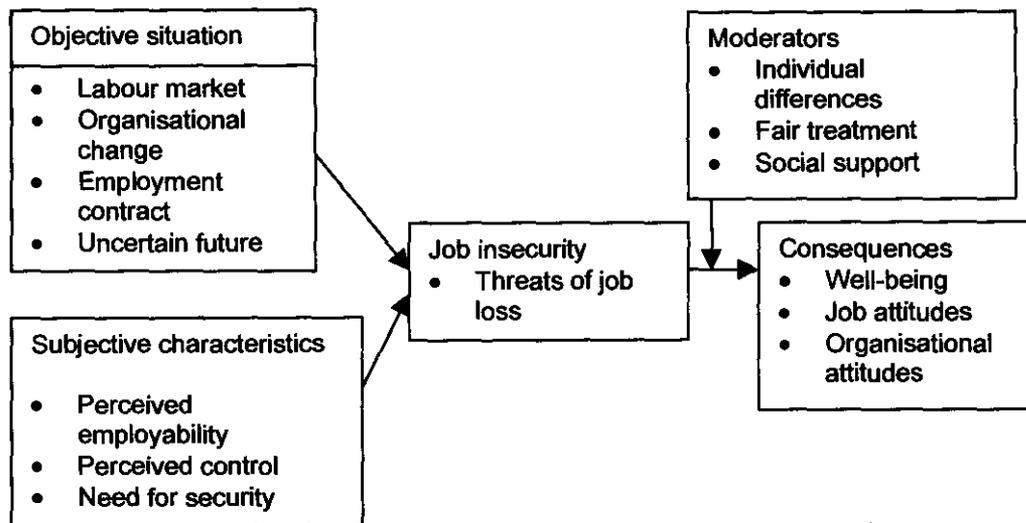


Figure 2.2. Integrated model of job insecurity

Physical health complaints, mental distress, and work-to-leisure carry-over increase proportionately with the level of job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991; Isaksson et al., 1998). Schaufeli (1992) adds to this list an increased level of mental, emotional and physical exhaustion (burnout) and various physical strains such as heart complaints as well as high blood pressure, suggesting that the prolonged exposure to job insecurity can lead to wearing out of the resources of the individual worker. Heaney et al. (1994) indicated that job insecurity acts as a chronic stressor whose negative effects (e.g. job dissatisfaction, physical symptoms) become more potent as the time of exposure increases. Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) found that prolonged job insecurity was more detrimental to an employee's health than security about his job situation (even if that entails the unpleasantness of having been made redundant). In addition, attitudinal reactions such as intentions to quit, reduced organisational commitment and reduced job satisfaction were related to job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; Heaney et al., 1994; Lim, 1996; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996).

The above-mentioned dynamics have organisational level consequences,

primarily through their effects on efficiency and innovation (Borg & Elizur, 1992; Greenhalgh, 1982; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996). Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) found that job insecurity had an adverse effect on perceived performance, organisational support and resistance to change. De Witte (1999) argues that, by being economically active in society, needs, such as acquiring an income and social contacts outside the family circle, the structuring of time, and being able to develop individually and socially is satisfied by work. The threat of unemployment means frustration of the above mentioned needs and the loss of important (financial, social and societal) resources, resulting in an unattractive prospect for the future (Kinnunen et al., 2000).

Job insecurity reduces the levels of psychological well being, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (De Witte, 1999). The harmful effects of job insecurity can be explained in terms of predictability and controllability. Job insecurity refers to a sense of unpredictability and includes the lack of clarity about the future and lack of clarity about the expectations and behaviour that the employee should adopt (De Witte, 1999; Hartley et al., 1991). Uncontrollability also has an impact because the lack of controllability or the feeling of powerlessness towards the threat is considered to be the core of the phenomenon of job insecurity (De Witte, 1999). However, individuals with an internal locus of control have the power to counteract whatever threats their environment might pose (Ashford et al., 1989).

A reduced level of organisational commitment can refer to resentment by the employee. This is due to the fact that the individual regards job security as one of the components of the psychological contract (Van Vuuren, 1990). When this security is eroded, the employee may attempt to restore the imbalance by showing less commitment, interest and motivation (De Witte, 1997). A reduction in commitment to the organisation can also be interpreted as a coping and yet passive strategy (De Witte, 1999). By withdrawing psychologically from the organisation, the person reduces the burdensome nature of any subsequent job loss in advance (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995).

Within this section the consequences of job insecurity have been discussed. The outcomes of job insecurity will be discussed in the next section.

#### **2.1.4 Outcomes of job insecurity**

The outcomes of job insecurity could be problematic for both the employee and employer since its impact on individual employees can erode the effectiveness of the organisation and the organisation risks getting into a downward spiral (Lord & Hartley, 1998). The competitive strength of the organisation is also undermined because productivity decreases and this increases the risk of further redundancies and in turn increases feelings of job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991). Furthermore, numerous studies have reported that job insecurity is related to various negative outcomes for the employee such as lowered job satisfaction (Ashford et al., 1989; Hartley et al., 1991; Probst & Brubaker, 2001; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990) as well as organisational commitment (Borg & Elizur, 1992; Greenhalgh, 1982; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996).

Job insecurity can also damage the image of the organisation, since employees are considered as ambassadors of their organisation (De Witte, 1997; Hartley et al., 1991). If the employees spread negative information of and about the organisation a negative reputation can be created and this can be harmful to the image of the organisation. Individuals experiencing job insecurity may also leave the organisation to seek more secure career opportunities in order to fulfil their four key expectations of work; namely income, security, creativity and social interaction (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Ransome, 1995). Turnover, particularly among high performers, is a primary reason for organisational concern about job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989).

Job insecurity has also been negatively related to job involvement (Elloy, Everett & Flynn, 1991), work and organisational commitment (Ashford et al., 1989; Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990), and job performance (Ashford et al., 1989),

suggesting that employees do not form strong attachments to employers that do not provide secure employment. These findings are consistent with the notion that job security is inherently desirable since it also provides the means to satisfy other extrinsic motives (Beard & Edwards, 1995).

Outcomes of job insecurity, including the potential harmful impact it has on both the employee and the employer were overviewed in the preceding section. Various definitions of the construct of job insecurity were discussed, including the affective and cognitive components of job insecurity. In addition, the consequences of job insecurity were discussed.

## **2.2 ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

### **2.2.1 Conceptualisation of organisational commitment**

Organisational commitment is defined as the identification with one's employer that includes the willingness to work hard on behalf of the organisation, i.e. to become involved in the organisation, participate in decision-making and internalise managerial values, and the intention to remain with the organisation for an extended period of time (Bishop & Scott, 2000; Chow, 1994; Wagner & Hollenbeck, 1995). Mowday, Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1975) support this as they define organisational commitment as a strong belief in the organisation's goals and values, a willingness to exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, and a strong desire to remain a member of the organisation.

Organisational commitment is viewed as the perceived need to maintain a relationship given the significant anticipated termination or switching costs associated with leaving the organisation (Geyskens, Steenkamp, Scheer & Kumar, 1996). It is generally perceived as a psychological link between the employee and his or her organisation that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1996). It is also perceived

as a guideline, within which the organisation can let its workers feel that they have a vision and mission for which they work (Reichers, 1985).

Within all these different definitions as indicated above, it seems that great emphasis is placed on the following:

- The ability, desire and the willingness of employees to work for the organisation;
- The psychological link between employees and their organisations;
- The identification and involvement of employees with the organisation's activities, and
- An acceptance of organisational goals by employees as their own.

To understand the concept of organisational commitment better, Meyer and Allen (1984; 1991) identified three dimensions of organisational commitment, namely continuance, affective, and normative commitment. **Affective commitment** relates to an emotional attachment to and identification with and involvement in the organisation (Meyer et al., 2002; Siu, 2002) **Continuance commitment** relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation (Meyer et al., 2002). **Normative commitment** was newly formulated by Allen and Meyer (1990) and reflects a feeling of obligation to remain with the organisation and a belief in one's responsibility to the organisation. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), it results from familiar, cultural and organisational socialisation regarding the importance of loyalty to one's organisation.

According to Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974), organisational commitment have **three basic components**: a belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values (identification); a willingness to exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (involvement) and willingness to maintain organisational membership (loyalty). As the concept organisational commitment has been discussed and certain common ground in defining the

concept has been identified, the importance of organisational commitment will be discussed next.

### **2.2.2 Importance of organisational commitment**

For the purpose of this study the importance of organisational commitment will be regarded as the result that can be expected or hoped for by improving the levels of job insecurity, job satisfaction and psychological well being of employees. As commitment is perceived as a positive organisational phenomenon with its positive influence on the behaviour and work outcomes of employees (Meyer & Allen, 1997), it will remain one of the most popular management issues in the years to come. This can be the result of the shielding effect of commitment for surviving employees from the stress of downsizing and re-engineering (Suliman & Iles, 2000).

The question of an organisation not needing some of its employees anymore is a complicated and ethical dilemma for managers (Lämsä & Takala, 2000; Susan & Orlando, 2000). Consequently, managers typically face uncertainty and complexity in their work during such strategic changes as downsizing and quality improvement.

Suliman and Iles (2000) identified the following important aspects of organisation commitment:

- It improves employee's performance. Committed employees are assumed to be motivated to work hard and put in more effort than less committed employees;
- It fosters better superior-subordinate relationships;
- It enhances organisational development, growth and survival;
- It improves the work environment;

- It negatively influences withdrawal behaviour such as turnover, lateness and absenteeism; and
- It has a positive impact on employees' readiness to innovate and create.

Fostering employee commitment in today's fast changing environments is essential (Dessler, 1999). Managers have a great challenge to maintain an employee's level of commitment regardless of the challenges of uncertainty, e.g. fear of losing their job and fear of taking self-responsibility. Managers are responsible for change and they act as change-agents (Kotter, 1996). High levels of commitment are expected from them and they are implicitly viewed as committed to change. According to Walton (1985), organisational commitment affects the method of supervision in an organisation. Successful organisations depend on a superior level of performance, a level that requires deep commitment not just obedience of employees.

Based on the above-mentioned aspects, it can be deduced that a high level of organisational commitment can enhance an employee's level of motivation and produce the required behaviour, while undesired behaviour such as turnover and absenteeism can be reduced. Managers have a great responsibility to create an environment that will enhance employee's level of organisational commitment. With aspects such as downsizing and restructuring, levels of job insecurity will be experienced. The challenge facing managers therefore would be to make sure that commitment of the remaining employees remains higher irrespective of the ongoing changes. The causes of organisational commitment will be discussed in the next session.

### **2.2.3 Causes of organisational commitment**

Meyer and Allen (1997) stated that organisational commitment is an individual's psychological bond to his or her job, career or organisation. One way in which people become attached to organisations is by investing something of

themselves in a particular source of employment, that is, something that would be hard to get back if they were to leave voluntarily or be forced to leave. In this way a contract comes into being.

This implies that individuals who are highly committed to the organisation's goals and values should be willing to devote considerable energy toward those ends. Committed employees are viewed to dedicate more of their time, energy and talents to the organisation than those who are not committed to the organisation do. Any person who works for an organisation is involved in an exchange relationship (Mazibuko, 1994), in the sense that one party trades its skills, energy and time in exchange for a reward such as a salary.

There are two main causes for organisational commitment namely behavioural and attitudinal approaches, which determine the level of employees' commitment to the organisation. The **behavioural approach** refers to the way an employee can get committed to an organisation by his own actions (Breukelen, 1996). The behavioural approach may lead to the development of congruent affective commitment attitudes (i.e. through processes such as retrospective rationalisation or justification), which lead to additional behavioural commitment that furthers the psychological attachment (Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994). Behavioural commitment is of a more cost-benefit type (Jacobsen, 2000) and is sometimes called continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This type of commitment is based on the fact that leaving an organisation is associated with some costs, or that one has very few options in the organisation one is currently working in.

Meyer and Allen (1997) stated that this type of commitment stems from an individual's feeling of having to be with an organisation. The options are few and the costs associated with leaving are getting higher as the number of "side-bets" increase. In Jacobsen's (2000) study comparing part-time workers and full-time workers, it seemed plausible that part-time workers will make fewer side-bets in

the organisation than full-time workers. Part-time workers will therefore exhibit less continuance commitment. An employee only working a few hours a week will not receive the same training on the job, will not get too much attached to colleagues, clients and buildings and will not get as deeply into routines as an employee working a full or close to a full week (Jacobsen, 2000).

According to Skisland (1999), continuance commitment seems to be best explained by the participation and level of education of employees. Both have negative effects. People who participate more in terms of decision-making in their work environment tend to feel less continuance commitment than those who participate less. The reason for this may be two fold. Firstly, it may be that those participating most are also the most central persons in the organisation. This centrality may give them a good position on the labour market, giving them a feeling that they do not really have to stay in the organisation. Secondly, it may be found that people who feel less continuance may feel freer to participate. They do not have to hide their discontent from their superiors because they have a bargaining power founded in a feeling that they do not really have to stay in the organisation.

However, it is clear from the literature review that behavioural commitment does not refer to an employee's agreement with organisational goals or a willingness to facilitate organisational goal attainment. Its emphasis is on the degree to which the individual feels bound to the organisation and in this way; he or she becomes convinced that a correct decision was made in joining the organisation and then remains with the organisation.

Regarding the **attitudinal approach**, Allen and Meyer (1990) describe it as a psychological statement that reflects the employee's relationship to the organisation. Attitudinal commitment is the most studied and reviewed of organisational commitment. It is probably also the most relevant aspect because

it shows the strongest correlation with variables, which can explain commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

In the study of Mazibuko (1994) attitudinal commitment was identified as focusing on the attitudes that employees develop towards their employer. Organisational commitment from an attitudinal perspective is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation (Aven, Parker & McEvoy, 1993). Affective and normative components reflect employee's attitudinal dispositions whereas the continuance component indicates their behavioural orientation (Meyer et al., 1993).

Most people have a psychological relationship with several layers of the organisation, e.g. people, work groups, departments, unions and sections (Becker, Billings, Eveleth & Gilbert, 1996). Indeed, employee attitudes towards the organisation may be more strongly influenced by immediate colleagues and line managers (Iles, Foster & Tinline, 1996).

Based on the literature review it is clear that various researchers view both behavioural and attitudinal approaches as playing a major role in causing organisational commitment. This indicates that the attitude an employee has can portray his behaviour. Therefore, for the purpose of this study both approaches are regarded as important. The following section is going to take into cognisance the outcomes of organisational commitment.

#### **2.2.4 Outcomes of organisational commitment**

Outcomes of organisational commitment are regarded as the end results that are obtained by improving the levels of organisational commitment experienced (Iles, Mabey & Robertson, 1996). Therefore, in this study outcomes of organisational commitment are regarded as a separate construct from the importance of organisational commitment, however it is still related.

**Performance** is perceived as an important outcome of high levels of organisational commitment. Iles, Mabey et al. (1996) suggest that not all kinds of commitment are associated with high performance. In particular, continuance commitment, a sense of commitment out of a sense of perceiving few alternatives or options or due to a feeling that the sacrifices involved in leaving would outweigh the benefits is unlikely to lead to high job performance. Dubois (1997) suggests therefore that superiors might aim at reducing continuance commitment whilst maintaining or enhancing affective and normative commitment.

Several studies have indicated that organisational commitment exerted a positive but statistically insignificant influence on performance (DeCottis & Summers, 1987; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Wiener & Vardi, 1980). It seems that highly committed employees will tend to perform well to the extent that (Steers, 1977):

- Organisations stress high achievement on good employee relations;
- Passive commitment (often called loyalty) can be translated into active commitment; and
- Employees possess the necessary skills and abilities and fully understand organisational roles.

Reduced **staff turnover** is also perceived as an important outcome of high levels of commitment. Smith, Allen, Harpour and Varkel (1997) found that significant differences exist between younger and older generations of 'professionals' in South Africa with regard to the level of turnover. The younger group displayed higher turnover intentions than the older group. They also displayed a lower level of commitment to the organisation. The reason for this could be the fact that younger employees still have higher expectations in terms of their career future than their counterparts.

According to Heymans (2002), individuals are changing jobs and even careers more frequently than in the past. Traditionally, employees were loyal to one firm and therefore aspired to move up through the corporate hierarchy in an attempt to improve their employment level. However, recent trends indicate that careers are shorter and loyalty to the organisation is secondary to that of the team and the profession. The poor organisational commitment and resultant high turnover can be extremely costly to the organisation.

Economic reality also undoubtedly plays a role (Khwela, 2001). Compensation of poor performers is usually lower than compensation of superior performers. If compensation is low enough poor performers may seek employment elsewhere, not just to avoid being fired but also in hope of reaching an adequate level of compensation. On the other hand, if compensation of superior performers is high enough, they may find it difficult to find a job that will provide a significant improvement in compensation. On the basis of this logic the negative link between organisational commitment and turnover would be expected to be lower for the higher performers who have a relatively clear picture of their future with the organisation and higher for the lower performers whose intentions are clouded by the relatively uncertain picture of their prospects inside the organisation.

The organisational commitment and turnover intention relationship was found to be stronger for men than women (Chen & Francesco, 2000; Russ & McNeilly, 1995). Chen and Francesco (2000) suggested that further studies could examine the underlying causes of the difference between men and women directly. For example, it would be interesting to explore the reasons leading to turnover intentions for both men and women and what the decisive reasons are for actually leaving the organisation.

A third perceived outcome of higher levels of organisational commitment is lower levels of **absenteeism**. Absenteeism refer to the non-presence at work; a

voluntary reduction by the individual of his working time or a failure to report for work and is often associated with dissatisfaction at work (Mazibuko, 1994; Wooden, 1995). Absenteeism and other withdrawal behaviours (e.g., lateness, turnover) reflect “invisible attitudes” such as job dissatisfaction, lower levels of organisational commitment or an intention to quit (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991). According to this view an employee who is absent from work is consciously or unconsciously expressing negative attachment to the organisation.

Wooden (1995) listed organisational commitment as one of the most important factors that impact on absence. He commented that increased organisational commitment positively related to attendance, which suggested that increased organisational commitment could lead to substantially lower levels of absenteeism.

According to Mazibuko (1994), the findings of some studies revealed that job category and absenteeism are inversely related, that is, employees in the higher job categories were found to be absent less often than those in lower categories. Absenteeism is not a reliable indicator of organisational effectiveness, as it is rather a function of the nature of the labour force and the external organisational factors such as housing, socio-economic and political situations and transport (Mazibuko, 1994).

A fourth perceived outcome of higher levels of organisational commitment is lower levels of **work alienation**. Work alienation is defined as the degree to which an individual identifies psychologically with a specific type of work. It is hypothesised that work alienation and organisational commitment is negatively related (Mullins, 1996). Work alienation is described in terms of four dimensions Heymans (2002):

- **Powerlessness** denotes workers' lack of control over management policy, immediate work processes and conditions of employment.

- **Meaninglessness** stems from standardisation and division of labour. It denotes the inability to see the purpose of work done or to identify with the total production process or finished product.
- **Isolation** is not belonging to an integrated work group or to the social work, organisation and not being guided by group norms of behaviour.
- **Self-estrangement** is the failure to see work as an end in itself or as a central life issue. Work is experienced as a depersonalised attachment and it is seen solely as a means to an end.

In this section various outcomes that serve as an important desired behaviour within the organisation have been discussed. As this section has covered issues related to organisational commitment the next section will focus on the concept of job satisfaction. The construct job satisfaction will be explored by being defined and also by discussing its importance, causes, approaches as well as its determinants and outcomes.

## **2.3 JOB SATISFACTION**

### **2.3.1 Conceptualisation of job satisfaction**

According to Hirschfeld (2000), job satisfaction has been conceptualised and operationalised as both a global construct and a multifaceted construct. One advantage of multidimensional measures of job satisfaction is that the components may relate differently to other variables of interest in a manner that advances the science and practice of industrial-organisational psychology. The short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967) is a popular faceted measure that is often used in job satisfaction research. The MSQ short form can be used to measure two distinct components of job satisfaction namely intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. Intrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves while extrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about aspects of

the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000). Brown (1996) indicated through meta-analysis that intrinsic job satisfaction is more strongly related to job involvement than extrinsic job satisfaction. Also, the results of Moorman's (1993) study suggest that intrinsic job satisfaction has an affective basis whereas extrinsic job satisfaction does not.

According to Judge et al. (1994), job satisfaction is a function of the balance between work role inputs, that is, what the individual puts into the work role (e.g. education) and work role outcomes, that is, what is received from the role (e.g. pay). As outcomes received relative to inputs invested increase, job satisfaction is hypothesised to increase. Robbins (1998) defines job satisfaction as an individual's general attitude toward his or her job. A job requires interactions with co-workers and immediate supervisors, following organisational rules and policies, meeting performance standards and living with conditions that are conducive. This means that an employees' assessment of how satisfied or dissatisfied he or she is with his or her job is a complex summation of a number of discreet job elements (Robbins, 1998).

There is no commonly agreed upon theoretical generalisation, which explains job satisfaction (Visser, Breed & Van Breda, 1997). Luthans (1995) define job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things, which are viewed as important.

From the preceding definitions, Visser et al. (1997) identified the following common elements related to the definition of job satisfaction:

- Employee satisfaction is an attitude or feeling which is based on the assessment of the conditions of employment (Hayeship, 1982; Robbins, 1998; Steers & Porter, 1975).

- These reactions and perceptions are individualistic in nature (Dubin & Champoux, 1977; Lasswell, 1968); and
- Attitudes and situations can change and due to the fact that they pertain to a particular context and content, the attitudes of individuals concerning satisfaction are time bound (Gurin, Veroff & Feld, 1960; Stoner & Freeman, 1992).

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept consisting of affective, cognitive and conative dimensions (Van Vuuren & Schepers, 1993). There seems to be general consensus among researchers that job satisfaction can be viewed as a multidimensional concept encompassing individual's general attitude towards work or to specific facets of the work (Greenberg & Baron, 1993; Longenecker & Pringle, 1984; Reyers & Shin, 1995).

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) defined job satisfaction as the process whereby employees seek to achieve and maintain correspondence with their environment. Job satisfaction is an attitude or internal state, which is associated with achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility, success and happiness (Boden, 1998; Mullins, 1995; 1996). Job satisfaction is defined as an attitudinal output which forms the criteria for job security, since the result of the internal assessment between the real outcome and the ideal outcome would indicate whether employees' needs are satisfied by their jobs (Strümpfer, Danana, Gouws & Viviers, 1998).

In terms of the present study, the measurement of overall or general satisfaction is preferred to the measurement of specific components hence opting for the overall satisfaction instrument constructed by Weiss et al. (1967). Since job satisfaction has been defined according to the literature, and the commonalities between various definitions have been identified including the differentiation made between overall and component measures of job satisfaction, the focus of

the next section will be on the importance of job satisfaction in terms of this study.

### **2.3.2 Importance of job satisfaction**

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

- Employees are sources of information and abilities,
- Employees relate with others and customers which makes for better production because they continuously search for improvement in work methods,
- Employees find solutions for problems and present creative and innovative ideas in terms of problem resolution,
- Employees are empowered to make better decisions, and
- Employees provide feedback to organisations, which prevents stagnation, and provides opportunities for growth.

Job satisfaction is an indicator of how much pressure and stress an individual can handle in a position. If the employees are enjoying their jobs, they are more likely to be more effective in handling the daily stressors they experience (Luthans, 1989). If employees are more satisfied with their job they are more likely to work harder, complain less, show up on time and treat customers and co-workers with respect (Testa, 2001).

For the purpose of this study, job satisfaction is an important construct because one of its determinants, job security, if viewed negatively, could present ill effects to both the employer and the employee. Also, an increase in job satisfaction will stimulate increased organisational commitment and in turn job security (Hui & Lee, 2000; Testa, 2001).

Happy employees are perceived as productive employees and as a result the sensitivity to the wellness of employees would be regarded as one of the important factors to improve job satisfaction for the benefit of both the organisation and its employees (Robbins, 2001). Job satisfaction is important for management (Luthans, 1995). A satisfied work force could translate into higher productivity due to fewer disruptions caused by absenteeism or good employees quitting, fewer incidences of destructive behaviour, as well as lower medical and life insurance costs (Luthans, 1995).

In this section, the importance of job satisfaction has been discussed, and various aspects, which serve as important drives to enrich job satisfaction have been covered. The following section is going to focus on the various causes of job satisfaction.

### **2.3.3 Causes of job satisfaction**

Various definitions of the construct job satisfaction have shown that there are different variables that determine job satisfaction. Weiss et al. (1967) identified twenty different dimensions underlying job satisfaction, which specify its causes. However, it appears that there are five dominant areas of job satisfaction within which causes of job satisfaction are specified (Furnham, 1997; Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998; Robbins, 1998). Furnham (1997) stated that each of these dominant areas is very complex but their complexity could be simplified by the following description:

- **Need satisfaction.** This area states that an employees' needs satisfaction experienced depends on the opportunities the work provides to an individual to satisfy his own needs;
- **Value attainment.** This area can be regarded as the opportunity that is given to the employee to work according to his values;
- **Generic component.** This model postulates that job satisfaction is the function of both personal and generic factors. Robbins (1998) refers to this model as consisting of self-image and the ability to handle stress;
- **Challenging work.** Employees choose more challenging work and tasks that give them opportunities to develop skills in a variety of levels. Freedom in the work situation is also important, as well as the degree of freedom which is received.
- **Supportive working conditions.** Robbins (1998) mentions that friendly and supportive colleagues lead to a greater level of job satisfaction. The more workers are satisfied with their job can indicate that they are also happy with their social interaction.

When referring to the actual causes of job satisfaction the following aspects should be taken into consideration (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 1997).

- Job satisfaction is a function of worthiness (values) and it differs from employee to employee;
- Employees' expectations should be emphasised. Job satisfaction of employees would also depend on their external environment (external locus of control) and their control over the circumstances influencing it (internal locus of control); and

- Perception of job satisfaction is individualistic and unique in nature and is not necessarily an accurate reflection of reality.

Other causes that can have an effect on job satisfaction are health, age, ambitions, social status, political beliefs and social activity (Byars & Rue, 1997). Mullins (1996) grouped and listed the following causes that affect job satisfaction of employees in certain conditions:

Table 2.1

*Causes affecting job satisfaction*

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Description</b>
Individual	Personality, education, intelligence and abilities, marital status and age
Social	Relationship with co-workers, opportunities for interaction, group working and norms
Cultural	Underlying attitudes, beliefs and values
Organisational	Policies and procedures, employee relations, nature of the work, leadership styles and management systems
Environmental	Economic, social, technical and governmental influences

From the above-mentioned it is clear that there is no singular cause of job satisfaction but that there are many causes. These causes are continuously interacting with each other. However, in the current study job satisfaction would be measured in general terms. In the following section different approaches to job satisfaction will be discussed.

### 2.3.4 Approaches to job satisfaction

Based on the literature review there are three approaches that cause job satisfaction, i.e. dispositional, situational and interactional. The dispositional approach contends that work attitudes such as job satisfaction are determined by unique individual traits (Hackman & Oldman, 1980). According to Roberts and Foti (1998) and Strümpfer et al. (1998), the situational approach to job satisfaction maintains that attitudes are influenced by external influences such as job design and supervisors. This finding was supported by Hackman and Oldham (1980) in that the situational approach refers to external conditions impacting on job satisfaction such as the nature of the job and leadership traits of the supervisor. Khwela (2001) mentioned that the interactional approach could be viewed as the combination of the dispositional approach in determining attitudes and actions of individual employees. The interactional approach views the individual and situation as central issues concerning the outcomes of work, i.e. job satisfaction. For the purpose of this study, the following approaches will be mentioned: work, organisational, social and biographical determinants (Coetzee, 1998).

**Work determinants** can influence the job satisfaction of employees, namely, task variety, recognition and feedback, autonomy, achievement, responsibility, creativity, activity, and utilisation of abilities (Coetzee, 1998). The **organisational determinants** that can influence the job satisfaction of employees are promotion, compensation, working conditions, organisational policy and procedures, work stress and job security (Coetzee, 1998). Job security as an organisational determinant will be elaborated on because of its relevance and job insecurity has been selected as the independent variable for this study.

The question of job security is fundamental to job satisfaction since the unlimited changes to which employees are exposed could impact on both employee and employer. It is assumed that organisations could unknowingly harm it by

engaging in unduly change activities, which creates feelings of job insecurity. A lack of understanding of such activities and the resulting job insecurity leads to the development of an alienated workforce, deprivation of organisational commitment and a reluctance to do more than the minimum input (Hunt, Chonko & Wood, 1995). In addition, attitudinal reactions towards job insecurity i.e. intentions to quit, reduced job satisfaction and organisational commitment, were found to be related to job insecurity (Ashford et al., 1989; Borg & Elizur, 1992; Davy et al., 1997; Heaney et al., 1994; Lim, 1996; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996; Yousef, 1998).

The following **social determinants** can influence the job satisfaction of employees namely, supervisory behaviour, which includes friendliness, encouragement to perform and attending to employee's needs (Coetzee, 1998). The **biographical determinants** influencing job satisfaction is gender, job grade, qualification and length of service (Coetzee, 1998).

In this section the various approaches to job satisfaction as well as determinants have been discussed. The outcomes of job satisfaction will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.3.5 Outcomes of job satisfaction**

For the purpose of this study the following outcomes namely, productivity, turnover intention, absenteeism as well as the well being of employees are going to be discussed.

**Productivity** is perceived as an outcome of high levels of job satisfaction. Robbins (1998) indicates that when job satisfaction and productivity data are gathered for the organisation as a whole, rather than at the individual level, it is found that organisations with more satisfied employees tend to be more effective than organisations with less satisfied employees. High levels of **organisational**

**commitment** are also perceived as an outcome of high levels of job satisfaction. Regarding this, Kreitner and Kinicki (1998) indicated that both job satisfaction and performance are significantly correlated with organisational commitment. Managers are therefore encouraged to increase job satisfaction in order to elicit higher levels of commitment.

The question is raised whether high employee satisfaction or job satisfaction will result in low turnover. High job satisfactions seem to keep turnover low, while job dissatisfaction will likely result in higher levels of turnover (Khwela, 2001). Lower levels of **turnover** are perceived as a possible outcome of high levels of job satisfaction. Regarding the **well being** of individuals, a fourth perceived outcome of higher levels of job satisfaction, the focus will be on mental health, physical health and life satisfaction.

It is postulated that job satisfaction has an effect, although not a strong effect, on mental health, including dimensions such as self-esteem, anxiety, hostility, sociability and life situation (Xaba, 1996). Intense job dissatisfaction leads to internal stress reactions, which in turn leads to a wide variety of physical illnesses such as heart disease, peptic ulcers and dermatitis (Khwela, 2001). Most researchers agreed that job satisfaction and or dissatisfaction can have a major impact on an individual's physical well being.

Gruneberg (1979) found that individuals who are unhappy in their jobs tend to be unhappy with life in general. According to Baron (1979), job satisfaction influences behaviour both outside as well as within work settings in that the more satisfied employees are with their jobs, the happier they are in general.

Within this section the outcomes of job satisfaction have been discussed. The relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction was also overviewed.

## **2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter a literature review regarding the three variables studied, namely, job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction were reviewed.

In the first section, the definition, antecedents, consequences and outcomes of job insecurity were discussed. In addition, explanations were provided for the consequences of job insecurity, and reference was made to its relationship to organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Job insecurity is perceived as the threat of losing one's job or valued features of the job, and control or loss of the continuance of employment.

Secondly, the construct organisational commitment has been conceptualised. In addition, the importance causes, with specific reference to the behavioural and attitudinal approaches have been reviewed, and the relationship it has with the other variables studied in this research. Factors influencing organisational commitment as well as the outcomes have been discussed.

The last section was on job satisfaction. The concept job satisfaction has been conceptualised. Furthermore, the importance, causes, and outcomes of job satisfaction were discussed with reference being made to the relationship it has with other variables studied in this research. Previous research indicates that the occurrence of stressful organisational change has been associated with decreased levels of job satisfaction.

Chapter 3 will focus on the empirical study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **EMPIRICAL STUDY**

In the previous chapter, job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction as well as the relationship amongst them as conceptualised in the literature were discussed.

This chapter contains the aims of the empirical investigation, specific research objectives, research group, research design, demographic information, measuring instruments, statistical analysis, procedure used in this study, as well as the hypotheses. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives are divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

##### **3.1.1 General objective**

With reference to the above formulation of the problem, the general objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal and to determine whether job insecurity contributes to lower levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

##### **3.1.2 Specific objectives**

The specific research objectives are as follows:

- To conceptualise job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction from available literature.
- To determine the levels of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.
- To determine the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.
- To determine whether the JISQ, OCQ and MSQ are valid and reliable measuring instruments of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction respectively.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A survey design was used to achieve the objectives of this research. For the purpose of this study a quantitative survey design namely a correlation design was used (Huysamen, 1993). The correlation design has been used because the relationship between the constructs of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction will be investigated at the same point in time without any planned intervention. This research is descriptive and explanatory (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

### **3.3 STUDY POPULATION**

The study population can be defined as an availability sample of engineers in a parastatal ( $N = 60$ ). A response rate of 96, 7% was achieved. Descriptive information of the sample is given in Table 3.1

Table 3.1

*Characteristics of the Participants*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (Percentage)</b>
Education	Diploma	30 (51, 72%)
	N4 – N6 or S1 – S4	13 (22, 41%)
	Degree	12 (20, 69%)
	Post-graduate	3(5, 17%)
Gender	Male	53(91, 38%)
	Female	5(8, 62%)
Age	24 – 35 years	30(51.73%)
	36 – 45 years	19(32, 76%)
	46 – 55 years	8(13, 79%)
	56 years and older	1(1, 72%)
Length of service	Less than one year	6(10, 34%)
	1 to 4 years	18(31, 03%)
	5 to 10 years	13(22, 41%)
	11 to 15 years	12(20, 69%)
	16 to 20 years	5(8, 62%)
	Longer than 20 years	4(6, 90%)
Division	Civil	1(1, 72%)
	Project management	7(12, 07%)
	MMS Power plant	23(39, 66%)
	MMS Outside plant	2(3, 45%)
	Electrical	4(6, 90%)
	Chemical services	12(20, 69%)
	Auxiliary	9(15, 52%)

The population consisted mainly out of males (91, 38%), between the ages 24 to 35 years (51, 73%) with a Diploma as their highest qualification (51, 72%). Of the respondents 31, 03% had 1 to 4 years length of service with the organisation and

39, 66% are working in the Mechanical Maintenance Section power plant department.

### **3.4 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS**

For the purpose of this research a measuring battery was compiled and used in the empirical study. The instruments used were the Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ) (De Witte, 2000), the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Meyer et al., 1993) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short version (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967).

The different measuring instruments will now be discussed in more detail with reference to their rationale and development, description, nature, administration and interpretation and reliability and validity results. The motivation for the use of the instruments will also be discussed.

#### **3.4.1 Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire (JISQ)**

In this section the rationale and development, nature, administration and interpretation, reliability and validity and motivation for the use of the JISQ will be discussed.

##### **3.4.1.1 Rationale and development of the JISQ**

The *Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire* (JISQ) was developed by De Witte (2000) and is used to measure job insecurity. Job insecurity is considered to be a stressor caused by workplace changes and it strongly impacts on employee health (De Witte, 1997; Jacobson, 1991). Thus the measurement of job insecurity as a construct having an impact within organisations necessitated the development of such a questionnaire.

#### **3.4.1.2 Description of the JISQ**

The JISQ (De Witte, 1997) included eleven items relating to job insecurity, encapsulating both the cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity and are arranged along a 5-point scale with 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree. **Cognitive job insecurity** measures the possibility of becoming unemployed, while **affective job insecurity** measures the emotional experience and reaction towards the possible threatening situation. A low score on the JSIQ is indicative of a low sense of job insecurity, while a high score is indicative of a high sense of job insecurity.

#### **3.4.1.3 Nature, administration and interpretation**

According to De Witte (2000), the JISQ can be administered individually or in groups. The eleven items are answered by indicating the extent to which an individual either agree or disagree with the specific item. The items are, as mentioned above, arranged along a 5-point Likert type scale with 1 = strongly agree and 5 representing strong disagreement. The mean scores of the affective and cognitive components will give an indication of the level of job insecurity experienced. Five items measure the affective dimension of job insecurity, whereas six items measure the cognitive dimension of job insecurity. Mean scores of four and five will indicate a feeling of being insecure in one's job while mean scores lower than three will indicate feelings of being secure in one's job.

#### **3.4.1.4 Reliability and validity of the JISQ**

The following Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for the JISQ: Affective job insecurity: 0, 85; and Cognitive job insecurity: 0, 90 (De Witte, 2000). An overall Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0, 92 for the questionnaire was reported by De Witte (2000). Heymans (2002) reported an overall Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 81 for the JISQ and Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0, 86 for the affective

subscale and 0, 45 for the cognitive subscale. Janse van Rensburg (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 86 in her study on pilots within the airline association on the relationship between job insecurity, coping and psychological well being. Elbert (2002) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 84 in her study on job insecurity and psychological strengths of service workers in a parastatal.

The construct validity for the cognitive scale of the Job Insecurity Questionnaire was found in order since the inter-item correlation ( $r = 0, 49$ ) is below the guideline of  $0, 15 \leq r \leq 0, 50$  as suggested by Clark and Watson (1995). The affective subscale indicated low levels of internal consistency and construct validity. Janse van Rensburg (2003) reported a high inter-item correlation ( $r = 0, 73$ ). The inter-item correlation of the Job Insecurity Questionnaire (total) is acceptable compared to the guideline of  $0, 15 \leq r \leq 0, 50$  (Clark & Watson, 1995). The Job Insecurity Survey Questionnaire seems to have internal consistency and construct validity. For the purpose of this study the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument are considered acceptable.

#### **3.4.1.5 Motivation for use**

The JISQ (De Witte, 2000) provides for an overall measurement of job insecurity despite it being conceptualised as a two-dimensional structure (***affective and cognitive***). Job insecurity is not predicted to occur only when an individual perceives that the future of his or her job is unstable and negatively reacts to it, Rather, it is proposed that job insecurity exists when the future of the individual's job is perceived to be unstable or at risk (Probst, 2003). The measuring instrument of job insecurity will assist in achieving the objectives of this research.

### **3.4.2 Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)**

In this section the rationale and development, nature, administration and interpretation, reliability and validity and motivation for the use of the OCQ will be discussed.

#### **3.4.2.1 Rationale and development of the OCQ**

The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was designed by Allen and Meyer (1990) as a measure of the primary indicators of work adjustment namely organisational commitment. The questionnaire measures organisational commitment in different subscales (affective, continuance, normative). Research shows that employees differ in terms of their commitment in organisations (Buckle, 2003). For the purpose of this study the overall organisational commitment of the engineers in a parastatal will be measured as well as the individual scores on the different subscales of organisational commitment namely affective, continuance and normative subscale. The rationale for the use of the OCQ is that it provides levels of commitment in different subscales including a total commitment scale (Meyer et al., 1993).

Organisational commitment has emerged as an important construct in organisational research owing its relationship with such important work-related constructs such as absenteeism, job involvement and leadership (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Yousef, 2000).

#### **3.4.2.2 Description of the OCQ**

The OCQ (Allen & Meyer, 1990) consists of 18 items arranged along a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree (Meyer et al., 1993). The OCQ is used to measure the organisational commitment of managers and employees. Organisational commitment has more recently been

expanded to a more comprehensive three components model, affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer et al., 2002; Siu, 2002). **Affective commitment** relates to an emotional attachment to and identification with and involvement in the organisation. Whereas **continuance commitment** relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation, and **normative commitment**, relates to a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation (Meyer et al., 2002).

#### **3.4.2.3 Nature, administration and interpretation**

The OCQ can be administered to groups or individually (Meyer et al., 1993). The eighteen items are answered by indicating the extent to which an individual either disagrees or agrees with the specific item. The items are, as mentioned above, arranged along a 5-point Likert type scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=unsure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The mean scores of the affective, continuance, and normative components will give an indication of the level of organisational commitment experienced. The total organisational commitment would also be measured.

#### **3.4.2.4 Reliability and validity of the OCQ**

McDonald and Makin (2000) found in their study among temporary staff in a UK organisation a reliability result of 0, 84 for organisational commitment. Meyer et al., (1993) stated that inter-item correlations between different populations were often above 0, 90, which indicates that the combined factor is congruent. Moeletsi (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 84. Heymans (2002) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 80 in his study of maintenance workers in a parastatal. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was consistently found in various studies to be above 0, 80 and found to be valid and reliable in South African studies (Suliman & Iles, 2000).

The following inter-item correlation coefficients were found: Organisational commitment (total) ( $r = 0,18$ ); affective commitment ( $r = 0,15$ ); continuance commitment ( $r = 0,31$ ); and normative commitment ( $r = 0,23$ ). The values for all scales compare favourably with the guideline of  $0,15 \leq r \leq 0,50$  (Clark & Watson, 1995). Based on these results the inter-item correlations coefficients do support the internal consistency and construct validity of the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire.

#### **3.4.2.5. Motivation for use**

The OCQ (Allen & Meyer, 1990) provides for an overall measurement of organisational commitment. Within this study organisational commitment will be studied with focus on its components, e.g. affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. The measuring instrument of organisational commitment will assist in achieving the objectives of this research.

#### **3.4.3 Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (short version) (MSQ)**

The short-version or the Revised MSQ (Weiss et al., 1967) was implemented in this study as a measurement of job satisfaction. In this section the rationale and development, nature, administration and interpretation, reliability and validity and motivation for the use of the MSQ will be discussed.

##### **3.4.3.1 Rationale and development of the MSQ**

The MSQ (Weiss et al., 1967) was designed to measure an employee's job satisfaction. The results obtained provides more specific information on the aspects of a job that an individual finds rewarding than do more general measures of job satisfaction. According to Foxcroft and Roodt (2001), it taps affective responses to various aspects of one's job. The MSQ is useful in exploring client vocational needs and in counselling follow up studies. It has been

developed as a measure of one of the primary indicators of work adjustment, namely job satisfaction (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2001).

#### **3.4.3.2 Description of the MSQ**

There are two versions of MSQ available, a 1967 version as well as a short version. Items are arranged along a five point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied. The 20-item short form is used to measure two distinct components of job satisfaction, namely **intrinsic job satisfaction** and **extrinsic job satisfaction** (Weiss et al., 1967). Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (Hirschfeld, 2000).

#### **3.4.3.3 Nature, administration and interpretation**

According to Weiss et al. (1967), the MSQ can be administered to groups or individually. The 20 items are answered by indicating the extent to which you feel dissatisfied by checking it against the description of the scale supplied. As indicated above, the MSQ is scored on a five point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied. The 20-item short form of the MSQ (Weiss et al., 1967) was used to measure employees' intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Mean scores of four and five are indicative of high levels of job satisfaction in terms of the nature of the job tasks themselves.

According to Hirschfeld (2000), mean scores of four and five are indicative of high levels of extrinsic job satisfaction, indicating that respondents feel satisfied about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks while mean scores lower than three will indicate that respondents are not satisfied in their jobs.

#### **3.4.3.4 Reliability and validity of the MSQ**

The Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1967) reported reliability coefficients of the short version varying from 0, 87 to 0, and 92. This finding is also supported by Liam, Baum and Pine (1998), when they found Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from 0, 87 to 0, and 95. Kaplan (1990) reported a reliability coefficient of 0, 90. Dwyer (2001) and Welman and Basson (1995) reported alpha coefficients of 0,92 using the MSQ, indicating that the MSQ indeed offers a reliable and valid measure of general job satisfaction. Within South African studies, Hlalele (2003) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 91 in his study of engineers at Sasol, while Khwela (2001) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0, 91. This battery was proven to be valid and reliable in South African studies.

According to the researcher's findings, the inter-item correlation found for job satisfaction (total) is 0, 10 and the inter-item correlation reported for intrinsic job satisfaction was 0, 11. This is not acceptable compared to the guideline of  $0, 15 \leq r \leq 0, 50$  (Clark & Watson, 1995). The inter-item correlation found for extrinsic job satisfaction is 0, 81.

#### **3.4.3.5 Motivation for use**

The MSQ (Weiss et al., 1967) provides for an overall measurement of job satisfaction. Within this study job satisfaction will be studied with focus on its components, e.g. intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. The measuring instrument of job satisfaction will assist in achieving the objectives of this research.

### **3.5 RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

In this section, the procedure in the conducting and scoring of the measuring instruments used will be discussed.

### **3.5.1 Pre-arrangements**

Initially an appointment was scheduled with the Engineering manager of the parastatal in order to present the proposed study, and aims of the study. The researcher obtained commitment and support from the Engineering manager. Feedback regarding the study will be given to the Engineering manager.

### **3.5.2 Administration of the questionnaires**

The measuring battery was compiled and appointments were made with the participants to conduct the study individually or in groups. A letter from the author endorsed by the engineering manager indicating the purpose of the study (for research purposes only) accompanied the measuring battery.

## **3.6 STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS**

The statistical analysis is carried out with the help of the SAS-programme (SAS Institute, 2000). Descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) are used to analyse the data. The mean is the best-known measurement of locality (Steyn, Du Toit, Smit & Strasheim, 1995) and is used to indicate the mean (average) score of the study population on each questionnaire. The standard deviation indicates the distances of all individual scores from the mean. Skewness is a descriptive indication of symmetry, which gives an indication of the level of skewness (positive or negative) of a population. Kurtosis indicates the level of pointedness of a distribution of scores (Steyn et al., 1995).

Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlations were used to determine the internal consistency, homogeneity and unidimensionality of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Coefficient alphas contain important information regarding the proportion of variance of items of a scale in terms of

the total variance explained by that particular scale. According to Clark and Watson (1995), the mean inter-item correlation (which is a straightforward measure of internal consistency) provides useful information in conjunction with the alpha coefficient of a scale (which is an indication of homogeneity of a scale), but as such cannot ensure unidimensionality of a scale.

According to Cohen (1988), the cut-off points for practical significance of differences between groups are:

- $d \geq 0,20$  small effect
- $d \geq 0,50$  medium effect
- $d \geq 0,80$  large effect

Values larger than 0, 50 will be regarded as practically significant for the purposes of this study (Cohen, 1988).

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) were used to specify the relationship between the variables. It is based on the premise that if two variables collectively vary, then a correlation or relationship exists among them (Moore & McCabe, 1993). The relationship can be either positive or negative. When a decline in the measurement of the one variable also leads to a decline in the other then a positive relationship is assumed. With a negative relationship a decline in the measurement of the one variable would lead to an increase in the other (Ferguson, 1981). Product moment correlation coefficient varies between  $-1, 00$  and  $+1, 00$ . The closer the value of a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) is to  $-1, 00$  (negative correlation) or to  $+1, 00$  (positive correlation), the more accurate the prediction that one variable relates to the other (Ferguson, 1981). In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ( $p \geq 0, 05$ ). Effect sizes (Steyn, 1999) are used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. A cut-off point of 0, 30 (medium effect,

Cohen, 1988) is set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients. A cut-off point of 0, 50 (large effect, Cohen, 1988) will be used for the practical significance of differences.

A correlation ( $r$ ) can be better understood by determining its square ( $R^2$ ) (Cohen, 1988).

### **3.7 HYPOTHESES**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Engineers in parastatal experience high levels of job insecurity and low levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The JISQ, OCQ and the MSQ are valid and reliable measuring instruments.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is a practical and statistically significant relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal.

### **3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter the research objectives, research design and study population were discussed. The measuring instruments in terms of rationale and development, description, nature, administration and interpretation, reliability and validity as well as motivation for use were explained. The research procedure and statistical analysis were discussed and hypotheses were also stated.

In chapter 4 the results of the empirical study will be reported and discussed in terms of the research hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the previous chapter the specific research objectives, the research design employed and the study population were discussed. The measuring instruments in terms of rationale and development, description, nature, administration and interpretation, reliability and validity as well as motivation for use were explained. The research procedure and statistical analysis were discussed and hypotheses were also stated.

In this chapter the results of the empirical study are reported and discussed. Firstly, the results are reported. The mean, standard deviation (*SD*), range skewness and kurtosis of each measuring instrument are also reported. The Cronbach alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) and the inter-item correlation coefficients of each measuring instrument are reported. Correlation coefficients (*r*) between the different dimensions of the measuring instruments are given. A discussion and interpretation of the results are given.

#### **4.1 RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

The results of the empirical study are reported in this paragraph. Firstly, the results of the descriptive statistics of the measuring instruments are reported as well as the Cronbach alpha coefficients and the inter-item correlations and secondly the correlation coefficients between the variables of the measuring instrument are provided.

#### 4.1.1 Descriptive statistics, Alpha Coefficients and Inter-Item Correlations of the measuring instruments

The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (*SD*), skewness, kurtosis, Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlations of the measuring instruments are computed for a sample of engineers in a parastatal. The descriptive statistics are given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1  
*Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Coefficients and Inter-Item Correlations of the JISQ, OCQ, MSQ*

Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	$\alpha$	<i>r</i> (Mean)
<i>JISQ</i>						
Total Job Insecurity	1,87	0,46	1,44	3,25	0,81	0,30
Affective Job Insecurity	1,85	0,45	1,33	2,95	0,52	0,21
Cognitive Job Insecurity	1,89	0,59	1,48	2,53	0,85	0,49
<i>OCQ</i>						
Total Organisational Commitment	3,34	0,47	-0,26	-0,46	0,79	0,18
Affective Commitment	3,70	0,50	1,13	2,05	0,43	0,15
Continuance Commitment	2,66	0,69	-0,09	-0,30	0,71	0,31
Normative Commitment	3,66	0,57	0,78	-0,09	0,62	0,23
<i>MSQ</i>						
Total Job Satisfaction	3,90	0,33	-0,63	0,22	0,71	0,10
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	3,74	0,42	-0,40	0,07	0,64	0,11
Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	4,14	0,33	-0,72	0,73	0,41	0,81

The information in Table 4.1 indicates that the factors of the JISQ were positive skew, while the factors of the OCQ and the MSQ were normally distributed. The mean scores for the JISQ also vary between 1, 85 (affective) and 1, 89 (cognitive) with a mean of 1, 87 for the total. A low score on the JISQ is indicative of a low sense of job insecurity, while a high score is indicative of a high sense of insecurity. According to Table 4.1, engineers in a parastatal seem to experience lower levels of job insecurity. This finding suggests that engineers are secured in their jobs. These findings are not in congruence to the findings by De Witte

(1999) Mauno and Kinnunen (2000). In their studies they found that respondents had relatively high levels of job insecurity. Heymans (2002) reported a mean score of 3, 65. Janse van Rensburg (2003) found a mean score of 3, 62 in a study of pilots. The mean scores for the OCQ vary between 3, 70, (affective), 2, 66 (continuance) and 3, 66 (normative) with a mean of 3, 34 for the total, indicating that engineers seem to be unsure to relatively commit themselves to both their jobs and organisation. The total mean score represents an average level of organisational commitment among the study population. The highest mean score was obtained on the organisational commitment affective scale indicating that engineers experience emotions, which are pleasant, and that they still want to stay with the organisation. A high score on organisational commitment could correlate rather highly with job insecurity, which according to the literature, will be characterised by reduced levels of organisational commitment, trust, less pride in the company and intentions to quit (Ashford et al., 1989; Heany et al., 1994; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996). Moeletsi (2003) reported the overall mean value for organisational commitment 3, 33. Khwela (2001) reported the high total average score of 65, 62.

The mean scores for the MSQ vary between 3, 74 (Intrinsic job satisfaction) and 4, 14 (extrinsic job satisfaction) with the total mean score 3, 90. This represents an above average level of job satisfaction indicating that engineers feel satisfied about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself. Buckle (2003) reported an average score of 3, 70 in a chemical organisation. In his study of maintenance workers in a parastatal, Heymans (2002) reported an average score of 3,48. This finding suggests that, in general, participants are satisfied with aspects relating to their jobs. Many authors found engineers, in general, to be more involved and more satisfied with their jobs than others (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby & Herron, 1996).

Hypothesis 1 can be rejected based on the above findings.

With regard to the internal consistency of the scales, Total Job Insecurity, Affective Job Insecurity, Cognitive Job Insecurity, Total Organisational Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Total Job Satisfaction seem to demonstrate acceptable coefficient alphas above the 0,70 guideline provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Furthermore, except for Total Job Satisfaction, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction, acceptable levels of inter-item correlations were obtained for all the rest of the factors, consistent with the guideline of  $0,15 < r < 0,50$  suggested by Clark and Watson (1995).

Hypothesis 2 is supported based on the above findings.

#### **4.2 The relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction**

In this study Pearson product moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) were used to determine the linear relationship between the dimensions of the JISQ, OCQ and the MSQ. The correlation coefficients between the different dimensions for the sample group of engineers are reported in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

*Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients of the JISQ, OCQ and MSQ dimensions*

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Insecurity – Total	1,00	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2. Affective Job Insecurity	0,79**	.0,49*+	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
3. Cognitive Job Insecurity	0,92**	0,49*	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
4. Organisational Commitment – Total	0,34**	0,34*	0,26	.	.	.	.	.	.
5. Affective Organisational Commitment	0,18	0,18	0,14	0,76**	.	.	.	.	.
6. Continuance Organisational Commitment	0,45**	0,41**	0,36*	0,81**	0,37*	.	.	.	.
7. Normative Organisational Commitment	0,15	0,21	0,08	0,85**	0,60**	0,47**	.	.	.
8. Job Satisfaction – Total	0,00	0,05	-0,03	0,31**	0,28*	0,19	0,29*	.	.
9. Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	0,01	0,01	0,01	0,27*	0,24	0,16	0,27*	0,95**	.
10. Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	-0,01	0,11	-0,08	0,29*	0,28*	0,21	0,23	0,77**	0,54**

\*  $p \leq 0,05$  – statistically significant

+  $r > 0,30$  – practically significant (Medium effect)

\*\*  $r > 0,50$  – practically significant (Large effect)

Inspection of Table 4.2 indicates that Total Job Insecurity is significantly positive related (large effect) to Affective Job Insecurity and Cognitive Job Insecurity and significantly positive related (medium effect) to Total Organisational Commitment and Continuance Organisational Commitment. Affective Job Insecurity is significantly positive related (medium effect) to Cognitive Job Insecurity, Total Organisational Commitment and Continuance Organisational Commitment. Cognitive Job Insecurity is significantly positive related (medium effect) to Continuance Organisational Commitment. It can be deduced that a practically significant relationship exists between job insecurity and organisational commitment which is supported by (Ashford et al., 1989; Van Vuuren, 1990; Davy et al., 1997; Lord & Hartley, 1998) suggesting that organisational commitment will decrease when job insecurity prevails. Heymans (2002) found

no significant correlations between job insecurity and organisational commitment including its facets (affective, continuance and normative).

Total Organisational Commitment is significantly positive related (large effect) to Affective Organisational Commitment, Continuance Organisational Commitment and Normative Organisational Commitment and significantly positive related (medium effect) to Total Job Satisfaction. Affective Organisational Commitment is significantly positive related (large effect) to Normative Organisational Commitment and significantly positive related (medium effect) to Continuance Organisational Commitment. Continuance Organisational Commitment is significantly positive related (medium effect) to Normative Organisational Commitment. It can be deduced that organisational commitment and its facets (affective, continuance and normative) are related to job satisfaction. Heymans (2002) reported findings of 0, 50\*\* and 0, 52\*\* (large effect). De Coninck and Bachman (1994) also reported practically significant correlations of 0, 64\*\* and 0, 63\*\* (large effect). This finding implies that when one variable increases the other will also increase. For the purpose of this study, it can be assumed that when the level of organisational commitment increase, there would be a tendency that the level of job satisfaction could increase and vice versa, suggesting a linear relationship. In addition, it would seem that there higher the degree of job satisfaction respondents experience, the stronger the commitment to the organisation is. Respondents will stay with the organisation because they want to (affective), and because they feel they ought to (normative) and will continue working for the organisation, which will lead to an increase in the total organisational commitment and job satisfaction (De Coninck & Bachman, 1994).

Total Job Satisfaction is significantly positive related (large effect) to Intrinsic Job Satisfaction and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction. Intrinsic Job Satisfaction is significantly positive related (large effect) to Extrinsic Job Satisfaction. For the purpose of this study, it can be deduced that participants feel satisfied about the nature of job tasks and they are also satisfied with their jobs.

Based on the above findings, hypothesis three is supported.

### **4.3 DISCUSSION**

The objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal and to determine whether job insecurity contribute to lower levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The descriptive statistics indicate that the population is normally distributed.

The analysis of Pearson correlations in this study showed that Total Job Insecurity and Affective Job Insecurity are positive related to Total Organisational Commitment and Continuance Commitment while Cognitive Job Insecurity is positive related to Continuance Organisational Commitment. Total Organisational Commitment is positive related to Total Job Satisfaction.

### **4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the results of the empirical study were reported and discussed. Firstly, the descriptive statistics of the measuring instruments were reported and discussed. Secondly, the Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlation coefficients of the measuring instruments were reported and discussed. Thirdly, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to determine the linear relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

In chapter 5 conclusions and limitations regarding this study are discussed and recommendations for the organisation and future research are made.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter conclusions will be drawn regarding the literature review and the empirical study, the limitations of the study will be highlighted and recommendations will be made for further studies.

#### 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

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

##### 5.1.1 Conclusions in terms of specific theoretical objectives

In terms of the specific theoretical objectives the following conclusions can be made:

1. **Job Insecurity** can be defined as the threat of losing one's job and becoming unemployed. The perceptions of job insecurity may have detrimental consequences for employee attitudes and well-being as well as for organisational viability. Job insecurity leads to health complaints and consistently manifests itself as a stressor. Occupational stressors can result in mental, physical and behavioural stress reactions such as burnout, depression and psychosomatic diseases. One would expect feelings of job insecurity to have a strong psychological impact on those affected. The experience of job insecurity relates to both affective and cognitive dimensions. **Affective job insecurity** measures the emotional experience of

the possible threatening situation while **cognitive job insecurity** measures the possibility of becoming unemployed.

2. **Organisational commitment** can be defined as a strong belief in the organisation's goals, values, and a willingness to exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organisation and a strong desire to remain a member of the organisation. According to Meyer et al. (1993), organisational commitment has three components, namely, affective, continuance and normative. **Affective commitment** relates to emotional attachment to and identification with and involvement in the organisation. **Continuance commitment** relates to the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation and **normative commitment** relates to a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation.

Managers have a great responsibility to create an environment that will enhance the employee's level of organisational commitment. Committed employees are viewed to dedicate more of their time, energy and talents to the organisation than those who are not committed to the organisation.

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

Satisfaction Questionnaire was used to measure intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

### **5.1.2 Conclusions regarding the results of the empirical objectives**

In terms of the specific empirical objectives, the following conclusions can be made:

According to the descriptive statistics, it is evident that the study population consisting out of engineers in parastatal experience lower levels of job insecurity, average levels of organisational commitment and above average levels of job satisfaction. The finding regarding the lower levels of job insecurity experienced by engineers in a parastatal is in contradiction to the findings obtained by De Witte (1999), Mauno and Kinnunen (2000) and Ruvio and Rosenblatt (1999). They found in their studies that respondents had relatively high levels of job insecurity. The average levels of organisational commitment are supported by findings from Heymans (2002). Research done by Meyer and Allen (1997) reveals that there is a general agreement among researchers that commitment is a positive organisational phenomenon and that it has a positive influence on the employee's behaviour and work outcomes. The above average levels of job satisfaction experienced are supported by similar findings by Buckle (2003) in a chemical organisation.

Based on the above findings hypothesis 1 is rejected in that engineers in a parastatal experience lower levels of job insecurity and average to above average levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The following dimensions of the JISQ, OCQ and the MSQ, demonstrated acceptable coefficient alphas above the 0, 70 guideline provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994): Total Job Insecurity, Cognitive job insecurity, Total Organisational Commitment, Continuance commitment and Total Job

Satisfaction. Affective job insecurity (0,52), Normative commitment (0,62) and Intrinsic job satisfaction (0,64) displayed reasonable alpha coefficients which is not in line with the guideline as indicated above but was found to be still acceptable for further analysis.

Furthermore, except for Extrinsic job satisfaction (factor of the MSQ), acceptable levels of inter-item correlations have been obtained for all the rest of the factors consistent with the guideline of  $0,15 < r < 0,50$  suggested by Clark and Watson (1995). In terms of these guidelines, the JISQ, OCQ and the MSQ seem to satisfy the requirements of homogeneity (internal consistencies acceptable) and unidimensionality (acceptable clustering of inter-item correlations around the mean). Based on the above findings hypothesis 2 is supported in that the JISQ, OCQ, and the MSQ are valid and reliable measuring instruments.

The analysis of Pearson correlations in this study showed that Total Job Insecurity and Affective Job Insecurity are positive related to Total Organisational Commitment and Continuance Commitment while Cognitive Job Insecurity is positive related to Continuance Organisational Commitment. Total Organisational Commitment is positive related to Total Job Satisfaction. Hypothesis 3, which states that there is a practical and statistical significant relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction of engineers in a parastatal, is supported by the researcher's findings.

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS**

The limitations of this study are discussed below.

- The study population only included 60 respondents and all of them were from one power station within the parastatal.

- The sample was based on the availability of respondents and the participants were not randomly selected.
- The internal fear of respondents that information could be used against them might have had an impact on the results.
- The shorter version of the MSQ was used. Therefore aspects such as salary, achievement, recognition and feedback were not measured. The impact of these aspects on the results of the research could therefore not be determined.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Recommendations for the organisation:**

The results of this study point to many avenues that can be explored further.

- A comparative and cross-cultural study of job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction within various sectors within parastatals is required.
- The relationship between job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction should be further researched to determine whether lower levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction contribute to higher levels of job insecurity.
- Further studies on the internal consistency, construct- and content validity of the JISQ, OCQ and the MSQ on engineers in a parastatal is required.
- A study between job insecurity and the relationship between psychological strengths from fortigenic paradigm will add value.

- The Long version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire should be used in future studies.
- Job insecurity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction should be researched in relation to other outcomes such as corporate wellness, productivity, performance and quality of work life.

#### **5.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Within this chapter conclusions were drawn from both the literature and empirical objectives. The limitations found in this research were indicated and recommendations regarding future research were made.

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