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Work-based and Nonwork-based Support: The Moderating Effects of Social Support on Job
Insecurity

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Abstract

Due to the current economic decline, numerous employees are faced not only with financial concerns, but with the additional stressor of potentially losing their jobs. This feeling of powerlessness in the workforce is referred to as job insecurity. When individuals experience job insecurity, their attitudes about work, job satisfaction, relationships, and overall life satisfaction suffer. Social support may act as a moderator to improve job-insecure employees' attitudes at work and in the home. Data were collected from full-time employees online to determine the moderating role of work-based support (e.g., manager, co-worker, organization) and nonwork-based or personal support (e.g., family, friends) for the consequences of job insecurity. The results of the regression analyses revealed that job insecurity was related to employees' higher levels of cynicism, noncompliance, emotional exhaustion, and lower levels of psychological well-being. Support received within the workplace was found to buffer noncompliant behaviors among women in the workplace. Furthermore, support received outside of the workplace improved employees' psychological well-being. The implications of these findings for research and organizations are explored.

Work-based and Nonwork-based Support: The Moderating Effects of Social Support on Job Insecurity

The current economic decline is a serious issue which has changed many lives over the past few years. According to United States Bankruptcy Statistics, in 2009 alone, 1,473,675 individuals filed for bankruptcy, which has been on the rise since 2006. In 2010, nearly 40,000 individuals filed for bankruptcy in the state of California. In 2011, bankruptcies were at a five year high, rising to 19% in California alone. Although unemployment rates have dropped slightly over the last year, the rate is still close to 9% in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). Individuals have experienced heightened levels of job insecurity due to the downsizing and restructuring that organizations have undergone for the purpose of saving money. Downsizing of organizations has contributed to the loss of thousands of positions, and the nature of work contracts has been completely restructured (Baumol, Blinder, & Wolff, 2003; Brandes, Castro, James, Martinez, Matherly, Ferris, & Hochwater, 2008). Due to these shifts and the ongoing fear of losing a job, many employees feel heightened levels of perceived job insecurity. Job insecurity is a stressor which involves a feeling of powerlessness or hopelessness to hold onto one's position in the workplace in a vulnerable job condition (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989). When employees no longer feel as if they have a constant, secure place in the workforce, their overall well-being may be reduced. Job insecurity can heighten one's feelings of anxiety and stress, which transfer to other aspects of life (DeWitte, 1999). Additionally, job insecurity can influence an individual's attitude about his or her job, causing reduced commitment and satisfaction at work, as well as an increase in the desire to quit (Ashford et al., 1989; Lim, 1996). The primary objective of this study is to determine the direct effects of job insecurity on an employee's home and work life, as well as which types of social support might serve as buffers for the relationship between job insecurity and negative outcomes.

Job insecurity is not a new phenomenon. The United States has experienced economic shifts and declines in earlier decades, and each time these downturns occur, employees experience increased feelings of job insecurity. It is extremely important, therefore, that researchers continue to address the direct effects of job insecurity, so that this information can be used to improve the workplace atmosphere, and decrease the negative effects of job insecurity. This thesis begins with a literature review that defines job insecurity, and a discussion of the direct effects of job insecurity on an employee's psychological well-being, relationship satisfaction, cynicism in the workplace, noncompliant work behaviors, and emotional exhaustion in the workplace. Differential effects by age and gender are highlighted. The role of social support as a moderator for the effects of job insecurity are then explored. The final section of the literature review provides a framework for exploring social support as a potential moderator between job insecurity and negative outcomes.

Job Insecurity

Job insecurity is a workplace stressor that can negatively influence an employee's psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and work related behaviors (Ashford et al., 1989; De Witte, 1999). Job insecurity involves the feelings of hopelessness and despair about losing one's position within the workplace, or the constant rumination of losing one's job on a day-to-day basis (Ashford et. al, 1989; De Witte, 1999; Lim, 1996). As companies continue to downsize and merge, previously job-secure individuals are now experiencing the threat of job loss. This heightened state of job insecurity can be detrimental to employees' job performance and commitment to their organization. Employees who were once competent and self-assured can be reduced to a depersonalized state in which they cut themselves off from colleagues, and their job performance suffers (Ashford et al., 1989; De Witte, 1999). These disconnected behaviors and

feelings can also spill over into an employee's life at home (Md-Sidin, Sambasvian, & Ismail, 2010). Because job insecurity affects so many employees, it is crucial to determine factors that can reduce the negative influence the stressor can have on psychological well-being, negative work behaviors, and satisfaction within the workplace and at home.

Job insecurity reduces an individual's psychological and physical well-being (Bussing, 1999; De Witte, 1999). Employees who experience job insecurity for extended amounts of time are likely to have higher levels of mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion. The relationship between job insecurity and psychological illnesses, such as depression and anxiety disorders, has been examined in numerous studies (Ashford et al., 1989; Bussing, 1999; Lim, 1996; Md-Sidin et al., 2010). De Witte (1999) revealed that experiencing job insecurity can be just as detrimental as actually losing a job. Moreover, prolonged job insecurity can put workers and their families at risk for chronic stress-related problems. Longitudinal research has found that job insecurity is often chronic and can affect an employee's health and well-being over the course of multiple years (Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen, 2001).

Job insecurity can impair an individual's psychological well-being in numerous ways (De Witte, 1999). Specifically, levels of anxiety and depression are two common aspects of psychological well-being that may be impaired by job insecurity. Many job-insecure individuals experience high levels of anxiety and depression when job insecurity becomes a chronic stressor (Rocha et al., 2006; Vinokur, Price, & Caplan, 2006). Experiencing this strain on psychological well-being can lead to a decrease in one's overall positive functioning, self-acceptance, and feelings of autonomy. Furthermore, a decrease in psychological well-being can affect an employee's relationships with others, purpose in life, and feelings about one's personal growth (De Witte, 1999; Spanier, 1976; Vinokur et al., 1996).

As long as an employee's position remains uncertain, an interaction between job insecurity and psychological turmoil will persist (Rocha et al., 2006). Interestingly, Rocha, Crowell, and McCarter (2006) found that, even as employees who were experiencing chronic job insecurity reported that they were feeling less insecure in the workplace, their heightened levels of depression and anxiety remained constant. These findings underscore the damaging effects that prolonged job insecurity can have on an employee's psychological health and general well-being. One such outcome is job burnout.

Burnout is a psychological strain of job insecurity that is often caused by chronic stressors within the workplace. Burned-out employees experience emotional exhaustion, a decrease in personal accomplishment, a lack of commitment, and depersonalization (Maslow, 2003; Rocha et al., 2006; Vinokur et al., 2006). Burnout and psychological distress contribute to an overall decline in employee morale. Job-insecure individuals are more likely to put less effort into their work, because their job state is uncertain and they are constantly emotionally exhausted and withdrawn. Furthermore, burnout can cause an overall sense of detachment from one's position in the workplace, combined with the perception that the individual has no control over his or her status. This apparent lack of control is often what influences burned-out employees to feel hopelessness and depression (Vinokur et al., 2006; Westman, Etzion, & Danon, 2001).

Cynicism is another negative outcome often attributed to job insecurity. Cynicism in the workplace, a key component of job burnout, has been on the rise since the late 1990s (Atwater, Waldman, Atwater, & Cartier, 2000). Organizational cynicism is described as a negative view toward one's workplace, comprised of the belief that the individual's organization lacks integrity, fairness, sincerity, and honesty (Dean, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998). These values, which employees view as essential in the workplace, are often overshadowed by the

organizations' self-interest. According to Vance, Brooks, and Tesluk (1995), cynical employees believe that serious, detrimental problems exist within their workplace. However, although there are solutions to these problems, they believe will not be solved due to the self-interested, greedy individuals in positions of power (Dean et al., 1998). This is one reason why cynical attitudes are often manifested through behaviors consistent with the negative beliefs and attitudes employees are feeling (Dean et al., 1998). Hochwarter et al. (2004) found that more than half of employee respondents stated that they felt cynical in the workplace. These feelings of cynicism among job-insecure employees show no signs of slowing down or decreasing, as companies continue to lay off workers and cut entire branches of organizations to increase revenue (Bommer, Rich, & Rubin, 2005). Research indicates that cynical employees are more likely to challenge or speak negatively about their employer (Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998).

Increased job insecurity can also negatively affect the atmosphere within the workplace. As downsizing has continued to affect large companies, middle management and professional positions, which were once believed to be secure, are now becoming more job-insecure positions (Brandes et al., 2008). This drastic shift in the workplace can contribute to workers developing feelings of distrust and doubt. Employees may start to think more negatively about their employer or company, and no longer put in the maximal effort in the workplace. Furthermore, feelings of cynicism and distrust in the workplace can predict emotional exhaustion, absenteeism, doubt, and overall job dissatisfaction (Hochwarter, James, Johnson, & Ferris, 2004). These intense negative feelings or attitudes about one's employer or company can often transform into unconstructive behaviors and actions. When these negative beliefs and attitudes manifest into actions in the workplace, they are referred to as acts of noncompliance (Lim, 1996).

Acts of noncompliance in the workplace include purposefully performing poorly to hurt the company's earnings, stealing from the company, or continual absenteeism to spite one's employers (Brandes et al., 2008; Lim, 1996). The level of job insecurity an employee feels has been found to influence the extremity of noncompliant behaviors and actions. Behaviors that are initially passive aggressive, such as showing up to work late or not being committed to complete one's work for the day can progress into much more severe and relentless behaviors, motivated by vengeance (Brandes et al., 2008, Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998). Noncompliant acts of vandalism, sabotage, and retaliation are extreme examples that job-insecure employees may resort to in an attempt to seek "revenge" against their management (Mishra & Spreitzer, 1998). These noncompliant job behaviors are often affected by the overall lack of trust that job-insecure individuals develop within their organization (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989). Attitudes that initially might appear to be dull or discontented can morph into feelings of resentment or bitterness towards one's employer or organization. These attitudes may manifest as acts of defiance because the employee feels isolated within the workplace (Lim, 1996). Feelings of isolation and alienation in the workplace are common when a company is highly job-insecure, because employees may be pitted against one another when trying to maintain their positions (De Witte, 1999, Lim, 1996). Workers that feel as if they have no one to turn to, and believe that they are alienated within their company, may act out defiantly as a last resort.

The stressors that a job-insecure individual experiences in the workplace may spill over into the home, leading to heightened anxiety and despair in both the workplace and home settings (De Witte, 1999; Lim, 1996; Md-Sdin et al., 2010). Research has addressed occupational stressors transmitted between spouses or cohabitating individuals, and has examined the relationship between an individual's job insecurity and the effect this can have on a

spouse or partner (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007; Westman et al., 2001). During times of economic hardship, couples' relationships may suffer. When experiencing financial strain and job insecurity, families often have to reduce their budgets, which can cause frustration and hopelessness (De Witte, 1999; Wadsworth & Owens, 2007; Westman et al., 2001). These added stressors often lower an employee's relationship satisfaction for extended periods of time (De Witte, 1999).

Research suggests that job insecurity increases burnout in both dual-earning partners, and that this burnout increases the extent of social undermining that occurs between spouses (Vinokur et al., 1996; Westman et al., 2001). Social undermining includes behaviors directed at the other partner such as negative attitudes, criticism of attributes or behaviors, and any behaviors that could limit or inhibit attainment of goals (Vinokur et al., 1996). Westman (2001) examined couples working at the same industrial firm, and found that job insecurity was positively related to burnout and perceptions of social undermining for both partners. Additionally, a negative interaction was found between sense of control in the workplace, burnout, and perceived social undermining for husbands and wives. Job insecurity and financial stress not only result in an increase in social undermining between partners, but also increase depressive symptoms. Couples experiencing job insecurity often experience a decrease in marital quality due to these feelings of betrayal and distrust (Vinokur et al., 1996).

Gender and Age Differences

Numerous studies have focused on determining what variables may play a role in influencing the effects of job insecurity. Gender is one factor which has been suggested as serving as a moderator for job insecurity and its effects (Cheng & Chan, 2008). According to the United States Department of Labor (2008) 51.2 million (75.4%) of employed women work full

time, and women make up two-thirds of all part-time workers (16.7 out of 25 million). The U.S. Department of Labor also predicted that by 2016, 46.5% of the labor force will be women. Other research has suggested that women now outnumber men in the labor force because many male-dominated industries are making the most lay-offs (Cheung & Halpern, 2010). Some research has suggested that males and females may perceive and experience job insecurity differently (Chusmir & Durand, 1987; DeWitte, 1999; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Tang & Singer, 2000). However, there are opposing views as to whether job insecurity and its consequences are more detrimental to men or women.

One theoretical view has suggested that perceived job insecurity has potential to be more harmful to women, because they have less occupational mobility (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). The rationale is that, because men typically have more mobility (and are more likely to receive promotions) in the workplace, they are less likely to worry about job loss, whereas women will take the threat of job insecurity more seriously. This heightened sense of vulnerability, in turn, could lead to women experiencing more damaging effects due to job insecurity.

In contrast, DeWitte (1999) suggests that job insecurity is negatively related to male employees' well-being, but not female employees' well-being. These results could be due to men feeling as if they are the "breadwinner," the person upon whom their family depends for survival. DeWitte suggested that since men typically carry more of the burden when it comes to supporting their family, they are more likely to worry about job loss and, in turn, perceived job insecurity will have a more damaging effect on their psychological and physical well-being. Both of these views have empirical support, so it remains unclear as to whether women or men suffer more from job insecurity.

A third perspective suggests that men and women's experiences are comparable. Cheng and Chan (2008) analyzed 133 studies in a meta-analysis to examine who suffers more from job insecurity. Gender was included as a potential moderator for the relationship between job insecurity and its consequences. The researchers found that job insecurity affected women and men similarly, and concluded that gender did not serve as a moderator for the effects of job insecurity. Furthermore, a difference between men and women's job insecurity and job satisfaction was not found, and gender did not moderate the effect job insecurity had on psychological or physical health and well-being. The researchers suggest that these findings could be due to a reduction in differences in work orientation between males and females as women's roles in the workplace are becoming more similar to their male counterparts' roles. Additionally, women's occupational mobility may be becoming more comparable to men's, and more women are now being placed in the "breadwinner" role in their family. Cheng and Chan reference the United States Census Bureau (2004) which shows that the number of women now earning as much as or more than their spouse is on the rise. This increase in responsibility could lead to women feeling and reacting to organizational stressors in similar ways to men. The researchers concluded that as our society and workforce changes and adapts, men and women may feel equally dissatisfying and damaging effects of job insecurity.

In addition to gender, research suggests that age could be a potential moderator for the effects job insecurity has on an individual's work and home life. Cheng and Chan's (2008) meta-analysis found that the negative effects of job insecurity are more severe among older individuals compared to younger employees in the workplace. One possible explanation for this could be that older people have spent more years working for a company, and believe that the loss of a job could have more damaging effects on their lives compared to their younger

counterparts, who are just testing the waters in the workplace, and have less of a connection to their positions in the workplace (Cheng & Chan, 2008; De Witte, 1999). Furthermore, older individuals are more likely to be supporting a family, so the potential loss of income would be more damaging than for younger workers (Cheng & Chan, 2008; De Witte, 1999).

Additionally, research has shown that finding a new position in the competitive job market can be extremely more difficult for older individuals compared to their younger counterparts due to age discrimination in the workplace (Cheng & Chan, 2008; De Witte, 1999). On the other hand, since older individuals are more likely to have been involved in long-term relationships and have families, they may have sources of social support to serve as buffers for the negative impact of job insecurity (Lim, 1996). Burke (1998) suggests that job insecurity can have extremely negative effects on levels of stress, psychological moods, and overall well-being of recent graduates who are new to the workforce. The current study will recruit a sample of employees from across the lifespan in order to assess whether age is a factor in the effects of job insecurity on cynicism, non compliance, emotional exhaustion, as well as relationships and psychological well-being.

Social Support

Whereas acknowledging the direct effects of job insecurity are important, an understanding of the factors that buffer these effects is also critical. It is essential that researchers identify factors that can serve as moderators between the interactions of job insecurity and the negative outcomes that are influenced by this stressor. A moderator (or a buffer) is defined as a third variable which divides an independent variable into subgroups that establish its effectiveness in relation to the specific dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In other words, a moderator can increase or decrease the strength of a relationship between two

variables. A moderator can explain who, when, or where an effect will occur, but not why or how the effect will occur (Aiken & West, 1991). Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) suggested various factors which could serve as moderators for the relationship between job insecurity and its consequences. One potential moderator is social support.

A model of stress and social support provides a useful framework for understanding the moderating role social support plays related to the outcomes of job insecurity (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Cohen and Wills (1985) suggest that there is a positive relationship between social support and well-being, in which individuals experiencing potentially detrimental stressors (e.g., job insecurity) but who receive social support will experience reduced negative outcomes due to the stressors. In other words, social support can serve as a protective factor, moderating the potentially adverse effects of job insecurity. This model is referred to as the buffering model or hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985). The theoretical framework of the buffering model will be incorporated into the current study in an attempt to determine if different types of social support serve as better buffers for the various consequences of job insecurity.

It is well established in the organizational literature that social support exhibits a main effect on employees by improving an employee's well-being, job satisfaction, and work behaviors (Kaufmann & Beehr, 1989; Lim, 1996; Wadsworth & Owens, 2007). In addition, social support can act as a possible buffer, which can serve to reduce stress within the workplace (Bussing, 1999; Lim, 1996). Because an employee who is experiencing extreme or chronic levels of job insecurity is likely to suffer from high levels of stress and psychological turmoil, social support can serve as a moderator for these heightened levels of stress (De Witte, 1999; Rocha, Crowell, & McCarter, 2006). The buffering or moderating hypothesis suggests that social support can modify the relationship between stressors (e.g. job insecurity) and the

outcomes these stressors produce (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Lim, 1996). Therefore, if an individual who is experiencing job insecurity believes that he or she has a secure support system, the negative impact of job insecurity will be less severe, as the individual will find ways to cope with his or her uncertain situation in the workplace.

Although the majority of research conducted on social support as a buffer has focused on stressful life events rather than negative workplace conditions and attitudes as stressors, research has suggested that support received from within and outside of the workplace can reduce the harmful effects of job stressors (Losococco & Spitze, 1990). It is clear that support can provide an individual with a sense of belonging, which can improve attitudes and behaviors (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Additionally, research shows that social support interacts with an individual's stress such that individuals who have more social support experience fewer negative outcomes influenced by stress, whereas those with low social support will experience more negative outcomes influenced by stress (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayana, & Schwartz, 2002; Lim 1996; Wadsworth & Owens, 2007). The purpose of the current study is to explore two types of social support as moderators. Specifically, this study will focus on work-based and nonwork-based social support, and examine their roles as buffers in the job insecurity-outcome relationship.

Whereas several studies have confirmed the moderating role of social support in relation to job insecurity (Lim, 1996; Ng & Sorensen, 2008), few have addressed the type of social support as a buffer for job insecurity. The moderating role of support may depend on who is delivering it (e.g. work-based or nonwork-based social support) and which outcomes it is moderating (e.g. work behaviors or life satisfaction). The type of social support being delivered

will have different effects on the outcomes of stressors within the workplace (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Ng & Sorensen, 2008).

Work-based support. Work-based support is help or guidance received from individuals within one's organization (Lim, 1996). Co-workers, managers, and the organization itself can provide work-based social support to individuals experiencing job insecurity (Lim, 1996). Evidence has shown that, compared to nonwork related behaviors, work-based social support plays a more important role in moderating stressors that are related to work behaviors, such as burnout, noncompliance, or job dissatisfaction (Lim, 1996; Ng & Sorensen, 2008).

Social support received from co-workers, supervisors, or the organization moderates the relationship between job insecurity and work-based outcomes, specifically, emotional exhaustion, job dissatisfaction, and noncompliant job behaviors. Receiving support from individuals who are in the same work atmosphere helps the employee feel a sense of camaraderie and solidarity in the workplace. This will influence employees to be more committed to the organization and more satisfied with their position. Work-based support from supervisors or colleagues can improve productivity and increase job satisfaction (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002).

Additionally, if employees perceive that they have a connection with their colleagues and supervisors, they will be less likely to exhibit noncompliant job behaviors. Acts of noncompliance and deviance in the workplace are often influenced by feelings of isolation and alienation (Lim, 1996; Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Therefore, employees receiving adequate support from their colleagues or employer will be less likely to act out due to the perceived belief of isolation or feeling unappreciated. Moreover, work-based support will improve the atmosphere in the workplace, making it seem more manageable and less hopeless. Employees who feel less threatened within the workplace are less likely to experience the emotional exhaustion that is

connected to job insecurity, and their mood will improve (Lim, 1996). If a worker has social support to act as a buffer against work related stressors, the individual will experience less job dissatisfaction and have a better outlook on life in the workplace overall (Lim, 1996; Ng & Sorensen, 2008).

Personal (Non-work based) support. The effects of job insecurity are not confined only to the workplace setting, as employees can experience various negative consequences influenced by job insecurity within their home. Previous research highlights the negative effects job insecurity can have on an individual's psychological well-being (Ashford et al., 1989; Bussing, 1999; De Witte, 1999). The anxieties and stress that are created by job insecurity are often subject to the spillover effect, influencing relationships and conflict within the home. Researchers in organizational literature have found that the quality of a worker's job experience influences his or her quality of life outside of the workplace (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999; Md-Sidin et al., 2010). Therefore, job-insecure individuals are likely to experience work-family conflict that is influenced by the anxieties and stressors of the workplace spilling over into their life outside of work. This means that job-insecure individuals who are exhibiting extreme levels of job dissatisfaction are also likely to be experiencing overall dissatisfaction with their lives. This dissatisfaction may transfer to relationships, leading an employee to feel disconnected, not only in the workplace, but at home, as well.

Although work-related stress has been shown to impact the functioning of the family, research suggests that the support employees receive at home may buffer these effects. Research conducted on the work-family dynamic addresses the role social support plays in moderating the impact stressors and strains can have on families with regard to the work-family interaction (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). The majority of the literature has suggested that social support

reduces levels of stress and, thus, indirectly improves work-family conflict (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Md-Sidin et al., 2010). By incorporating theories such as the moderating hypothesis into the relationship between job insecurity and its outcomes, one can predict that social support will improve one's quality of life and life satisfaction by serving as a buffer against the stressors of job insecurity.

Collectively, the literature suggests that these outcomes of job insecurity (life dissatisfaction, family conflict or relationship dissatisfaction, psychological well-being) that take place outside of the workplace are more likely to be moderated by sources outside of the workplace. Social support received from individuals separate from one's workplace is referred to as nonwork-based social support (Lim, 1996). This term can be used interchangeably with personal support, since Lim (1996) states that nonwork-based social support is support which is given by an individual's family, friends, or other individuals who are not within the employee's workplace or organization. Personal social support from family or friends has been shown to act as a buffer, helping an individual cope with the stressors and the uncertainty he or she endures within the workplace that spill over into the home (Lim, 1996). Having support outside of one's job can help an employee to feel less despair about his or her current situation. Family and friends can improve a job-insecure employee's outlook on life, overall mood, and well-being. If employees feel that they have support from family and friends, their actual satisfaction with these relationships will improve as well (Lim, 1996).

Although work-based and personal social support moderate the effects of job insecurity in different ways, the two arenas also interact with and influence one another. An employee who receives support from colleagues and supervisors is less likely to let stressors from work spill over and create work-family conflict (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007). Additionally, any successes

experienced in the workplace can transfer to home, improving the work-family interaction. Both work-based and personal social support can serve to enhance the work-family dynamic; therefore, it is ideal that an employee receive support from their friends and family as well as from their manager and co-workers (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007).

Current Study

The present study was designed to examine the role that work-based and nonwork-based support play in moderating the relationship between job insecurity and various negative outcomes. It was hypothesized that work-based support would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and cynicism and distrust, burnout, and noncompliance within the workplace. Since these outcomes are strictly related to the workplace, it is more likely that work-based support will have a stronger influence on them. Personal support was predicted to moderate the relationship between job insecurity and psychological well-being and marital dissatisfaction. Psychological well-being and relationship satisfaction are factors outside of the workplace; therefore, nonwork-based support should influence the relationship between these outcomes and job insecurity.

Exploratory Analyses. Since past research has included age as a control variable, the current study did as well. The following exploratory question was addressed in the current study regarding gender differences:

Research Question 1: Did men and women differ in job insecurity?

Work-based Hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Job insecurity would be related to cynicism, emotional exhaustion, and acts of noncompliance in the workplace.

Hypothesis 2: Work-based support moderates the relationship between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion. The relationship between emotional exhaustion and job insecurity would be stronger when support within the workplace is low and weaker when work-based support is high.

Hypothesis 3: Work-based support moderates the relationship between job insecurity and cynicism in the workplace. The relationship between job insecurity and cynicism would be stronger when work-based support is low and weaker when support within the workplace is high.

Hypothesis 4: Work-based support moderates the relationship between job insecurity and noncompliant job behaviors. The relationship between job insecurity and noncompliance would be stronger when work-based support is low and weaker when work-based support is high.

Personal Hypotheses.

Hypothesis 5: Job insecurity would be related to lower levels of psychological well-being and relationship dissatisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: Personal support moderates the relationship between job insecurity and poor psychological well-being. The relationship between poor psychological well-being and job insecurity would be stronger when support is low, and weaker when personal support is high.

Hypothesis 7: Personal support moderates the relationship between job insecurity and relationship dissatisfaction. The relationship between job insecurity and relationship dissatisfaction would be stronger when personal support is low and weaker when support from family and friends is high (See Figure 1 for the proposed model of the hypotheses).

Method

Participants

Data for the study were collected from a sample of 216 employees from multiple organizations using an online survey. An exact response rate is not known, since the original e-mails including the survey were forwarded to other participants. However, the initial recruitment involved sending the survey to approximately 150 individuals. The survey included a wide range of individuals, but employees in companies susceptible to downsizing were particularly targeted. Specifically, individuals who were teachers, engineers, and in banking and finance were initially surveyed. Less secure industries with high levels of job insecurity were targeted because if the company is undergoing some change (e.g. mergers, downsizing) that could cause the employees to be uncertain about their position in the workplace. To participate in the study, the individuals needed work at least 30 hours a week and live in the United States. Due to the incorporation of the snowball technique, the employees that were gathered for the study came from a large range of occupations and organizations. Because this was an organizational study that is of a somewhat sensitive nature, a response rate of around 50% was expected (Lim, 1996). Although it is impossible to calculate a response rate for this study, previous similar studies report a response rate of around 60%. The study did not target a specific gender, age, socioeconomic status, education level, or ethnicity, as the intention was to obtain a diverse sample.

A total of 216 participants completed the organizational behaviors survey. Of these 216 participants, 203 were used for the final data analysis because they had complete data. The participants consisted of 31.9% men and 67.1% women. The range in age was 18 to 75 years. The mean age was 35.6 ($SD=14.2$, see Table 1).

Participants were also asked about the number of hours they worked a week, the industry they worked in, and their job title. The modal participant worked 40-50 hours a week (45.7%).

The participants were predominately Caucasian and Hispanic (68.5%) and worked in a variety of industries including academic (17.3%, e.g., teacher), sales (16.3%, e.g., clothing store saleswoman), and helping professions (15.3%, e.g., doctor; See Table 1).

All participants held at minimum a high school diploma, whereas the modal participant had his/her bachelor's degree (30.6%), indicating that the education levels in the sample were relatively high. Of the 203 participants, the modal participant was single (43.9%) and had no children (45.3%, see Table 2).

Measures

The materials that were used to measure the different variables were found while conducting a widespread review of the literature on job insecurity and social support. The scales used have been adopted from past research that has already established their psychometric properties. Mean scale scores were calculated for each of the measures. Participants also answered several demographic questions, including gender, age, ethnicity, job status, education, number of children, hours worked per week, and marital status.

Job Insecurity. In order to examine employees' levels of job insecurity, combined items from a variety of scales were used. A measure of job insecurity created by Ashford and her colleagues (Ashford et. al, 1989) measured overall job insecurity. Both the threat of job loss and the threat of losing various essential dimensions of one's job were addressed. The first set of 10 questions addresses the *importance of possible changes to one's job as a whole*, and proposes: "Assume for a moment that each of the following events could happen to you; how important to you personally is the possibility that:" A sample item is "you may be fired?" or "lose your job and be moved to a lower level within the organization?" Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Very unimportant; 5=Very important). The second set of 10 questions addresses the

perceived threat of losing one's job. The participants are asked: "Again, think about the future, how likely is it that each of these events might actually occur to you in your current job?" The participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale of (1=Very unlikely; 5=Very likely). The same 10 situations are presented that were asked earlier in the importance of possible changes section. The Ashford et al. (1989) scale is used often in job insecurity studies because it has good reliability, with alphas ranging from .84 to .92 (Ashford et al., 1989; Lim, 1996). The Ashford et al. scale is considered to be the most sophisticated operationalization of job insecurity scales and has been used and validated among a wide range of organizational studies pertaining to job insecurity (Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen, 2001). For the current study the reliability of the scale was $\alpha=.80$.

The final three questions addressed the powerlessness aspect of job insecurity. The powerlessness scale was created by Ashford et al. (1989). The participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with three statements: "I have enough power in this organization to control events that might affect my job"; "In this organization, I can prevent negative things from affecting my work situation"; and "I understand this organization well enough to be able to control things that affect me." Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale, (1) Strongly disagree through (5) Strongly agree. These three questions were added to the job insecurity measure, as suggested by Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen (2001). Convergent validity was demonstrated by the significant associations between these questions and numerous job related stressors such as job dissatisfaction and job burnout (Ashford et al., 1989; Mauno et al., 2001). The scale is also reliable, with an alpha of .83 (Ashford et al., 1989). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.79$. For complete overview of means and standard deviations of the job insecurity variable for men and women, see Table 3.

Spousal Job Insecurity. Spousal job insecurity was measured with the following four questions developed by the researcher: “How certain are you that your spouse/partner will be laid off from his or her job in the next few years?”; “How certain are you about the job insecurity within your partner’s present organization?”; “How important is it to you that your spouse could get fired?”; and “How important is it to your spouse that he or she may be fired?” These items were used to determine if spousal job insecurity moderated or affected any of the outcome variables. Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale, (1) Very unimportant through (5) Very unimportant. The spousal job insecurity questions were chosen for their reliability ($\alpha=.83$; Lim, 1996) as well as their validity, as shown through significant correlations with various organizational variables such as job, life, and relationship dissatisfaction (De Witte, 1999, Lim, 1996). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.77$.

Work-based Social Support. Work-based social support was measured using the abbreviated version of the Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa (1986) Perceived Organizational Support Scale (Credo, Armenakis, Feild, and Young, 2010). Items include “The organization values my contribution to its well-being”; and “Help is available from my organization when I have a problem.” Responses were measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1= Strongly disagree; 7=Strongly agree). The seven-item scale yields a Cronbach’s alpha of .82 (Credo et al., 2010). The scale was chosen because it has good internal consistency, as well as good internal reliability (.90) and construct validity (Credo et al., 2010). The validity of the scale is demonstrated through its significant positive relationship to another scale of work-based social support ($r=.59$, $p<.001$) according to Brouwer, Reneman, Bultmann, van der Klink, and Groothoff (2010). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.82$.

Personal Social Support. Personal social support was measured using The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley (1988). The scale is a 12-item social support scale which measures support received from family and friends (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988; Krokavcova, van Dijk, Nagyova, Rosenberger, Gavelova, Middel, Gdovinova, & Groothoff, 2008). The scale consists of three subscale scores for an individual's friends, family, and significant others, as well as an overall total score. Items include "I can talk about my problems with my friends"; and "I get the emotional help and support I need from my family." Responses were measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1=Very strongly disagree; 7=Very strongly agree). The scale has yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .93 for overall support, .91 for family support, .93 for friend support, and .89 for support received from significant others, which indicates very satisfactory reliability (Krokavcova et al., 2008). The scale was chosen because it has good internal consistency (.88) and construct validity (Zimet et al., 1988). The validity of the scale is demonstrated through its significant positive relationship to another scale of personal social support ($r=.66, p<.001$) according to Krokavcova et al., 2008). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.80$.

Organizational Cynicism. A six item scale created by Vance, Brooks, and Tesluk (1995) was used to measure organizational cynicism. Items on the scale include "It is hard to be hopeful about the future because people at my workplace have such bad attitudes"; and "I've pretty much given up trying to make suggestions for improvements at work". The items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree). The scale is reliable, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of .87 to .89 (Brandes et al., 2008). The validity of this scale was demonstrated by its significant relationship to other negative work-related attitudes and

behaviors, such as organizational deviance and poor work effort (Aquino, Lewis, & Bradfield, 1999; Brandes et al., 2008). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.87$.

Noncompliant Job Behaviors. In order to observe employees' noncompliance in the workplace, Aquino, Lewis, and Bradfield's (1999) deviant behaviors scale was used.

Organizational deviance (noncompliance) was measured using an 8 item scale. Some examples of the items are, "Intentionally arrived late to work"; "Called in sick when I was really not ill"; and "Purposely ignored my supervisor's instructions." The participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale, (1) never, (2) 1 to 3 times, (3) 4 to 10 times, (4) 11 to 20 times, or (5) more than 20 times. This measure of noncompliance has reliability and construct validity when compared to other scales measuring aspects of noncompliance, such as Robinson and Bennett's (1995) organizational deviance scale, and has a Cronbach's alpha of .76 (Aquino et al., 1999). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.78$.

Emotional Exhaustion. The Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) was used to assess burnout. This scale assesses an employee's levels of emotional exhaustion in response to the work situation. Sample items include "I feel emotionally drained from my work"; and "I feel frustrated by my job". The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree). Research shows that the scale is reliable (Cronbach's alpha=.93) and has demonstrated construct validity (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002). This is a widely used scale in organizational literature, and was chosen because it has been validated across a wide range of populations and organizations (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002; De Witte, 1999). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.82$.

Psychological Well-being. Employees' psychological well-being was examined using Ryff's (1989) Scale of Psychological Well-Being (RPWB). This self-report scale targets six different aspects of positive functioning, including self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Sample items include: "I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most other people think"; "I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life"; "I know I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me". The participants responded using a 6-point Likert scale (1=Strongly agree; 6=Strongly disagree). This scale has been found to correlate positively with various other measures of well-being; internal consistency has been shown to range from .82 to .90 (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). This scale has been validated across a wide range of populations and disorders, and has been shown to correlate with numerous variables related to psychological well-being, such as depression and anxiety (Lim, 1996; Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.84$. The scores on this scale were reverse coded, wherein a higher score represents lower psychological well-being.

Relationship Satisfaction (Dissatisfaction). An abbreviated version of Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale was used to measure relationship satisfaction. The scale contains 6 items. These items were measured using a 6-point Likert scale. An example of an item is "do you feel frustrated with this relationship?" Participants responded (1) Never through (6) All the time. Research establishes that the scale is reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha of .91 (Spanier, 1976; Vinokur et al., 1996). Additionally, the scale has been shown to correlate with other relationship satisfaction scales, such as the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and Norton's (1983) Quality Marriage Index, and is considered to have high validity (Schumm, Paff-Bergen,

Hatch, Obiorah, Copeland, Meens, & Bugaighis, 1986; Vinokur et al., 1996). The reliability of the measure in the current study was $\alpha=.79$.

Procedure

The snowball method was used initially to recruit participants. The snowball method is a sampling technique which involves targeting individuals when the sample characteristics which are desired are difficult to find in a population sample which is random (Mutchnick & Berg, 1996). The snowball technique begins with initial solicitation of potential participants who fit the required components of the study. Researchers first e-mailed the survey website link to potential participants they knew who worked at least 30 hours each week. Then, the employees who took part in the study were asked to give referrals for other potential participants by forwarding the link and information. The measures were completed online, so that a large and diverse sample was targeted.

All data collection was conducted online using SurveyMonkey. Participants were invited to take part in the study through an e-mail, which contained the guidelines of the study (information sheet), as well as the link to the survey. Participants were given information describing the intentions of the study, along with instructions on how to complete the survey. Participants were assured that all of their responses would be kept confidential. There was an information sheet within the e-mail which highlighted the risks and benefits of the study, similar to an informed consent sheet. Responding to the measures constituted informed consent. The researcher's contact information was also listed in case participants had any questions or required further information. After completing all of the sections of the questionnaire, the participants were instructed to click the submit button to enter their responses. All of the

responses were collected electronically. It took approximately 30 minutes to complete the survey.

Power

Work-based. Previous studies of the independent correlations among emotional exhaustion, job insecurity, and social support (Rocha et al., 2006; Westman et al., 2001) were used to calculate an approximate medium effect size of $f^2=.29$. Research on the moderating relationship between cynicism in the workplace and job insecurity resulted in a large effect size of $f^2=.66$ (Brandes et al., 2008). Research examining the relationship between noncompliant job behaviors, job insecurity, and work-based support has resulted in an effect size of around .21 (Lim, 1996), which is a medium effect. According to Cohen (1992), to achieve a .80 level of power, with an alpha set at .05, 97 participants were needed.

Personal. Previous studies of the independent correlations among psychological well-being, job insecurity, and social support (De Witte, 1999; Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002) were used to calculate an approximate effect size ($f^2=.16$), which is a medium effect. Past research on the independent correlations among relationship satisfaction and job insecurity (De Witte, 1999; Vinokur et al., 1996) were to used calculate an approximate effect size ($f^2=.18$). An effect size of .18 is a medium effect. According to Cohen (1992), to achieve a level of .80 power, with an alpha set at .05, 97 participants were needed.

Because of the multiple dependent variables, there was a high risk of familywise error. It is unlikely that data taken from 100 participants would have been sufficient to test the multiple hypotheses with more than one dependent variable. Therefore, approximately 200 participants were needed for the study to produce the appropriate power for a medium effect (Cohen, 1992).

Results

Assumptions

Various assumptions need to be met in order to explore the hypotheses. An independent samples t-test was needed to examine the effects of gender on job insecurity. The statistical assumptions for the t-test are normality, homogeneity of variance, and independence of observations. In order to ensure that each of these assumptions has been met, a variety of tests were run on all of the study variables. To test for normality, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run, in which the job insecurity variable violated this assumption. To test for homogeneity, a Levene's test was conducted. The Levene's test revealed that the assumption of homogeneity was not violated. The independence of observations assumption has been met because the participants were run independent of one another.

Before testing hypotheses one through seven the assumptions for regression analyses (normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of observations) were examined. Linearity and homoscedasticity are assumed for significant relationships. Additionally, it was assumed that the data met the independence of observation assumption because each score is believed to be unique and unaffected by other scores in the data set. A visual inspection of scatter plots confirmed homoscedasticity. Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests and the visual inspection of histograms were conducted to assess normality for all of the variables. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test revealed that along with a violation in job insecurity which was already noted, normality had also been violated for relationship satisfaction ($p < .01$) and emotional exhaustion ($p < .01$), so there will be a restriction of range, which could affect the results. Because of this violation, data were transformed using logarithmic and radical transformations. However, this transformation did not fix the normality violation. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov indicated non-normality for relationship satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, but examination of skewness

and kurtosis indicated that the variables were not as bad as the Komolgorov-Smirnov test suggested. Therefore, analyses were conducted with untransformed variables however results should be interpreted with caution as the violated assumption could influence the results.

Due to the violation of normality, variables were assessed to ensure that there was a normal distribution for individuals' levels of job insecurity related to their gender, the industry they worked in, and their education. The average (mean) job insecurity score of the 203 valid participants was $M=2.06$, $SD=.81$. Only three percent of participants rated their job insecurity at the highest level (4 to 5 on the scale), whereas 60.1% of participants rated their job insecurity at a level of 1 or 2. These are relatively low rates of job insecurity, and could potentially affect the results. Given the low level of job insecurity, it is possible that the variable was confounded by education or industry. Therefore, analyses were run to determine the possible influence these variables might have had on job insecurity. Education was dichotomized (high education or little education); job security was not found to differ based on education ($t(203)=1.52$, *NS*). In addition, a one-way ANOVA comparing job insecurity among participants in the four industries (academic, sales, helping, other) assessed in the study did not show a significant difference ($F(1,203)=.296$, *NS*).

Because the job insecurity variable was so positively skewed and it is a critical variable in each analysis, attempts were made to rectify this problem. Data were first transformed using logarithmic and radical transformations, but they did not reduce the positive skew. We considered dichotomizing the job insecurity variable but were concerned that this would lead to a substantial loss of power and loss of information about the true nature of the job insecurity variable (Fitzsimons, 2008). Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest recoding outliers to reduce their influence on the outcomes. Examining and recoding the outliers using this proposed

method did not make the job insecurity variable less positively skewed. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) also discuss logistic regression as a possible solution since it does not include normality as an assumption. This form of regression is most useful when using dichotomized variables. There are no assumptions, so violating normality would no longer be an issue when running this analysis. However, using logistic regression would require dichotomizing the job insecurity variable, and not get at the root of the problem. Given that no appropriate solution was found for normalizing the job insecurity variable, the analyses used the skewed data.

Gender

To explore the proposed research question on whether job insecurity differed by gender, an independent samples *t* test was run. This analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between males and females on job insecurity responses. Men scored higher in job insecurity ($M_{male}=2.26$, $SD_{male}=.99$) than women ($M_{female}=1.96$, $SD_{female}=.70$; $t(203)=2.48$, $p<.001$). Given that a difference was found by gender for job insecurity, the hypotheses were assessed for men and women separately.

Moderator Hypotheses Plan of Analysis

In order to test the moderator hypotheses, the regression analysis as recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used. Moderating relationships are supported if a significant effect is found for the interaction when the simple effects of job insecurity and work-based social support are controlled.

A multiplicative term of the predictor (job insecurity) and the moderator (work-based or personal social support) was computed. For work-based social support hypotheses the regressions conducted following this computation used job insecurity as the predictor, work-based social support as the moderator, and either cynicism, noncompliance, or burnout as the

criterion variable. Noncompliance (or burnout or cynicism) was regressed onto job insecurity, work-based social support, and the interaction between work-based social support and job insecurity. For personal social support hypotheses the multiplicative term of job insecurity and personal social support was computed. Well-being (or relationship satisfaction) was regressed onto job insecurity, personal social support, and the interaction between personal social support and job insecurity. Because a significant difference in job insecurity was found between men and women females, the analyses were run separately by gender.

Regressions were conducted using centered data. Hypotheses were tested separately for men and women, and age was included as a control in all regression analyses.

Job Insecurity and Work-based Outcomes

Hypothesis one predicted that job insecurity would be related to the work-based outcomes of cynicism, noncompliance, and emotional exhaustion. First, zero order correlations were examined for all major study variables (see Tables 4 and 5).

Regression analyses were then conducted to observe the direct effects between job insecurity and the three work-based dependent variables. In support of hypothesis one, job insecurity was predictive of all three of the work related outcomes both for men and women, with age included as a control variable. Job insecurity was predictive of men's burnout score ($R^2=.27$, $F(2, 64)=11.49$, $p<.001$) as well as women's burnout score ($R^2=.11$, $F(2, 135)=8.27$, $p<.001$). Additionally, cynicism scores were predicted by job insecurity for men ($R^2=.29$, $F(2, 64)=12.39$, $p<.001$) as well as women ($R^2=.12$, $F(2, 135)=9.05$, $p<.001$). Lastly, job insecurity predicted noncompliance scores for both men ($R^2=.30$, $F(2, 64)=13.12$, $p<.001$) and women ($R^2=.19$, $F(2, 135)=15.59$, $p<.001$).

Work-based support as a moderator. Direct effects of job insecurity on work-based outcomes, specifically noncompliance in the workplace, emotional exhaustion, and cynicism were established. Because the predicted relationship was found between job insecurity and the three work-based dependent variables, the moderating role work-based social support plays in this relationship was explored. It was predicted that work-based social support would play a moderating role in the relationship between job insecurity and the work-based outcome variables. Job insecurity is expected to be a weaker predictor of the of the outcome variables when individuals have higher levels of support.

Emotional Exhaustion (burn-out). Hypothesis two predicted that work-based social support would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion (burnout). Burnout scores were regressed onto job insecurity, work-based social support, and the interaction between job insecurity and work-based social support for men and women in the workplace. This analysis revealed a significant final regression equation for men ($R^2=.41$, $F(2, 64)=14.10$, $p<.001$). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and work-based social support did not produce a significant interaction for levels of emotional exhaustion in men ($R^2= .41$, $F(1,64)= 14.10$, NS). Similar results were found for women, in which a significant final regression equation was produced ($R^2=.31$, $F(2, 135)=18.94$, $p<.001$), but a significant interaction with work-based support was not present ($R^2= .31$, $F(1,135)= 18.94$, NS). These findings suggest that work-based social support does not moderate the relationship between job insecurity and burnout in the workplace.

Cynicism. Hypothesis three predicted that work-based social support would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and cynicism in the workplace. Cynicism scores were regressed onto job insecurity, as well as work-based social support and the interaction between

the two. Similar to the burnout results, a significant final regression equation was found for men ($R^2=.50$, $F(2, 64)=19.92$, $p<.001$) and women ($R^2=.47$, $F(2, 135)=37.84$, $p<.001$). However, when the interaction term between job insecurity and work-based social support was entered on the second step of the regression analysis, significant interactions did not emerge for cynicism in men ($R^2= .50$, $F(1,64)= 19.92$, NS) or women ($R^2= .47$, $F(1,135)= 37.84$, NS). The findings indicated that work-based social support does not play a role in buffering the relationship between employees' job insecurity and cynicism in the workplace.

Noncompliance. Hypothesis four predicted that work-based social support would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and noncompliant job behaviors. Job insecurity predicted men's noncompliance scores ($R^2=.39$, $F(2, 64)=19.20$, $p<.001$). Job insecurity and work-based support also accounted for unique variance in noncompliance levels. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and work-based social support did not produce a significant interaction for levels of noncompliance in men ($R^2=.42$, $F(1,64)=14.17$, NS).

For women, job insecurity was predictive of noncompliance scores ($R^2=.26$, $F(2, 135)=22.97$, $p<.001$). Job insecurity and work-based support also accounted for unique variance in employees' levels of noncompliance. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and work-based social support explained a significant decrease in noncompliance rates ($R^2=.55$, $F(1,135)= 52.06$, $p<.001$). The unstandardized simple slope for women one *SD* below the mean of noncompliance rates was .48 and the unstandardized simple slope for women one *SD* above the mean of negative affect was -.25 (see Figure 2). Thus, work-based social support was a significant moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and noncompliance in the workplace. These findings imply that women employees with high

support within the workplace do not show an increase in noncompliant behaviors as their rates of job insecurity increase, while those with low work-based support report more noncompliant behaviors as job insecurity increases.

Job Insecurity and Personal Outcomes

The fifth hypothesis predicted that job insecurity would be related to a decrease in the personal outcomes, well-being and relationship satisfaction. First, zero order correlations were examined for all major study variables. Significant correlations were found for men and women for psychological well-being (see Tables 4 and 5).

To test hypothesis five, which stated that job insecurity would be predictive of relationship satisfaction and psychological well-being, a regression analysis was conducted to observe the direct effects between job insecurity and the two personal-based dependent variables. Job insecurity was not predictive of men's relationship satisfaction scores ($R^2=.07$, $F(2, 51)=1.87$, NS) or women's relationship satisfaction scores ($R^2=.02$, $F(2, 100)=.76$, $p=NS$). However, participants' job insecurity was found to be predictive of well-being scores for men ($R^2=.13$, $F(2, 64)=4.42$, $p<.05$) and women ($R^2=.21$, $F(2, 135)=17.12$, $p<.001$).

Personal support as a moderator. Hypotheses six and seven predicted that personal social support would moderate the relationship between job insecurity and well-being and relationship satisfaction. Similarly to hypotheses two through four, regression analyses were run to explore these possible moderator effects. Men and women were once again run separately, and age was included as a control variable.

Psychological well-being. Hypothesis six predicted that personal social support would serve as a moderator for the relationship between job insecurity and psychological well-being. Job insecurity predicted males' well-being scores ($R^2=.45$, $F(2, 64)=25.13$, $p<.001$). Job

insecurity and nonwork-based support also accounted for unique variance in well-being levels. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and personal social support explained a significant increase in well-being scores for men ($R^2 = .52$, $F(1,64) = 21.53$, $p < .01$). The unstandardized simple slope for men one *SD* below the mean of psychological well-being was $-.31$ and the unstandardized simple slope for men one *SD* above the mean of psychological well-being was $.02$ (see Figure 3). Thus, personal social support was a significant moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and psychological well-being.

For women, job insecurity was predictive of well-being scores ($R^2 = .45$, $F(2, 135) = 51.51$, $p < .001$). Job insecurity and nonwork-based support also accounted for unique variance in employees' levels of well-being. Furthermore, in the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and personal social support explained a significant increase in well-being scores for women ($R^2 = .48$, $F(1,135) = 37.23$, $p < .05$). The unstandardized simple slope for women one *SD* below the mean of psychological well-being was $-.45$ and the unstandardized simple slope for women one *SD* above the mean of psychological well-being was $-.14$ (see Figure 4). Thus, personal social support was a significant moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and psychological well-being. The psychological well-being of people with high support outside of the workplace does not decline as their rates of job insecurity increase, while a decline is seen in those with low personal social support.

Relationship Satisfaction. Hypothesis seven predicted that personal social support would serve as a moderator for the relationship between job insecurity and relationship satisfaction. A significant regression equation was found for men's relationship satisfaction ($R^2 = .25$, $F(2, 64) = 5.47$, $p < .05$) as well as women's relationship satisfaction ($R^2 = .23$, $F(2, 135) = 8.85$, $p < .001$). In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between job insecurity and

personal social support did not produce a significant interaction for relationship satisfaction in men ($R^2 = .25$, $F(1,62) = 5.47$, NS) or women ($R^2 = .23$, $F(1,135) = 8.85$, NS). This suggests that personal social support does not moderate the relationship between job insecurity and relationship satisfaction.

Spousal Job Insecurity. A significant regression equation was found for relationship satisfaction ($R^2 = .04$, $F(2, 151) = 2.12$, $p < .05$). However, a significant interaction with personal based social support as a moderator was not found ($R^2 = .22$, $F(1,151) = 8.40$, NS). This finding revealed that the participants' spousal job insecurity did not serve as a buffer for the relationship between job insecurity and the personal outcome of relationship satisfaction. This suggests that spousal job insecurity does not moderate the relationship between job insecurity and relationship satisfaction.

Discussion

This study explored work-based and personal support as moderators of work-based and psychological well-being outcomes. Results indicated that greater job insecurity was related to more positive work-based outcomes for both men and women. Work-based support was found to moderate this relationship for job insecure women experiencing noncompliance in the workplace. Secondly, job insecurity was related to psychological well-being for men and women, but not to relationship satisfaction. Personal social support received from friends and family worked as a moderator between job insecurity and psychological well-being for both men and women.

Work-based Findings

An objective of this study was to examine the role job insecurity plays in relation to various work related outcome variables. As was predicted, individuals experiencing job

insecurity displayed more noncompliance in the workplace, and had higher levels of emotional exhaustion and cynicism. All three of these work-related outcomes have underlying factors in common. Individuals exhibiting these behaviors often do so as a result of feelings of isolation and alienation in the workplace. Employees may feel as if they are being pitted against one another when trying to maintain their positions (De Witte, 1999; Lim, 1996). Additionally, they may feel that their company does not have their best interest in mind, and that issues such as saving money are more important to their supervisor than their continued position in the workplace. Emotional exhaustion and cynicism are problems in and of themselves but are also problematic because they are often expressed through acts of noncompliance, such as lying about the hours one worked, stealing company property, or purposely ignoring a supervisor's instructions. Acts of noncompliance can be extremely detrimental to a company.

Individuals experiencing an increase in emotional exhaustion commonly report feeling disconnected from the workplace, as well as a sense of depersonalization. Employees experiencing emotional exhaustion no longer feel committed to their responsibilities in the workplace, and this can affect their job performance and sense of accomplishment (Maslow, 2003; Rocha et al., 2006; Vinokur et al., 2006). Employees with emotional exhaustion are not working to their full potential and are less likely to care about their organization. Furthermore, employees experiencing emotional exhaustion often report higher levels of hopelessness and depression (Vinokur et al., 2006; Westman, Etzion, & Danon, 2001).

Similarly, cynicism within the workplace can lead employees to express feelings of contempt and disregard for all of those associated with their place of work (Bommer et al., 2005). Cynical attitudes and behaviors could tear a company apart, by lessening workers' morale and drive. If employees do not believe their company has their best interest in mind, they

may stop putting the company's best interest in mind as a form of retaliation or justice. If an employee believes that his or her workplace lacks integrity, fairness, sincerity, and honesty numerous issues may arise that could be detrimental to the organization as a whole (Dean, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998). For example, Mishra and Spreitzer (1998) found that cynical employees are more likely to challenge or speak negatively about their employer.

Employees who believe their job is at risk are more likely to act out against their company as a defensive retaliation (Aquino et al., 1999). This is truly alarming, since employees reported not only small acts of retaliation, such as calling in sick when they were not really ill, but many reported criminal acts as well, such as vandalizing or stealing company property. If employees are purposefully performing poorly to hurt their organization's earnings, stealing from their company, or using absenteeism to spite their employers, the organization will suffer (Brandes et al., 2008; Lim, 1996). Furthermore, if criminal acts are taking place within the company, this could draw unwanted attention to the organization as a whole, as well as all of the parties involved. These findings should be extremely alarming for organizations, because there is an added threat that their employees will actively try to harm their business.

These findings raise various implications for supervisors and managers because they suggest that job insecure employees not only internalize feelings about job insecurity but may also actively try to harm their business. It is important that organizations address these feelings of contempt, because it is possible that cynical attitudes could influence employees acting out through violence in the workplace (Bommer et al., 2005). Therefore, it is essential that organizations find ways to buffer these negative outcomes, by incorporating possible moderators that serve to improve overall employee morale and reduce cynicism, emotional exhaustion, and acts of noncompliance.

Support received from one's organization, employer, and fellow employees was found to be important for buffering women employees from acting out in the form of noncompliance when experiencing job insecurity. This finding suggests that support originating from individuals within the workplace can significantly play a role in decreasing noncompliant job behaviors for women. This is particularly important when an employee's job is at stake, because acting out against one's company through destructive behavior could lead to immediate termination for an employee. This buffering effect was not found for men.

There are many explanations that could account for work-based support moderating this relationship for women but not men. It is possible that men may not respond at all to support within the workplace. This could be due to men feeling more competitive in the workplace. If employees feel pitted against one another, or competing for their place in the workplace, they are less likely to turn to each other for support (De Witte, 1999; Lim 1996). Men may view the workplace as a competitive atmosphere, and view interacting with peers as a sign of weakness. Because women tend to be more social and interpersonal compared to men, they may seek work-based support out more, and rely on it when work stressors are affecting their attitudes. These different views of the workplace atmosphere may contribute to women being less likely to act out against their company if they feel they have constant, substantial support from their colleagues and employers.

Given these findings, it is essential that employers and organizations continue to provide their employees with adequate support, and also motivate individuals to seek support from their colleagues, who are experiencing similar effects related to job insecurity. Because the effects of job insecurity on noncompliance were found to be lessened by work-based support for women, it is crucial that employers continue to provide their employees with a constant stream of support

as they go about their day to day workloads. Furthermore, it is important that the role work-based support plays in regards to noncompliance among men continue to be explored, since it appears to be a less effective solution in dealing with noncompliance in the workplace for job insecure men.

Work-based support did not buffer the relationship between job insecurity and cynicism or emotional exhaustion. This suggests that support served to buffer overt negative behaviors towards the company, but not attitudes or feelings related to one's company. Therefore, while actual behaviors seem to be decreased, overall feelings and attitudes are more difficult to buffer. This is why it is important that companies seek to understand why employees are acting out rather than focusing solely on decreasing the negative behaviors. Whereas decreasing absenteeism and increasing job productivity is important to employers, they must also seek to improve the way the employees view the company, or these improvements in noncompliance among women may be short-lived. If the company only cares about these short-term goals (such as employees simply showing up to work) they could be severely damaged in the long run if employees decide to act out through noncompliance, by vandalizing or stealing company property.

Personal Findings

Another objective of this study was to examine the role job insecurity plays in relation to life outside the job. The results revealed individuals experiencing job insecurity were more likely to experience a decrease in psychological well-being, but not decreased relationship satisfaction with a spouse or significant other.

People who are job insecure endure various aspects of poor psychological well-being, such as heightened levels of anxiety and depression. Consistent with this research study,

numerous researchers have provided evidence that suggests job insecurity reduces employees' psychological well-being (Bussing, 1999; De Witte, 1999). This relationship is a particularly destructive one, because job insecure employees often experience various depression and anxiety disorders, as well as higher levels of mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion (Ashford et al., 1989; Bussing, 1999; Lim, 1996; Md-Sidin et al., 2010). Low levels of psychological well-being have been found to affect employees' physical and mental health, and if left untreated can contribute to high blood pressure, heart attacks, and other stress-related illnesses (Ashford et al., 1989; De Witte, 1999). These illnesses not only have a damaging effect on the employees experiencing them, but also affect their loved ones, both financially and emotionally. Those who are job insecure will experience a decrease in overall positive functioning, self-acceptance, and feelings of autonomy. Job insecure employees will also experience a decrease in an employee's positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and feelings about one's personal growth (De Witte, 1999; Spanier, 1976; Vinokur et al.; 1996). These negative outcomes can affect an employee in the home as well as within the workplace.

Prolonged job insecurity can put workers and their families at risk for various chronic stress-related problems. De Witte (1999) suggested that experiencing job insecurity can be as harmful as actually losing one's job. Longitudinal research has revealed that job insecurity is often chronic and can affect an employee's health and well-being over the course of multiple years (Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen, 2001). Companies must seek to improve the workplace so that these detrimental effects do not destroy the organization and the employees over the course of time.

Support received from family and friends was found to significantly buffer the relationship between job insecurity and psychological well-being for both men and women.

This finding suggests that family and friends can play an important role in improving employees' attitudes about their work lives. At times, it can be quite difficult to focus on motivating a significant other or family member to stay positive when there is the imminent threat of job loss. Families often worry about more concrete issues, such as money and mortgages, but fail to acknowledge the effect job loss and job insecurity can have on an employee's morale and self-image. Similar to the relationship between noncompliance and attitudes such as cynicism and emotional exhaustion in the workplace, it is easier to address more concrete issues (such as financial loss) compared to attitudes related to job insecurity (such as a loss in self-esteem and personal accomplishment). However, if this support is not given, the employee's psychological functioning will be affected. Enduring job insecurity often leads to individuals cutting their ties with peers within the workplace in response to a heightened fear or anxiety and job insecure individuals often report feeling a level of disconnect from family and friends (De Witte, 1999; Erera, 1992; Lim, 1996). Therefore, personal support outside of the workplace is essential, as employees need to feel as if they have people within the home they can confide in about their job stressors.

However, factors other than job insecurity seemed to play more of a role in influencing men's and women's relationship satisfaction. Perhaps variables that are more directly related to the home, such as the demands for household work that couples place on one another or how couples spend their free time could have more of an impact on relationship satisfaction compared to job insecurity. Perhaps another moderator is involved in influencing this variable, such as anxiety, which could be more related to relationship satisfaction compared to job insecurity. Other factors outside of the workplace could play a more significant role in dyadic relationship

satisfaction. It is also possible that couples have adapted to the job insecurity threat, so their relationship satisfaction is less related to this work stressor.

Tips for employers

These findings raise many issues that companies and organizations should acknowledge and address. It is essential that researchers continue to explore ways in which the psychological turmoil and damage related to job insecurity can be alleviated. By doing so, companies and researchers will be more likely to find solutions or other possible buffers that can serve to improve the various negative outcomes related to job insecurity. In turn, companies can improve not only job production and motivation, but also possibly save individual's lives and improve the functioning of those whose behaviors and attitudes impacted on a daily basis. These efforts should focus on increasing employee control, training supervisors, improving employee attitudes in the workplace, and offering employee assistance programs.

Organizations should seek to alleviate some of these psychological issues by providing employees with the sense of control over their situation that they feel they have lost as a result of their job insecurity. Organizations can improve the workplace environment by providing employees opportunities where they can share their concerns about their position and the goals of the company (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). If the employees feel as if they have some control over their role in the workplace, they will be less likely to completely lose hope in relation to the organization and the role they play in regards to the company's success. Companies also need to make it clear to employees that they have their best interest in mind, and care about the workplace environment and the effect it has on employees. Organizational leaders should seek to find ways to show their appreciation for their employees, so that it is clear the supervisors are not solely concerned with profits, but also care about the individuals who work hard for them on

a day to day basis. This can be done through company retreats or bonuses, or simple memos or gatherings reiterating that the employees' efforts are acknowledged and that they are viewed as valued members of the company. Leiter and Maslach (2005) suggest that employers try negotiating better assignments, avoid favoritism and dishonesty in the workplace, and hold workshops within the organization that promote building alliances, respect in the workplace, and cultural diversity in an attempt to alleviate the symptoms of the burnout effect among employees.

Organizations should train their supervisors on the values and aspects of positive psychology in the workplace, in an attempt to improve employees' well-being and work performance (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). An aspect of positive organizational psychology that companies could consider incorporating is positive psychological capital (PsyCap). PsyCap includes an employee's levels of hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resiliency in the workplace (Donaldson & Ko, 2010; Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman, & Combs, 2006). Employers should seek to improve workplace conditions incorporating aspects of PsyCap, as it has been linked to an increase in job performance, job satisfaction, and commitment in the workplace, as well as a decrease in negative behaviors, such as absenteeism, stress, and desire to quit (Avey, Patera, & West, 2006; Avey, Luthans, & Jensen, 2009; Larson & Luthans, 2006; Luthans et al., 2007; Luthans, Norman, Avolio, & Avey, 2008). Research has suggested that PsyCap interventions are easy to develop by incorporating brief in-person and web-based training techniques, and incorporating these techniques is relatively cost effective for organizations as well (Luthans, Avey, & Patera, 2008; Luthans et al., 2006). If employers incorporate PsyCap techniques, they could promote team effectiveness, which could improve work production and also improve employees' work-based support since they would be working more closely with their fellow co-workers.

To decrease acts of noncompliance, employers must first understand what is influencing the behavior. Are attitudes of cynicism and emotional exhaustion being manifested as bitter acts of contempt? If so, employers need to first address the attitudes that are impacting noncompliance, and then address the actual behaviors. If workplace stressors are the factors that are influencing the behaviors, employers could implement worksite stress-management interventions to decrease the impact work stressors have on their employees. Employers could incorporate interventions in the form of small groups led by instructors that teach relaxation techniques. Research has shown that these cognitive-behavioral stress management interventions can reduce perceived and physiologically measured stress in the workplace, which can improve workplace conditions and the negative effects of job insecurity (Eisen, Allen, Bollash, & Pescatello, 2008; Randolfi, 1997). Introducing relaxation and stress-management techniques within the workplace can serve to alleviate many of the damaging outcomes related to job insecurity.

Finally, organizations can also support employees and their families through Employee Assistance Programs (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). Support outside of the workplace is essential when an employee is experiencing a damaging stressor such as job insecurity. Individuals also need to feel that if they do lose their job, they will not be berated or criticized for it, and can move on from their job loss (Brandes et al., 2008). In many cases, experiencing the threat of losing one's job can be detrimental for families, as spouses place the blame on one another for their monetary troubles (De Witte, 1999). It is essential that families and friends work to support a job insecure employee, especially when the threat of job loss is severe, so that the employee can continue to hold onto some hope during this dire situation. Outside counseling can be very beneficial in this situation.

Because research has revealed how damaging the effects of job insecurity can be on employees it is essential that companies strive to ensure that their workers feel that they are valued and important. Additionally, employers need to emphasize the importance of working as a unit with fellow employees by promoting team effectiveness, so that a sense of trust is created among employees and their peers. If researchers and organizations continue to target these underlying issues, perhaps cynicism in the workplace, emotional exhaustion, and noncompliance can be decreased, even if job insecurity continues to be threat.

Job insecurity variable

A major area of concern in the current study was the job insecurity variable. As discussed in the results section, the variable was very positively skewed, with 60% of participants responding at the two lowest levels of job insecurity. This is such a curious finding because people did not report that they are job insecure when all of the outside evidence suggests that they are. It is really surprising that, given the current state of our economy, few people in the sample were worried about their position in the workplace. It is important to address this issue, and explore possible explanations for this result.

For example, a possible explanation for this finding could be that job insecure employees are in denial about their current position in the workplace. Acknowledging this stressor could be too difficult for employees. Perhaps if the employees had been given this measure when they were first experiencing the increase in job insecurity their responses would have been higher. Or perhaps given that the threat of possible job insecurity is no longer novel in this economy, employees have adjusted to this job stressor and it has become a norm for them. A final explanation could be that because organizations have cut so many positions, employees are now experiencing the job stressor of work overload more than job insecurity. Because employees are

now taking on the responsibilities that were once assigned to two or three employees, their negative work-related behaviors and attitudes might be related to a construct other than job insecurity. It is also possible that employees who were job insecure did not participate in the study because it was too anxiety provoking or they were too busy looking for jobs. Further research should explore these possible explanations.

The recruitment method used in the study may have influenced the data. The snowball technique made it difficult to target only individuals who were currently experiencing the effects of a downsizing. Perhaps participants chose to send the link only to people that they knew were job secure or to colleagues in their organization who were experiencing similar levels of job insecurity.

Other factors could influence the low rates of job insecurity, such as the amount of time the individual has spent working at his/her current job. If employees have been working at a stable company for thirty years, they would be less likely to report job insecurity compared to an individual who has been working in an unstable job for a shorter period of time. Future studies should attempt to target companies that are going through current restructuring and downsizing, in which job loss is a day-to-day possibility. Perhaps instead of focusing on reaching various companies throughout the United States, the study could have been conducted targeting one or two specific industries which were known to have higher levels of job insecurity. Targeting participants in this way might have resulted in higher reports of job insecurity compared to the results of the current study.

Study Limitations and Strengths

There are some limitations in the present study. The first is that it is cross-sectional and provides correlational, not causal data. Therefore, it is difficult to make causal inferences about

the relationships between job insecurity and the critical work and nonwork-based variables. Future studies should continue to explore these relationships, but also attempt to study them in a way that takes change over time into consideration. For example, Lim (1996) suggests replicating similar moderation studies using longitudinal methodology. Rocha et al. (2006) discuss the damaging effects prolonged job insecurity can have on employees. Longitudinal studies could serve to better understand the impact long-term job insecurity can have on employees' psychological well-being, relationship satisfaction, and various work-based outcomes. The participants in this study did not report extremely high levels of job insecurity. If they had been studied in a long-term context, perhaps their levels of job insecurity would have increased, and the role of work-based and nonwork-based support would have become more crucial.

Another limitation of the study is that it relied completely on self-report measures. There is a possibility that participants gave exaggerated responses or experienced apprehension about being completely honest about their workplace behaviors. Some of the items in the survey were sensitive in nature, particularly those related to noncompliance in the workplace. Participants completing the survey within the home could have experienced apprehension when answering questions related to relationship dissatisfaction. Perhaps the participants did not respond honestly to the relationship satisfaction out of anxiety over their significant other being nearby. This is one possible explanation for why a relationship between job insecurity and relationship dissatisfaction was not found. However, Lim's (1996) research suggests that self-report is not a critical problem when asking questions of this nature. Participants in the current study were advised to complete the survey in an area in which they were comfortable being completely honest. Therefore, the issue of self-report may not be a critical weakness. However, future

researchers should find ways in which they can incorporate measures that are not solely based on self-report, since it is impossible to know if the participants were being honest, or who was actually taking the self-report measure.

Although there are some limitations in the current study, there are several strengths as well. The study used a variety of measures related to organizational and personal factors that were found to be both reliable and valid. The Ashford et al. (1989) job insecurity scale is one of the most commonly used scales in organizational psychology when researchers are attempting to understand the stressors in the workplace related to the potential threat of losing one's job. Additionally, incorporating SurveyMonkey and the snowball technique allowed for a wide variety of participants. Social support was clearly broken down into one of two components, work and personal, and the outcomes were clearly defined as either work-based or personal effects. Many direct effects of job insecurity were explored in the current study, helping to add to the understanding of the influence job insecurity has on employees' workplace behaviors and attitudes, as well as their lives outside of the workplace.

Future Research

Although the current study tested many variables related to job insecurity, various other outcomes related to job insecurity need to be explored in future research. Researchers should continue to explore both organizational outcomes (e.g., self-efficacy in the workplace, job productivity, job dissatisfaction) as well as outcomes related to the home (e.g., work-family conflict, life dissatisfaction) when attempting to understand the effect job insecurity has on employees.

There are also many other variables that could serve as potential moderators for the relationship between job insecurity and work-related outcomes and personal variables.

Demographic, lifestyle, and personality factors that were not explored could have potentially affected the relationship between job insecurity and the outcome variables. These potential moderators include self-esteem and locus of control. For example, individuals who place less blame on themselves and more on the weaknesses of their company may be more likely to experience organizational cynicism and noncompliance, since they believe their job insecurity is the result of wrongdoings committed by their company or supervisor. Individuals with low self-esteem may be more likely to experience negative outcomes related to job insecurity. If an employee already doubts his or her abilities in the workplace, the threat of potentially losing one's position could cause severe duress. Future research should explore this dynamic to determine if self-esteem can moderate the relationship between the job insecurity threat and the outcome variables.

Another factor that could affect workplace outcomes is the type of communication that is being exchanged between employees and their supervisors. Are employers only discussing work-related information with their employees, or do they also discuss non-job related things to give their employees a sense that they care about more than just their productivity on the job? Employees who discuss their lives with their boss and colleagues may feel more at ease and appreciated within the workplace. Beehr, King, and King (1990) reported that discussing non-job related issues in the workplace can serve as a buffer of the relationship between work stressors and their work-related outcomes. When employees experience high amounts of stress, and their supervisors choose to discuss non-job related issues with them, they are likely to feel as if their supervisors care about them and their well-being outside of the workplace. This aspect of the workplace could serve to improve employee morale by decreasing negative, cynical attitudes about one's employer. Therefore, further research should be conducted to explore the content of

communication related to work-based support, job insecurity, and work-related outcomes. It is essential that organizations seek to improve this communication with employees, and that through doing so they learn to view employees as long-term investments, and strive to improve workplace conditions for employees to ensure that they maintain loyal, trustworthy workers.

Future researchers should also attempt to illuminate the buffering role social support plays on job insecurity and its outcomes by further exploring the sources of social support. Only two overall types of support were investigated in this study, whereas future studies could separate work-based support into its counterparts (i.e., colleague support, manager support, and organizational support) and separate personal support into categories such as friend support and family support. While this study defined work-based support as support received from one's organization, colleagues, or supervisor, there are other areas which could contribute to work-based support, such as unions or government agencies (Lim, 1996). These types of organizations could serve to play a calming role in a job insecure employee's life, by decreasing uncertainty and anxiety related to the possibility of losing one's position in the workplace. Personal support was defined as work received outside of the workplace, but focused on support from family and friends; however other groups could serve as personal support for employees, such as support from one's religious organization, community service, or other organized social groups. Future research should address the role these other forms of personal social support can play in the relationship between job insecurity and outcome variables.

Conclusion

As the United States continues to be affected by downsizing due to economic turmoil, job insecurity will continue to be an issue of great importance for employees. Therefore, it is vital that researchers and organizations understand this job insecurity phenomenon. Previous research

has supplied a large amount of evidence indicating that job insecurity can be extremely detrimental to employees' physical and psychological health, as well as their relationships, attitudes, and behaviors within and outside of the workplace. Research has also suggested that these effects can have a negative impact on how an organization performs and functions as a cohesive unit (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002; Bommer et al., 2005; Brandes et al., 2008). Thus, research efforts that attempt to improve our overall understanding of the variables that may help to lessen the damage that is associated with job insecurity can improve the development and implementation of organizational programs and interventions being created. These programs, in turn, can potentially improve the workplace in dealing with this intense work-related stressor. As long as job insecurity continues to be a reality in our nation, employees will continue to experience hardships related to this work-stressor. Therefore, it is essential that researchers and organizations continue to explore this dynamic, to aid their employees and improve workplace conditions for all of the parties involved.

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Table 1

Participant Demographics: Age, Ethnicity, Hours Worked per Week, Education Level

Age		Ethnicity		Hrs Per Wk		Education	
18-25	35.2%	Caucasian	39.1%	30-40	44%	HS Degree	5.1%
26-35	26.8%	Hispanic	29.4%	40-50	45.7%	Some College	23.5%
36-45	17.2%	Black	18.9%	50 +	10.3%	Associates	7.1%
46-55	8.3%	Asian	4.5%			Bachelors	30.6%
56-65	8.8%	Native American	4.3%			Some Grad. School	13.3%
66-75	3.7%	Other	3.8%			Completed Grad. Degree	20.4%

Table 2

Participant Demographics: Relationship Status, Children, Children in the Home, Industry

Relationship Status		Children		Children in Home		Industry	
Single	43.9%	0	45.3%	0	65%	Academic	17.3%
Married	37.8%	1	22.2%	1	15.6%	Sales	16.3%
Divorced	4.1%	2	25.4%	2	15.3%	Helping	15.3%
Separated	2%	3	7.1%	3	4.1%	Food	8.2%
Cohabiting w/ Partner	11.2%					Financial	6.1%
Widowed	1%					Administrative	5.1%
						Engineering	3.1%

Table 3

Overview of Means and Standard Deviations for all Variables

Variables	Men		Women	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Relationship Satisfaction	2.24	.85	2.21	.76
Noncompliance	1.83	.84	1.43	.55
Well-being	4.68	.83	2.90	.61
Cynicism	2.80	1.06	2.45	.93
Emotional Exhaustion	2.80	1.00	2.61	.95
Work-based Support	4.43	.79	4.62	.71
Nonwork-based Support	5.44	1.21	6.02	.79
Job Insecurity	2.26	.99	1.96	.70

Table 4

Correlation Matrix for Self-reports of Job Insecurity, Support, and Work and Nonwork Related Outcome Variables (Men)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. JobInsec	-						
2. WorkSpt	-.428**	-					
3. NonwkSpt	-.131	.456***	-				
4. Cynicism	.531***	-.645***	-.367**	-			
5. EmotEx	.521***	-.334**	-.366**	.701***	-		
6. Noncomp	.540***	-.381**	-.291*	.518***	.606**	-	
7. Wellbeing	-.353**	.436***	.609***	-.605***	-.580**	-.525***	-
8. RelSat	.261	-.275*	-.433**	.389**	.430**	.513***	-.593***

N=66

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 5

Correlation Matrix for Self-reports of Job Insecurity, Support, and Work and Nonwork Related Outcome Variables (Women)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Job Insec	-						
2. Work Spt	-.367***	-					
3. NonwrkSpt	-.229**	.348***	-				
4. Cynicism	.350***	-.671***	-.328***	-			
5. EmotEx	.323***	-.533***	-.326***	.644***	-		
6. Noncomp	.409***	-.430***	-.133	.476***	.422***	-	
7. Wellbeing	-.450***	.417***	.571***	-.464***	-.574***	-.308***	-
8. RelSatis	.111	-.049	-.477***	.093	.210**	.159	-.463***

N=137

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Figure 1. Model representing the moderating effect of work-based and nonwork-based social support on the relationship between job insecurity and various negative outcomes.

Figure 2. Simple slope equation for moderation of work-based social support (women)

Figure 3. Simple slope equation for moderation of personal social support (men)

Figure 4. Simple slope equation for moderation of personal social support (women)