Job insecurity, turnover intention and psychological distress: The mediating effect of job satisfaction and trust in management
JOB INSECURITY, TURNOVER INTENTION, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS: THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF JOB SATISFACTION AND TRUST IN MANAGEMENT

Tom-Stian Vetting

Research has produced compelling evidence that quantitative job insecurity is associated with negative consequences, and also suggests that short-term attitudinal reactions mediate the relationship between job insecurity and long-term reactions. The aim of this study was to investigate if both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity are related to short-term (job satisfaction and trust in management) and long-term (turnover intention and psychological distress) reactions, and if the short-term reactions mediate the relationships between the two dimensions of job insecurity and the long-term reactions. Survey data from 549 Swedish white-collar workers show that both types of job insecurity were related to all outcomes. While trust in management only had a small mediating effect in the relationship between quantitative job insecurity and turnover intention, job satisfaction was an important mediator between both types of job insecurity and long-term outcomes.

The worldwide changing nature of work and careers has gained considerable interest the last decades (Cooper, Dewe, & O’Driscoll, 2001). As means toward higher productivity and survival on a competitive global market, companies engage in mergers, acquisitions and downsizing (Marks, 1994). In search for flexibility many tasks are being outsourced, the use of short and fixed term contracts is increasing (Murphy, 1999), and the willingness to make long-term investments in employee development is decreasing (Cascio, 1993; Pfeffer, 1997). The Swedish labor market is no exception, as the economic recession is continuing to materialize itself in higher unemployment rates, more people on short-term contracts, and fewer permanent employees in comparison to the same period in 2009 (SCB, 2010). Factors like these are likely to result in increased job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, & van Vuuren, 1991), a concept that has received considerable research attention (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). As experiences of insecurity also emerge in seemingly unthreatened employment situations (Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996), the absolute number of employees perceiving their job as threatened is substantial (De Witte, 2005).

The possible consequences of worries about job loss, so called quantitative job insecurity (Hellgren, Sverke, & Isaksson, 1999), are numerous, and many of them well documented (for reviews, see e.g., De Witte, 1999, 2005; Probst, 2005; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). The two job insecurity meta-analyses to date (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2002) have reported negative correlations with several attitudinal, behavioral and health related outcomes. The less extensive research on worries about losing valued job features, so-called qualitative job insecurity (Hellgren et al., 1999), is more inconclusive. However, recent findings suggest that this type of

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Data collection was conducted with financial support from the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research.
insecurity might have just as negative consequences as quantitative insecurity (De Witte et al., 2010). Following the advancements of knowledge, calls have been made for research aiming at identifying the processes by which job insecurity affect these possible outcomes (e.g., Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke et al., 2002).

As outlined in Figure 1, Sverke and colleagues (2002) categorized the included outcomes in their meta-analysis as either short-term and attitudinal (e.g., job satisfaction and trust in management) or as long-term and behavioral (e.g., turnover intention) or health related (e.g., psychological distress). A distinction was also made between reactions mainly having consequences for the individual (e.g., job satisfaction and psychological distress) or the organization (e.g., trust and turnover intention). As job insecurity appears to be more strongly related to the short-term than the long-term reactions (Sverke et al., 2002), it has been hypothesized that job insecurity only has direct effects on short-term reactions (i.e., attitudes) and that these in turn mediate the effect of insecurity on the long-term reactions (i.e., health-related and behavioral reactions) (Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003). A limited amount of research has tested the mediating effect of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the relationships between quantitative job insecurity and its proposed long-term outcomes turnover intention and psychological distress (e.g., Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003; Davy, Kinicki & Scheer, 1991, 1997; Probst, 2002; Størseth, 2006). It has been suggested that job satisfaction is the strongest mediator (Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003), indicating that job oriented attitudes could be more important mediators than organizationally oriented attitudes. Job insecurity has however also been shown to relate to trust in management (Sverke et al., 2002), which in turn has been pointed out as an antecedents of the long-term consequence turnover intention (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Thus, this variable could be a possible mediator.

This study aims at contributing to the current research literature in several ways. It investigates the mediated effects of both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity (see Figure 1), and is as such the first to include the qualitative dimension in a test of mediated effects. Also, it includes trust in management to find out if this attitude contributes to mediation in the relationship between job insecurity and long-term reactions. Lastly, it replicates the existing literature on the mediated effects of job insecurity, as well as the scarce literature on qualitative job insecurity and its consequences.

![Figure 1. The hypothesized relationships between all variables in this study, based on the model by Sverke and colleagues (2002).](image-url)
The Nature of Job Insecurity

Researchers’ understanding of job insecurity is largely inspired by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt’s (1984) theoretical article, where they defined the concept as “perceived powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation” (p. 438). In the wake of their work, job insecurity has been described as “expectations about continuity in a job situation” (Davy, Kinicki, & Scheck, 1997, p. 323) and as “an employee’s perception of a potential threat to continuity in his or her current job” (Heaney, Israel, & House, 1994, p. 1431). These definitions bear obvious similarities, and imply that job insecurity can be understood as something more than threats of job loss. Employees can perceive threats to both the job as such and to valued job features (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), such as career opportunities, positive pay development, and stimulating job content. Building on Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt’s (1984) theoretical work, Hellgren et al. (1999) made a distinction between quantitative (worries about losing the job as such) and qualitative (worries about losing valued job features) job insecurity, whose definitions are adopted in this study.

Implicit in Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt’s (1984) definition is first of all that job insecurity is understood as a perceptive phenomenon reflecting a subjective experience. This is in line with how a majority of academics understand the phenomenon (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). Hence, employees will perceive the level of threat to a job situation differently, although exposed to the same objective situation (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). It is however important to point out that insecurity is not just something that we construct in our heads (De Witte, 2005). Several researchers have pointed out macro variables as important antecedents of job insecurity (e.g., Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Hartley et al., 1991). This is in line with so-called transactional theories of stress (e.g., Katz & Kahn, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), where stress is regarded as a result of interaction between the environment and the individual. For example, Katz and Kahn (1978) make a distinction between the objective work environment and the individual’s experience of it, which they call the psychological environment. In support for a transactional view on job insecurity, a six-year longitudinal study in Finland found that the subjective perception of job insecurity correlated with the national percentage of unemployment (Nätti, Happonen, Kinnunen, & Mauno, 2005). Anderson and Pontusson (2007) identified quite a few macro level variables that affected job insecurity, including several labor market conditions.

There is moreover a general agreement that job insecurity should be considered a work stressor (Barling & Kelloway, 1996; De Witte, 1999; Näsvall, 2004), and that is why the focus on job insecurity research has been on traditional stress outcomes like attitudinal changes, behavioral reactions and psychological distress. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have defined stress as “a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being” (p. 19). Job insecurity is a perceived powerlessness to retain continuity in a job situation. In Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) stress perspective, it is claimed that the anticipation of a potentially stressful event is just as stressful as actually experiencing the event. In the case of job insecurity, this means that worries about losing the job or job features could be just as stressful as actual loss. The uncertainty in the situation makes it difficult to take action in order to do anything about what is stressful. According to Ashford et al. (1989), the lack of
predictability and control accompanying job insecurity is an important reason for its negative outcomes. This understanding of job insecurity is somewhat related to the demand-control model (Karasek, 1979), where psychological strain is seen as a result of too many environmental challenges in combination with a low level of control.

Job insecurity is also an **involuntary threat** to the employment situation. The concept has actually been described as a discrepancy between the preferred and experienced level of security (Hartley et al., 1991). Therefore, a person who has chosen a temporary employment because it best suits his or her life situation is by definition not job insecure (De Witte, 2005). Linking this to Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) stress theory, an environmental demand like job insecurity must first through primary appraisal be considered as an obstacle on our way toward some valued goal, or as in interference with our core values, if it is to be appraised as a threat (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Thus, both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity are potentially important stressors, depending on the individual’s goals and values. In the Conservation of Resources theory, Hobfoll (1989) claim that people strive to retain, protect, and build resources, and that a potential or actual loss of these valued resources is threatening and stressful. Resources may be objects (e.g. a home), personal characteristics (e.g. positive outlook), conditions (e.g., financial security, employment, status) and so-called energies (e.g., time, knowledge). In this list one can easily identify resources that are potentially threatened both when an employee have worries about losing the job and valued job features. In addition, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also claim that an individual through secondary appraisal considers his or her options for doing something about the stressful person-environment relationship (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Because of the unpredictability imminent in job insecurity, these options are often considered as few.

Another rather common way of explaining the effects of job insecurity and its consequences is through psychological contract theory (e.g., De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006; De Witte et al., 2008). This approach has recently been used as an argument to why both types of job insecurity could be equally related to outcomes (De Witte et al., 2010). Psychological contracts are “individual beliefs in a reciprocal obligation between the individual and the organization” (Rousseau, 1989, p. 121). Hence, subjectivity and perceptions are essential here as in transactional stress theories. In the case of job insecurity, an employee might feel that he or she should be able to attain secure employment with career opportunities and possibilities for development in return for effort and loyalty. When such subjective expectations are not met, the psychological contract is breached, and a possible result is a feeling of betrayal (Rousseau, 1989). Moreover, Morrison and Robinson (1997) made a distinction between psychological contract breach and violation. While breach should be understood as a cognitive evaluation of contract fulfillment, violation is a more affective and emotional experience of disappointment, anger, frustration and resentment resulting from contract breach. As contract breach or violation is a combination of unmet expectations and damage to the relationship between the employee and the organization (Rousseau, 1989), these reactions are understandable. Two meta-analyses have supported negative relationships between psychological contract breach and attitudes as job satisfaction and trust in management (Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van der Velde, 2008; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, and Bravo, 2007). More generally, breach is argued to affect the employees’ contribution to the organization in a negative way (Robinson, 1996).
Job insecurity and outcomes

In their multi-stage model of psychosocial illness causation in the workplace, Katz and Kahn (1978) claim that a psychologically stressful environment first may lead to affective and behavioral responses, and that these in turn may develop into psychological distress and physical ill health. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have a similar stage model of stress reactions, although they emphasize the need for caution when interpreting the arrows in it. In this model, positive or negative feelings and physiological changes are termed immediate effects, while well-being and somatic ill health are called long-term effects. Beehr and Newman (1978) made a distinction between immediate, short-term and long-term stress reactions, and classified these reactions as having consequences for either the individual or the organization. Building on models like these, both Sverke and colleagues (2002) and Näswall (2004) argue that attitudinal changes are possible short-term reactions to job insecurity, while turnover intention and ill health are potential long-term reactions. These distinctions have been adopted by other researchers (e.g., Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003; Storseth, 2006), and make the foundation for the model to be tested in this study.

Attitudes represent summary evaluations of psychological objects, and the multi-component view of these evaluations suggests that they are influenced by both cognitions and affect (Ajzen, 2001). The presentation of job insecurity as a work stressor and psychological contract breach, made it clear that job insecurity is likely to be followed by negative emotions as well as negative evaluations of the job and the employer. A central aspect in Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) stress theory is coping, which they describe as cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific demands that exceed the resources of a person. Changed attitudes towards the job and organization is in this view a form of emotion-focused coping, which in turn is a way of dealing with stress without changing the situation. The attitude job satisfaction is the most investigated outcome of quantitative job insecurity (De Witte, 1999), and is defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976, p. 1300). Following the distinction made by Sverke et al. (2002), this is a possible short-term and individually oriented reaction to job insecurity. Both quantitative (e.g., Ashford et al., 1989; Rosenblatt & Ruvio, 1996) and qualitative (e.g., De Witte et al., 2010; Hellgren et al., 1999) job insecurity have been found to be associated with decreased job satisfaction.

Trust has in various forms gained considerable interest in the social sciences (Kramer, 1999). This organizationally oriented short-term reaction (Sverke et al., 2002) has however not received the same level of interest in the specific field of job insecurity research (Sverke et al., 2002), and more research is therefore needed (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 2010). Trust is defined as “one’s expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another’s future actions will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to one’s interests” (Robinson, 1996, p. 576). The lack of predictability and control, as well as the perceived powerlessness, imminent in job insecurity, can possibly result in distrust in management. Psychological contract breach has shown to be an antecedent of decreased trust in management (Robinson, 1996), and research findings also support a negative relationship between both types of job insecurity and this attitude (e.g., Borg & Elizur, 1992).
The possible individual long-term reaction to job insecurity (Sverke et al. 2002) included in this study is psychological distress. Mirowsky and Ross (2003) describe psychological distress as “the unpleasant subjective states of depression and anxiety, which have both emotional and physiological manifestations” (p. 8). In the present study, a non-psychiatric understanding of the concept is applied. There is ample support from job insecurity research that quantitative job insecurity is positively related to psychological distress (e.g., Ashford et al., 1989; De Witte et al., 2010; De Witte, 1999; Heaney et al., 1994; Hellgren et al., 1999; Hellgren & Sverke, 2003), and there are also some support for a relationship between qualitative job insecurity and this outcome (e.g., De Witte et al., 2010; Hellgren et al., 1999).

While psychological distress is a result of not being able to cope with job insecurity, the possible long-term organizational outcome of job insecurity, turnover intention, can be explained as a coping strategy. Following Lazarus and Folkman (1984), withdrawal cognitions like turnover intention can be understood as a form of problem-focused coping that takes away the stressful aspect of the situation. In an earlier conceptualization of psychological contract, Schein (1980) described contract breach as a powerful determinant of behavior in organizations (p. 24), and empirical findings also suggest a strong association between psychological contract violation and turnover intention (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Following the theoretical framework adopted in this article, unpredictability and frustration resulting from job insecurity, are two of many possible reasons why job insecurity could result in turnover intentions. A link between both quantitative (e.g., Davy et al., 1997; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995; Hartley et al., 1991) and qualitative (e.g., Hellgren et al., 1999) job insecurity has been supported by previous research.

Although scholars have argued for the importance of including the qualitative dimension when investigating the consequences of job insecurity (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), the quantitative dimension is commonly assumed to be the stronger of the two (De Witte, 1999). The latent deprivation model (Jahoda, 1982) is frequently mentioned as theoretical support for this assumption, suggesting that a threat of unemployment constitutes a possibility for frustration of needs, such as for structure, social contact outside the family and income. As there is no direct threat to these needs for individuals who experience qualitative job insecurity, the consequences of this dimension is thought to be less severe. Ashford et al. (1989) argued that the two job insecurity dimensions could have different effect on outcomes, and even effect different outcomes. The empirical findings are not all conclusive. For example, Reisel and Banai (2002) identified the strongest relationships between quantitative job insecurity and all outcomes. On the other hand, Roskies and Louis-Guerin (1990) identified qualitative job insecurity as the most important predictor of psychological distress and work commitment. Lee, Bobko and Chen (2006) found that qualitative job insecurity was negatively related to job satisfaction, trust and intention to stay, while quantitative job insecurity did not exhibit any significant relationships. As a compromise between these findings, Hellgren and colleagues (1999) found that the quantitative dimension explained most variance in the long-term outcomes, while the qualitative dimension accounted for most variation in the short-term outcomes. However, a recent study by De Witte and colleagues (2010) found support for the notion that the two types of job insecurity are stressors of almost equal importance. They reported that both quantitative
and qualitative job insecurity added explained variance in job satisfaction and psychological distress over and beyond demographics, negative affectivity and job characteristics. Based on the theoretical framework of this study and the empirical findings suggesting a relationship between both types of job insecurity and the includes outcomes, it is hypothesized that,

Hypothesis 1. Quantitative (H1a) and qualitative (H1b) job insecurity are negatively related to the short-term reactions job satisfaction and trust in management.

Hypothesis 2. Quantitative (H2a) and qualitative (H2b) job insecurity are positively related to the long-term reactions turnover intention and psychological distress.

The mediating effect of job satisfaction and trust in management

Theoretical arguments and empirical findings, then, support the notion that both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity is associated with several attitudinal, behavioral and health related reactions. Stage models of stress reactions (e.g., Katz & Kahn, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) even suggest that attitudinal changes are short-term reactions, while long-term stress could manifest itself in behavioral and health related reactions. Despite this, it is not clear if short-term reactions to stressors such as job insecurity are expected to develop into long-term reactions, or if long-term reactions only are assumed to take more time to develop. The question is therefore if the short-term reactions mediate the relationship between work stress and the long-term reactions. There is some theoretical and empirical support suggesting mediation.

The ability of attitudes to predict behavioral intentions and overt behavior is an important focus in theory and research (Ajzen, 2001). More specifically, it has been pointed out that reduced job satisfaction is an important antecedent of turnover intention (Mobley, 1977), and researchers have consistently found support for this relationship through numerous meta-analyses (e.g., Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Tett & Meyer, 1993). There are also support for a connection between job insecurity and psychological distress. For example, Karasek and Theorell (1990) refer to a number of studies designed to test their model of job strain, that have identified pathways from perceived stress, through job dissatisfaction, to more general affective responses as feelings of depression, irritation and anxiety. Such findings have led authors to propose a spillover hypothesis of strain, where job related strain (e.g., job dissatisfaction) is thought to develop into more general psychological distress (Näswall, 2004). Adding job insecurity to this picture, Davy, Kinicki and Scheck (1991) found support for a mediated model where job security was negatively related to turnover intention through job satisfaction, which in turn was associated with organizational commitment. The same researchers replicated these findings some years later with results from two studies (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1997). In contrast to these studies, Probst (2002) tested job satisfaction as an immediate mediator between job insecurity and different outcomes. She found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between job security and psychological distress, but not between job security and turnover intentions. Chirumbolo and Hellgren (2003) extended this model, and tested it in four European countries. Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment were included as immediate mediators in the relationship
between job insecurity and the long-term reactions turnover intentions and psychological distress. They found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment fully mediated the relationship between job insecurity and turnover intention, as well as support for mediation of the relationship between job insecurity and psychological distress. Their results even suggest that job satisfaction was a far more important mediator than organizational commitment. Although Davy and colleagues (1991, 1997) used a measure of job insecurity including items reflecting both threats to the job and job features, the mediated effects of qualitative job insecurity has not yet been tested properly. In addition, this also means that only a small number of studies have used a real quantitative job insecurity measure when investigating mediated effects.

Trust in management is generally regarded as a key concept in theory on employment relationships (Guest, 2004). Robinson (1996) argued that psychological contract breach might result in distrust, and an experience of not being taken care of by the employer. These beliefs are thought to have a strong negative effect on employees’ behavioral intentions toward the organization (e.g., Robinson, 1996). Meta-analytic results have also shown that distrust in management is an antecedent of turnover intention (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Assuming that both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity may be perceived as psychological contract breach, it is likely that trust in management may function as a mediator between job insecurity and turnover intention. In sociological studies, it is common to treat so-called generalized trust as an aspect of social capital (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001). Trust has as such shown to be a powerful predictor of different outcomes. Social capital has for example been described as “a web of cooperative relationships between citizens, high levels of interpersonal trust, and strong norms of reciprocity and mutual aid” (Veenstra, 2005). While this represent a macro level approach to social capital, it also suggest that it can be measured and have meaning on an individual level. Yang (2007) describes individual social capital as “features of social relations that can be used by individual members as means for achieving ends” (p. 22). He further understands social relations as a tool for obtaining resources, which he in turn exemplifies by psychological comfort. This gives some support to the hypothesis that trust in management could be a mediator in the relationship between job insecurity and psychological distress. An important aspect of trust in management is allowing oneself to be vulnerable (Robinson, 1996). It could be that distrust, and in turn unwillingness to be vulnerable, might make employees less likely to ask for help and support in stressful situations. Support is in turn an important buffer to stress in the extended Job Demand-Control Model (Karasek & Theorell, 1990), and seeking, obtaining and using social support is also a form of social coping in stressful situations (Lazarus, 1999). In this light, lack of trust in management might mediate the effect of job insecurity on psychological distress. Based on the previous discussion it is hypothesized that,

Hypothesis 3. Job satisfaction and trust in management are negatively related to turnover intention and psychological distress.

Hypothesis 4. Job satisfaction and trust in management mediate the relationships between quantitative (H4a) and qualitative (H4b) job insecurity and turnover intention.
Hypothesis 5. Job satisfaction and trust in management mediate the relationships between quantitative (H5a) and qualitative (H5b) job insecurity and psychological distress.

Methods

Sample and procedure
This study makes use of questionnaire data collected for the ongoing research project “Job insecurity from a gender perspective” at the Department of Psychology at Stockholm University. Data collection was conducted between August and November 2009. The questionnaire was sent via postal services to all 806 employees working at a Swedish accounting firm. They received the questionnaire at their home addresses, together with one covering letter from the organization’s headquarters encouraging participation, as well as a covering letter from the research group stressing confidentiality and voluntary participation. A total of 579 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a response rate of 71.8 percent. After listwise deletion of missing data the effective sample was reduced to 549 employees, yielding an internal attrition of 5.2 percent. No imputation of missing data was conducted, as this number is in parity with the generally recommended 5 percent limit for such corrections (Little & Rubin, 1987). The final sample consisted of 355 women (61.3 %) and the mean age was 41.5 (SD=11.4) years. Organizational tenure in the sample was 6.7 (SD=6.8) years, and 71.4 percent had completed education on university or university college level.

Measures
All psychological constructs were measured using multiple indicator scales. Unless stated otherwise, participants reported their answers on a Likert type scale format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scales’ internal consistencies (estimated using Cronbach’s alpha coefficients) were all satisfactory.

Job insecurity. Quantitative job insecurity was measured using three items (α = .95) developed by Hellgren and colleagues (1999). These items (e.g., “I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to”) capture a worry about the continuity of the job. A four-item scale (α = .79), also developed by Hellgren and colleagues (1999), was used to measure qualitative job insecurity. Items (e.g., “I feel worried about my career development within the organization”) reflect worries about losing valued job features.

Short-term outcomes. Job satisfaction was tapped using three items (α = .89) adopted from Brayfield and Rothe (1951), and developed by Hellgren, Sjöberg, and Sverke (1997). Items reflect the respondent’s overall satisfaction with his or her job, and a sample item is “I am satisfied with my job”. Five items (α = .94) based on Robinson (1996) were used to capture trust in management. The scale captures the employee’s perception of the employer’s trustworthiness, and a sample item is “I can expect my employer to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion”.

Long-term outcomes. Turnover intention was measured with three items (α = .83) taken from different propensity-to-leave scales and slightly modified from questions into
statements by Sjöberg and Sverke (2000). A sample item is “If I was completely free to choose I would leave this job”. The 12-item version of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1979) was used to assess psychological distress. This is a test developed for detection of non-psychiatric disorders, and has previously been used in job insecurity research (e.g., De Witte et al., 2010; Hellgren et al., 1999). On a Likert type scale format anchored with response alternatives from 0 (never) to 3 (always), the respondents were for example asked to indicate how often the last two weeks they had “Lost much sleep over worry”, “Felt capable of making decisions about things” (reverse coded), and “Been feeling unhappy and depressed” ($\alpha = .84$).

**Control variables.** Gender, age and tenure were included as control variables. A dummy variable was computed for gender, where women were coded 0 and men were coded 1. Age and tenure was measured in years.

**Analyses**

Ordinary least square (OLS) regressions were used to test if quantitative and qualitative job insecurity are related to the included short and long-term consequences (Hypotheses 1 and 2), and to see if job satisfaction and trust in management are related to the long-term reactions (Hypothesis 3). The possible mediated effect of the short-term reactions in the relationships between job insecurity and the long-term reactions (Hypotheses 4 and 5) were tested in accordance with Preacher and Hayes’ (2004, 2008) recommendations. This involves combining the product of coefficient approach with bootstrap analysis. The product of coefficient approach is based on the causal step hypothesis (Baron & Kenny, 1986), which states that a mediating effect has been identified if the effect of $X$ on $Y$ decreases by a non-trivial amount after the inclusion of $M$ in an ordinary least square (OLS) regression analysis. As this approach only focuses on direct effects of all variables ($a$ and $b$ paths in Figure 1), it is preferably complemented with a Sobel test (Sobel, 1982). This is used to more directly testing the significance of indirect effects by focusing on the product of $a$ and $b$ paths. The approach described by Baron and Kenny is however biased, as there is a built-in assumption of normally distributed data in these analyses. This is rarely the case, especially when testing indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). It has also been pointed out that this approach in most cases has low statistical power, and that it is vulnerable to Type-I and Type-II error (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) instead recommend the use of bootstrapping, a non-parametric re-sampling procedure, for estimation of indirect effects and confidence intervals for significance testing. As bootstrapping also makes it possible to estimate individual indirect effects, and even contrasts among them, this procedure has many advantages compared to the more traditional methods.

In accordance with recommendations by Preacher and Hayes (2008), and following the product of coefficient approach, point estimates for the total effect ($c$ path in Figure 1) and direct effect ($c’$ path in Figure 1) of job insecurity were computed, as well as the indirect effects ($ab$ paths in Figure 1) through job satisfaction and trust in management. Standard errors for all effects and $t$-values for the total and direct effects were also computed for significance testing. A decrease in the direct effect of job insecurity compared to the total effect indicates mediation. Five thousand bootstrap samples were then drawn in order to compute point estimates and bias corrected and accelerated
confidence intervals for the indirect effects and contrast effects. If a confidence interval contain zero, the effect is non-significant. A measure of adjusted $R^2$ was also calculated in order to determine how much variance in the outcome variables the model accounts for. OLS regression analyses were performed using built-in functions in SPSS 17, while calculations of indirect effects were performed using Preacher and Hayes’ (2008) SPSS macro for multiple mediator models. As two predictors and two outcome variables are included in this study and the macro only allows one $X$ and $Y$ variable at a time, four separate analyses were conducted.

![Diagram: Mediation Model](image)

Figure 2. A multiple mediation model of the relationship between job insecurity and its proposed long-term consequences turnover intention and psychological distress.

Results

Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for all variables in this study are presented in Table 1. The two job insecurity dimensions correlated strongly, as did the two proposed mediators. The three control variables correlated weakly or moderately with all variables, except for non-significant relationships between tenure and job satisfaction, trust in management and turnover intention. The pattern of relationships between job insecurity and the hypothesized outcomes were in line with predictions. Both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity related negatively to job satisfaction and trust in management, and positively to turnover intention and psychological distress. Job satisfaction and trust in management correlated strongly and negatively with turnover intention and psychological distress. Hence, the requirements for further inferential analysis were met.

In support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b, all $a$ paths in the mediation analyses were significant. Quantitative job insecurity (H1a) had a negative effect on both job satisfaction ($B = -.22, t = -5.81, p < .001$) and trust in management ($B = -.31, t = -8.15, p < .001$). Qualitative job insecurity (H1b) had a strong negative effect on job satisfaction ($B = -61, t = -18.35, p < .001$) and trust in management ($B = -.59, t = -16.20, p < .001$). As shown in Table 2 and 3, all total effects were significant. Hence, also Hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported, as quantitative and qualitative job insecurity was related to turnover intention and psychological distress. Tables 2 and 3 also show that job satisfaction was a significant predictor of both turnover intention and psychological distress.
Table 1. Descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients, and Pearson product-moment correlations between all variables in the study.

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<td>3. Organizational Tenure</td>
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<td>4. Quantitative JI</td>
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<td>1.04</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>-22&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-28&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-24&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Qualitative JI</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>-28&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-22&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-20&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.54&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.13&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.11&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-27&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-63&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Organizational Trust</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.09&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.11&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-35&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-58&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.66&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Turnover Intention</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-12&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-12&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.27&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.60&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.78&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.58&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Psychological Distress</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>-.13&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.13&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.12&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.36&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.44&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.49&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.41&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=549.  *p < .05;  **p < .01 (two-tailed);  <sup>a</sup>scale range from 1 to 5, except for Psychological Distress (0-3), gender (woman = 0, man = 1) and age and tenure (years).
Table 2. Mediation of the effect of quantitative and qualitative job insecurity on turnover intention through job satisfaction and trust in management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Quantitative Job Insecurity</th>
<th>Qualitative Job Insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stand. coeff.</td>
<td>Unstand. coeff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (man)</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.69***</td>
<td>-0.75***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>-0.11**</td>
<td>-0.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job insecurity</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td><strong>0.04</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indirect effects of Job Insecurity (Bootstrapping)**

- Through Job satisfaction (JS): 0.16 0.04 0.10 0.23 0.41 0.04 0.33 0.49
- Through Trust: 0.04 0.02 0.01 0.08 0.05 0.03 -0.003 0.11
- Contrast JS vs. Trust: 0.13 0.04 0.05 0.21 0.37 0.06 0.23 0.48
- Total indirect effect: **0.20** 0.04 0.13 0.27 **0.46** 0.04 0.40 0.53

**Total effect of Job Insecurity**

- Direct & Total indirect effect: **0.24*** 0.04 **0.62*** 0.04
- R² adj.: **0.61*** 0.63***

N=549. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05; effects of job insecurity in bold; aβ-weights from OLS regression analyses; b for indirect effects bootstrap point estimates are given; c BCa=bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals; d 5000 bootstrap samples; e proportion of total variance in Turnover intention accounted for by the hypothesized model.
Table 3. Mediation of the effect of quantitative and qualitative job insecurity on psychological distress through job satisfaction and trust in management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regression weights for all variables</th>
<th>Quantitative Job Insecurity</th>
<th>Qualitative Job Insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard. coeff.</td>
<td>Unstandard. coeff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (man)</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.37***</td>
<td>-0.16***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job insecurity</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect effects of Job Insecurity (Bootstrapping^d)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Job satisfaction (JS)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Trust</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast JS vs. Trust</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total indirect effect</td>
<td><strong>0.05</strong></td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total effect of Job Insecurity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct &amp; Total indirect effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=549. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05; effects of job insecurity in bold; ^β-weights from OLS regression analyses; ^b for indirect effects bootstrap point estimates are given; ^c BCa=bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals; ^d 5000 bootstrap samples; ^e proportion of total variance in Psychological distress accounted for by the hypothesized model.
distress, while trust in management only predicted turnover intention. Hypothesis 3 was therefore partly supported.

The direct and mediated effects of job insecurity on turnover intention are presented in Table 2. Quantitative job insecurity had a significant total effect on turnover intention, while the direct effect was not significant. Hence, the results suggest full mediation. Both indirect effects through job satisfaction and trust in management were significant, but job satisfaction stood out as the most important mediator. This was also supported by a significant contrast effect. However, results supported Hypothesis 4a. With qualitative job insecurity as a predictor of turnover intention, the significant total effect was higher than for the quantitative dimension. The direct effect was significant but markedly lower than the total effect, suggesting partial mediation. Hypothesis 4b was however only partly supported, as the only significant indirect effect was through job satisfaction.

Results from the two analyses predicting psychological distress are presented in Table 3. As with turnover intention, quantitative job insecurity had a significant total effect on psychological distress. The significant direct effect was smaller, suggesting partial mediation. As the only indirect effect was identified through job satisfaction, Hypothesis 5a was partially supported. Also qualitative job insecurity had a significant total effect on psychological distress. Although this effect was larger than with the quantitative dimension as predictor, the difference was not as big as when predicting turnover intention. The significant direct effect was lower than the total effect, reflecting partial mediation. As in the preceding analysis, only job satisfaction was a significant mediator. Hypothesis 5b was therefore partially supported. It is also worth noting that a smaller part of the total effect of job insecurity on psychological distress was attributable to indirect effects, compared to the effect of job insecurity on turnover intention.

Discussion

The aim of this study was three-fold. First, it investigated the relationships between quantitative and qualitative job insecurity and their proposed short-term outcomes job satisfaction and trust in management, and long-term outcomes turnover intention and psychological distress (Hypothesis 1 and 2). It also tested if job satisfaction and trust in management are related to turnover intention and psychological distress (Hypothesis 3). Finally, and most importantly, this study aimed at testing to what extent job satisfaction and trust in management mediate the relationships between the two types of job insecurity and their proposed long-term outcomes turnover intention and psychological distress (Hypothesis 4 and 5). The results suggest that quantitative and qualitative job insecurity are negatively related to both job satisfaction and trust in management, as well as positively related to the two long-term reactions turnover intention and psychological distress. Job satisfaction was strongly and negatively related to both turnover intention and psychological distress, while trust in management only had a small negative relationship with turnover intention. Moreover, job satisfaction was a significant mediator in the relationship between job insecurity and both turnover intention and psychological distress, while trust in management only exhibited a small
mediating effect between quantitative job insecurity and turnover intention. The control variables gender, age and tenure did not reach significance level in any of the analyses.

**Job insecurity and outcomes**

As predicted, quantitative job insecurity was negatively related to job satisfaction and trust in management, and positively related to turnover intention and psychological distress. These findings suggest that job insecurity may have negative consequences for both the individual (psychological distress) and the organization (propensity to leave), and are in line with both meta-analyses on job insecurity and outcomes published to date (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke et al., 2002). As such, worries about job loss continue to materialize themselves as an important work stressor. Qualitative job insecurity exhibited the same pattern of relationships with the outcome variables, also in line with predictions. Although empirical findings for this dimension are not as clear as for quantitative job insecurity (De Witte et al., 2010), significant relationships have earlier been found with job satisfaction (e.g., Ashford et al., 1989; Hellgren et al., 1999), trust (e.g., Borg & Elizur, 1992), turnover intention (e.g., Hellgren et al., 1999) and psychological distress (e.g., Hellgren et al., 1999). The results from this study thus differ from the articles that have reported weak (Hellgren et al., 1999) or non-significant (Reisel & Banai, 2002) relationships between qualitative job insecurity and different outcomes. They also contrast Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti, and Happonen’s (2000) suggestion that the job feature subscales be excluded from measures of job insecurity. Instead, the present results suggest that both types of job insecurity are important work stressors, much in line with Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt’s (1984) view on job insecurity, as well as recent findings by De Witte and colleagues (2010).

However, still somewhat surprising, the present results suggest that qualitative job insecurity is the most important predictor of negative outcomes of those included in this study. The fact that qualitative job insecurity could explain more variance than quantitative job insecurity in outcomes finds some support in previous research. For example, Lee, Bobko and Chen (2006) identified qualitative job insecurity as the most important predictor of decrease in job satisfaction, trust in management and intention to stay. Qualitative job insecurity was also the only insecurity dimension having significant effect on somatic health complaints. Hellgren and colleagues (1999) suggested based on their own results, that qualitative job insecurity might mainly affect employees’ attitudes, while quantitative job insecurity might be the best predictor of more long-term reactions. The results presented here suggest that this need not be the case.

There are some possible explanations to why qualitative job insecurity was identified as such an important predictor of negative outcomes. Building on the notion that people wish to create a world that will provide them with pleasure and success, Hobfoll (1989) argue in his Conservation of Resources theory that people strive to retain, protect, and build resources. He further claims that a potential loss of these resources is stressful. Qualitative job insecurity, as measured in this study, reflects worries about getting less stimulating job content in the future, not facing a positive pay development and not having career opportunities in the organization. In Hobfoll’s terms this could be understood as threats to resources, or as a barrier to building on resources, like for example knowledge and status. Qualitative job insecurity could probably also result in decreased Perceived investment in employee development, a concept introduced by Lee
and Bruvold (2003). This is described as the employees’ evaluation of how interested their employer is in their growth at work by helping them to identify and obtain new skills and competencies. These assessments have shown to be related to work and organizational attitudes and turnover intention (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). A central aspect of Perceived investment in employee development is to what extent the employees’ experience that the employer cares about their employability, which in turn also could serve as an explanation to the present findings. Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford (2004) argue that employability is becoming increasingly important to employees because of the pace of change in the economy. Thus, it could be stressful for employees to perceive future opportunities to maintain or increase their employability as limited.

The mediating effect of job satisfaction and trust in management
The fact that job satisfaction was an important predictor of turnover intention was expected, as support for this relationship has been found in several meta-analyses (e.g., Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Similarly, the relatively strong relationship between job satisfaction and psychological distress was not surprising. As pointed out by Näswall (2004) in her stress perspective on job insecurity, there is agreement among researchers on the spillover hypothesis of strain. This hypothesis states that job related strain is likely to develop into more generalized strain if exposure to the stressor continues. In the present study, the results suggest that negative effects of job insecurity on job satisfaction might develop into, or spill over, to psychological distress. The finding that trust in management had a significant relation to turnover intention is also in line with predictions, but the fact that this association was quite weak is unexpected. They actually run contrary to meta-analytic results suggesting that trust in management is an important antecedent of turnover intention (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The non-significant relationship between trust in management and psychological distress were also unexpected. Results from the mediation analyses were as predicted, and much in line with earlier research. Chirumbolo and Hellgren (2003) identified a fully mediated effect of quantitative job insecurity on turnover intention through job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the present study, also qualitative job insecurity had a strong indirect effect on turnover intention. This indicates that the two types of job insecurity affect outcomes through the same processes, and should also be taken as encouragement to continue investigating mediated effects of qualitative job insecurity. It is also worth noting that there was no obvious difference in correlation magnitudes between job insecurity and its short and long-term outcomes. This is not in line with the results from Sverke and colleagues’ (2002) meta-analysis, where job insecurity correlated stronger with short-term reactions than long-term reactions. Although it was this finding that inspired Chirumbolo and Hellgren (2003) to investigate indirect effects of job insecurity, the present study show that it is possible to find mediated effects without such a preliminary indication.

The finding that job satisfaction was a superior predictor of turnover intention compared to trust in management has several possible explanations. For example, Harrison, Newman, and Roth (2006) have argued, and found empirical support for, the notion that one overall job attitude containing job satisfaction and organizational commitment is a better predictor of behavior than specific attitudes. At the same time, this so-called attitude-engagement model serves as a possible explanation to why job satisfaction also was a superior mediator compared to trust in management. Another interpretation of the
finding that job satisfaction was of such importance for turnover intention may be that the propensity to leave is mainly a way to withdraw from the job and not from the organization. Concerning the effects of job insecurity on psychological distress, only job satisfaction was a significant mediator. It could be that an overall attitude is a better predictor of health related outcomes like psychological distress as well. In line with Chirumbolo and Hellgren’s (2003) results, the effect of job insecurity on psychological distress was partially mediated. This was also a tendency in Chirumbolo and Hellgren’s (2003) study. While short-term attitudinal reactions seem to be important mediators of the effect of job insecurity on turnover intention, the present results and earlier findings (Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003) suggest that other variables than attitudes play a role in the prediction of psychological distress.

In the present study, transactional theories of stress (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and psychological contract theory (Rousseau, 1989) were used to argue why both types of job insecurity should relate to all outcome variables included in this study. Overall, the results are in accordance with this theoretical framework. It seems like both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity may lead to short-term attitudinal reactions, and that these are important in the development of more long-term reactions. However, in line with earlier research (Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003) job satisfaction stood out as the most important mediator of the effect of job insecurity on both turnover intention and psychological distress. One possible interpretation of these results is that the organizationally oriented attitudes, like organizational commitment and trust in management, have less predictive power than the individually oriented attitudes on the long-term reactions to job insecurity.

**Limitations and directions for future research**

Some sample and organization characteristics can have affected the generalizability of the results presented in this study. The respondents reported low average levels on both job insecurity dimensions. Overall, they also scored low on turnover intention and psychological distress, while mean levels of job satisfaction and trust in management were high. It could be that the indirect effects would look different in job situations with high job insecurity. Process models like the one tested here should therefore also be applied in situations with obvious objective threats to the employment situation. Data for this study was also collected in an accounting firm, and most respondents were highly educated. This may have affected the results of this study. As research suggests that employees with low education experience higher levels of job insecurity than highly educated employees (De Witte & Näswall, 2003), process models of job insecurity and its outcomes should be tested also on blue-collar workers in the future.

The process model tested here included hypothesized short and long-term reactions to job insecurity, implying that job insecurity may lead to the short-term reactions, and that these in turn may develop into long-term reactions. However, the analyses were based on cross-sectional data, thus limiting causal interpretation. Support for causality has however been presented for the direct linkages between quantitative job insecurity and outcomes (e.g., Dekker & Shaufeli, 1995; Hellgren & Sverke, 2003). To date, such findings do not exist for qualitative job insecurity. Regarding indirect effects of job insecurity, Davy, Kinicki and Scheck (1991) found longitudinal support for a mediated effect of job satisfaction and organizational commitment between job insecurity and
turnover intention. However, full support for such a three-stage model was not obtained, as results were based on two waves of data collection. Hence, future research should preferably use three-wave longitudinal designs when testing indirect effects of job insecurity.

It is also important to point out that no test of the relative strength of quantitative and qualitative job insecurity was conducted. The Preacher and Hayes (2008) macro used for the analyses only allows inclusion of one independent and one dependent variable at a time. Thus, when results are discussed in terms of relative strength of the two job insecurity dimensions, they should be taken as indications. However, support for the notion that qualitative job insecurity can have the most negative short and long-term effects, have been found in earlier investigations of relative strength of quantitative and qualitative job insecurity (Lee, Bobko, & Chen, 2006). Still, future research should apply statistical techniques like structural equation modeling, in order to get a more correct picture of the two dimensions’ relative predictive power in mediated models. Further, job satisfaction was an important predictor of both turnover intention and psychological distress. However, job insecurity only accounted for a relatively small part of the variance in job satisfaction. This suggests that there are other factors having impact on attitudes and long-term outcomes. For example, De Witte et al. (2010) recently controlled for socio-demographics, negative affectivity and several job characteristics when testing the effect of job insecurity. It is possible that the total effect quota explained by indirect effects would change by including more control variables. Future studies should therefore include more control variables to find out if that can increase the proportion of indirect effects relative to the total effects of job insecurity on long-term outcomes.

Conclusion

The present study brings three main contributions to job insecurity research. It replicates parts of the relatively scarce literature on qualitative job insecurity and outcomes. It also answers calls for more research on job insecurity and trust in management (Sverke et al., 2002). Finally, it adds qualitative job insecurity to a line of research investigating job insecurity and mediated relationships with turnover intention and psychological distress (e.g., Chirumbolo & Hellgren 2003; Davy, Kinicki, & Scheck, 1991; 1997; Probst, 2002; Størseth, 2006). The results show that both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity are related to job satisfaction, trust in management, turnover intention and psychological distress. Contrary to the popular view that quantitative job insecurity has the strongest negative consequences of the two dimensions, the results even suggest that qualitative job insecurity can have more negative consequences than quantitative job insecurity. Further, job satisfaction was strongly related to both turnover intention and psychological distress, while trust in management only had a small effect on turnover intention. Most importantly, job satisfaction was a strong mediator in the relationship between job insecurity and both turnover intention and psychological distress, while trust in management only had a small mediating effect between quantitative job insecurity and turnover intention. As the prevalence of job insecurity today is significant, it is important to get a better understanding of how job insecurity may lead to negative consequences. This study does so by suggesting that both quantitative and qualitative job insecurity may lead to short-term attitudinal reactions, and that these in turn may develop into long-term reactions with consequences for both the individual
and the organization. The results also suggest that the individually oriented attitudinal reactions may have a more important role in this development of long-term consequences, than the organizationally oriented attitudes. Apart from adding to the existing job insecurity literature, the results from this study present several new opportunities for future investigations to even further extend our understanding of the complex mechanisms of job insecurity.

References


Hellgren, J., Sverke, M., & Isaksson, K. (1999). A two-dimensional approach to job insecurity:


