Socio-Economic Security, Justice and the Psychology of Social Relationships

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Abstract

This review was undertaken as part of the ILO InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security. The available research literature is overwhelmingly devoted to job security but a growing body of work has looked at the security of diverse job features and, more recently, issues of work intensification. Insecurity is seen as a subjective phenomenon to be distinguished from various aspects of employment stability. The empirical evidence makes it clear that insecurity in the workplace has serious negative consequences for personal health and well-being, and for the efficient and productive functioning of organizations.

The same consequences are involved in layoffs, and fairness perceptions are important moderators of responses. Fairness also impinges on the same basic set of organizational variables as insecurity and both can be seen as threats to relationships in the workplace. Trust, too, is a significant moderator of responses, and there is sufficient overlap in the empirical studies to justify the conclusion that insecurity is an issue of fundamental importance to social justice.

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Introduction

This paper is based upon the premiss that socio-psychological studies of distributive justice can illuminate our understanding of work-related security and insecurity. The argument is that although industrial psychology has already taught us much about the phenomenon of job security, theories about the psychology of distributive justice enable us to comprehend the broader, societal implications of job security, and link the latter to other forms of socio-economic security.

Studies of perceptions of, and responses to, distributive issues have demonstrated that different patterns of distribution of salient resources both define, and indeed constitute the social relationships in a group, community or society. Participating in a distribution of some valued good constitutes group membership or citizenship and the different types of security mentioned above can be seen as membership of different groups within society. The distribution acts through mediation

Distributions have their effects through the functioning of psychologically linked sets of norms, arrays of knowledge, which are called in play when one of the elements is cued in the environment, thus at one and the same time directing the response of the member, and giving information about that group and what can be expected within its boundaries.

Insofar as job security is a salient and desirable social good, the distribution thereof has the potential to define the nature of citizenship in our society.

1. What is job security?

Standing (1999) discusses several forms of socio-economic security:

- **job security** (security in the possession of a particular niche in the labour market, i.e. a specific post or career path and its job attributes)
- **labour market security** (security of finding a job)
- **employment security** (security of institutional framework for employment, e.g. against arbitrary employment procedures)
- **work security** (safety at work, working conditions)
- **skill reproduction security** (opportunities to gain and retain skills);
- **representation security** (having a voice in the procedures, both at workplace and labour market level, which affect one's working life) and income security (security of sufficient income to continue to function in one's own society).

The ILO InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security (ILO, 1999) adds

- **occupational security** (being able to follow one's chosen profession or that activity that gives central meaning, identity and direction to one's working life).

All of these are related to the work domain, and although "job security" is the term used in most of the studies discussed here, it does actually cover more than one form of socio-economic security. This paper will discuss those forms of security primarily framed by the work situation and thus will not deal with issues such as government provision for welfare payments. The issue is how secure people feel or believe themselves to be in their daily working lives, in terms of their work, its characteristics, safety and working conditions, the profession they follow or type of work they do.

The list above draws our attention to four different aspects of work-related security. There is the holding of a particular job. Where job security is studied this is what it usually means: remaining in a particular post in a particular place of employment. This will be the sense of **job security** used here. Then there are the characteristics associated with actually doing the job, such as control over different aspects of the job. Different attributes of a job may be valued (see below) or particular conditions of work, or terms of employment. This will be referred to as **work security**.

Then there are more general beliefs about job security. If you mention to people that you are interested in job security, usually you will get one of three responses: "there isn't any", "you mean insecurity" or "no one's job is secure these days". These global beliefs, which may be quite independent of specific beliefs about one's own job, and beliefs about the availability of jobs, one's own employability and aspects of the prevailing economic climate, all contribute to **labour market security**.

The last form of security, **occupational security**, is also worthy of notice. If this is about opportunities to follow a particular profession or line or work which is central to social identity and the sense of self, then it is likely to be important for personal well-being through its effect on self-esteem and self-actualization.

Job security has been extensively studied in the fields of organizational behaviour, social policy, industrial psychology and sociology. Some of these studies also cover labour market security and work security has also attracted attention particularly in the study of the survivors of layoffs and work intensification. The last however, has not been specifically addressed, although indirect evidence is available through the study of effects of redundancy.

1.1 Studies of job insecurity

In actual fact, most studies deal with job insecurity rather than job security. Rather like justice, the issue of job security is only noticeable in the breach. It will be argued here that this tends to obscure the importance of job security itself. This paper will suggest it is not simply the aversive experience of uncertainty and anxiety over the future which is at issue, but the hitherto unnoticed practices and attitudes which tell the individual who they are and where they belong.

Just as justice research suggests a distinction between expectation and the experience of moral imperatives, so we will suggest there is a difference between the difficulty in acting and planning in circumstances of uncertainty, and the threat to one's personal identity involved in the prospect of losing one's job. For example, Heaney et al. (1994) showed that there are attitudinal and physical effects of chronic insecurity over and above the insecurity experienced at a particular time. Greenhalgh and

Rosenblatt's influential paper (1984) defines job insecurity as a threat to continuity in a 'job situation'.

Felstead et al. (1998) discuss the ease/difficulty of re-employment. The Job Insecurity and Work Intensification Study (Burchell et al., 1999) studies both.

1.2 The subjective experience rather than objective measures

We do not actually have a great deal of work on the phenomenology of job security/insecurity. While the "threat x powerlessness" model discussed in the next section has considerable intuitive appeal, and has withstood the vagaries of many different research projects, it is important to know if this is how people are describing the situation, or whether it captures adequately the feelings and thoughts that are present to them when they are considering this issue. Although there are qualitative studies of job insecurity and organizational change, they have not been presented at the level of individual experience. Hallier and Lyon's (1996) study discusses individual coping strategies and adaptation to the changed job situation. Perceptions of job security are a part of this rather than a focus.

Jacobson (1987) looks at personal descriptions of the experience of job insecurity, particularly with respect to how "common sense" descriptions, i.e. the ordinary everyday descriptions lay people use, map onto the formal model of "threat x powerlessness". This is a methodologically sound piece of qualitative work which identifies cognitive, affective and behavioural (response) categories of experience, even though the responses (defined by overt behaviour) are actually characterized by the absence of active behaviour. The same study notes that the three clusters of attitudes which it identifies, two of which are mutually exclusive, can exist side by side in apparent contradiction. This should alert us to the possibility that there may be more than one way to describe the situation. This may be a question of framing (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981) or, as Jacobson suggests, that attitudes may vary over the course of the job insecurity/unemployment experience. Similarities to the latter are notable and to the process of loss, bereavement and grieving. The possibility of positive outcomes is noted, especially associated with coping, but the descriptions found are largely negative. Jacobson suggests that it is the particular combination of attitudes reflecting the (theoretically) different components of a situation which result in particular meaning in a given "microculture".

All researchers agree that it is the subjective perceptions of security that are important. It is these representations of the social environment which mediate responses to objective changes in the situation. Experience of job losses and knowledge that the company is in bad shape are significant predictors of insecurity (Armstrong-Stassen and Latack, 1992, Bender and Sloane, 1999). However, the precise relationship between subjective and objective insecurity (of whatever form) is not a straightforward matter and will be considered in more detail in the conclusions, section 5. Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) found that both global and facet insecurity measures correlated with features of the actual job situation.

Heaney et al. (1994) have shown that perceptions of job insecurity produce significant changes in health and job satisfaction. Burchell (personal communication) and Felstead et al. (1998) show that even though most people's perceived likelihood of

losing their job is small, they still report high levels of perceived insecurity. Gallie et al. (1998) chart both an increase in job instability (as measured through work history data) and present perceptions of security. Felstead et al. (1998) also demonstrate that although overall subjective perceptions of job insecurity have changed little there have been changes within sections of the labour market. Similarly Burchell (1999) maps the distribution of perceptions of job security in different labour market segments (i.e. who perceives themselves to be secure or insecure, and why).

Felstead et al. find that the percentage of people reporting themselves insecure is relatively insensitive to overall unemployment, but it is sensitive to local unemployment i.e. to the factors which will impinge upon people's perceptions of their situation. Hartley et al (1991, p. 66) quote two workers at the same plant with diametrically opposed views of the same objective situation and remark that they could have been describing completely different places.

The importance of subjective perceptions is just as great for employers as employees (Barrell and Morgan, 1999). Employers' beliefs about the importance of labour market deregulation and employment protection are not borne out by actual hiring and firing policy (Buechtermann, 1993, p.37-39). This also bears upon the question of general beliefs current in the environment and the way in which the symbolic meaning of acts can affect the psychological environment. A TUC report (1996) challenges the claim that since job tenure has not significantly decreased, perceptions of job security are irrational. The paper points to the changes in the nature of the labour market that people actually experience, particularly the extension of job insecurity to sectors previously considered immune, and notes that 'downsizing has become accepted as the norm' (p.10) and can be used by firms to send messages to the capital markets about their attitudes and intentions. The issue of the role of beliefs present in the cultural milieu in mediating behaviour of employers and employees is one on which, other than these indications, we have little information.

Burchell et al. (1999, p.15) report that restructuring is largely perceived by managers to have favourable effects, in spite of the evidence of decreased motivation, effort, and morale which will be discussed below. Managers believe they need to increase the cooperation of employees, even where they are instituting measures which worsen the latter's terms and conditions. Similarly, belief in the beneficial effects of restructuring seem to have become accepted wisdom so that even where market conditions are relatively favourable, senior management may still see the need for change (Burchell et al., 1999, p.11). An explicit policy of avoiding compulsory redundancies can be selectively interpreted to meet organizational ends and there are clear differences in perceptions of various motivation policies between employees and their line managers (p.56). Similar perspective related differences appear in perceptions of social support (p.45).

Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton (1988) suggest that since it is the perceptions of a situation that mediate responses, a working environment perceived as threatening may seriously impede the development of adaptive responses (Greenhalgh, 1983). Marchington et al. (1994) emphasize that the way events are interpreted in a particular context not only leads to outcomes quite different from what might have been predicted but can explain otherwise inconsistent findings. Even positive developments such as new skills or job content, if interpreted as just another means of managerial control, may fail to gain employee cooperation (Burchell et al., 1999). Even where employee

involvement takes place, perceptions of the process may be quite different from what was intended and employee involvement does not necessarily lead to greater commitment (Guest, 1993). Particularly relevant to the later discussion of fairness, is the occurrence of perspective related differences in the criteria (basis of distribution) deciding redundancies between older workers, who favour seniority, and younger workers, who favour performance (Greenhalgh, 1983).

Continuity in the work situation

One of the key features of this model is the negative appraisal of change. Any change at work can be seen as threatening, as happens with downsizing, especially when little information is available (Sutton et al., 1986). It is 'losing the job as the employee currently knows it' (Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, 1984, p. 441) that is at issue. While the loss of a job can be experienced as positive (Fryer and Payne, 1984) in the main job insecurity is seen as a basically aversive experience. There is a priority given to things staying the same and uncertainty is seen as a stressor which assumes, not unreasonably, a general preference for things to remain stable. Some authors attribute the negative effects of job insecurity to the inability of someone to plan and undertake goal directed activity in such circumstances (Burchell, 1999). Jacobson (1987) found that perceptions of the situation focussed on unpredictability, disruption of usual routines, and the disorientation that ensued. If things are to change, then the key to job insecurity is the involuntary nature of the change and the lack of control exercised by the subject. Externally imposed factors are the largest of the situational descriptive categories. Thus voluntary job change which also produces uncertainty is not included. However, even when voluntary redundancy is adopted as a mechanism for reducing or restructuring the workforce, employers may still have a large degree of control over who is or is not eligible (Wass, 1996).

Hallier and Lyon (1996) in semi-structured, in-depth interviews, identify uncertainty as a major component in the experience of insecurity. Heaney et al (1994) conceptualize job insecurity as 'the perception of a potential threat to continuity'. Marchington et al. (1994) identify established practice as an important norm in and of itself. Clearly defined procedures have effects on work attitudes and fairness (Orpen and Andrewes, 1993). Thus any changes in circumstances, or indications of uncertainty about the future, especially with prior experience of closures, may lead to job insecurity. Work intensification, for example, can be seen not only as a stressor in itself, but as the 'betrayal of long established practice' (Marchington et al., 1994, p. 886). Firms that can offer continuity of employment even where specific jobs are lost, suffer fewer negative consequences of downsizing (Greenhalgh, 1983). In the context of a previous norm of jobs for life, downsizing can lead to all jobs being seen as insecure (McGovern et al., 1998).

Perceived "threat x powerlessness"

The concern with regularity and control informs the centrepiece of this model: perceived job insecurity is constructed as the product of the threat (and its severity) and the powerlessness of the subject to avoid this threat. By defining it thus, as a threat rather than as a probability, job insecurity becomes an inherently negative experience. Threat may be defined as the apprehension of a possible negative event. It may be ameliorated by an ability to neutralize the threat or avoid its consequences, or the lack of importance attached to the outcomes may minimize its extent. It remains, however,

inherently aversive. Threat may therefore be thought of as a continuum of experience ranging from mild unease to downright fear. The disruption of everyday routines, caused by uncertainty and strong emotional reactions may also be a threatening experience in itself (Siegrist et al., 1996).

The model allows us to encompass the probability that any change may be negative, even when employment prospects are good. It copes with the possibility that a prospective change to one's job or working conditions may, in fact, be seen as an opportunity by attributing a value of 0 to the threat. Since this is multiplicative model the perceived job insecurity is also 0, The severity of the threat and the degree of powerlessness are both at issue since both terms may take a range of values >=0. If powerlessness is close to 0 then job security will also be small.

The severity of the threat depends upon the seriousness of the outcomes and their importance to the person and the likelihood of these outcomes. If losing one's job is a serious outcome but the perception of the likelihood of losing it is low, then perceived job insecurity is also low. On the other hand if an outcome is less important but the likelihood is high, significant felt insecurity may result. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1994) see the severity of the threat in terms of a temporary versus permanent loss, the type of redundancy (being fired has different consequences from being laid off) and whether it is the job or only features of the job. The transferability of skills, which leads to labour market security and thus the decrease in the severity of a threat, is a predictor of perceptions of job security (Gallie et al., 1998). Perceptions of the degree to which unemployment would cause problems is also associated with job insecurity (Burchell et al., 1999).

Job insecurity is related in this way several types of work-related security. There is job insecurity itself, but there is also the threat of the loss of valued job features. Hartley et al (1991) interpret the severity of the threat as composed, in this model, of the sum of the threats to each of a range of valued job features, each threat being the product of the likelihood of losing that job feature and the importance of the feature to the subject and demonstrated that this is the case (see also Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996). However, most studies deal with global measures of job security, although Ashford et al. (1989) did develop a multidimensional scale (see Hartley et al. (1991) for discussion). Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) found that while a job features subscale performed as well as a global measure or a composite of the two, the last was most useful in covering more of the domain.

Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) used job features (21 items representing 21 features), global (five items) and powerlessness subscales but the latter was found not to be useful and dropped. Either of the other two subscales performed as well as the composite scale but this was kept on the grounds that it more of the domain. The job insecurity scales were composed of the average of the (importance x probability) scores over the items, and the composite measure was the sum of these two averages. The measures demonstrated construct and external validity.

Rather than considering subscales for job features it may be worth assessing them as different *types* of work-related insecurity. Some are clearly part of "work security", Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) distinguish between organizational security and 'occupational or professional security' (ibid., p. 439) and several of Rosenblatt and Ruvio's features are concerned with membership of the organization.

Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt actually discriminate between loss of job and loss of job features. It is in this sense that changes in the features of a work situation may provoke a significant response, even when no loss of job is at issue, hence the importance of work security. This also raises the possibility that the severity of job loss as an outcome, is more than simply the sum of its constituent parts: loss of a job involves a loss of identity and function in our society, as well as social and other rewards from the work situation. Insecurity may be induced by the loss, or threat of loss, of promotion prospects and expected pay increases (Davy et al., 1991) and may thus affect occupational and income security as well. Felstead et al. (1998) recognize the importance of labour market security in the perception of a threat: their job security index is the product of the likelihood of losing a job and the ease of finding an equivalent one.

The simple expectancy value formulation thus captures many of the relevant features of the work situation. It accommodates the value given to the job or its features, the likelihood of the negative outcomes occurring and also the degree of dependence which someone has on his or her job or job features. If there is no other source of income in the household, loss of a job may be catastrophic, but if there is another person earning it may be much less dire, and even relatively unimportant if the person regarded it as a source of 'pin money'. If employees rely on the company to pay health insurance, then the loss of the job may be significant even when the job itself is onerous and an alternative readily available and attractive. In considering the types of insecurity it is important to identify the unit that is threatened, such as an individual, household or community.

The model's power is define the general properties of the construct "insecurity" which can then organize the factors in different situations.

1.3 The expectancy value model

It is for this reason that job insecurity is a question of psychology, of what people perceive, how it is organized and the way in which those perceptions map onto behavioural and attitudinal responses. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's (1984) expectancy value model has passed the test of time and affords a firm theoretical base from which to pursue the subject.

The essential elements of this model are

- **subjective perceptions in the work situation** of
- **threats to the continuity of a valued job situation** constituted by
- **perceptions of threat and powerlessness** resulting from
- **interpretations of information and cues** (including attributions of causality)

1.4 Powerlessness and the importance of attributions

Although Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996, see above) found their powerlessness subscale to add little to the job insecurity measures, they point out that for their sample (consisting of Israeli teachers) job security was very high and safeguards were considered strong. On the other hand, Hartley et al. (1991) note that the powerlessness

dimension of a multidimensional job security measure (Ashford et al.1989) explains nearly as much of the variance as the full measure. Greenhalgh (1983) identifies a basic motivation to control any situation someone finds themselves in. For Jacobson's (1987) respondents, the most salient feature of the experience is the fact of its being externally imposed, and one of the clusters of attitudes was labelled 'surrender', involving as it did 'feelings of unchangeability and loss of control over the environment' (ibid., p.151).

These kind of judgements about the source of a threat, its cause and what one can do about it are part of an area of social psychology known as "attribution theory". An attribution is a belief about one thing causing another, we attribute certain properties to things in the social environment, including ourselves. Indeed, the causal properties of people and factors in our environment are part of our definitions of a situation and such causal properties are identifiers of people, places, objects and processes. Part of being a person is the ability to act, to cause things to happen, and to respond to things happening around one. Management are the people who manage, the people who take decisions about redundancy and conditions of work. The process of explanation and justification is part of the task of perception.

Attribution theory has long concentrated on two important dimensions of causality: causes which are controllable as opposed to those considered uncontrollable, and causes which are internal to the person or object being considered, or external and a part of the environment. These two factors together are called locus of control and whether someone tends to external or internal attributions is considered to be an individual trait which varies between individuals. If one is taking a proactive view of a situation then who or what controls what is happening, or can affect the processes producing certain results, is an important matter. But what is considered a property of persons, groups, objects or organizations, and what is defined as part of the environment is not clear cut: Hartley et al. (1991) distinguish between organizational factors and environmental ones, but one could equally say that organizational factors are the environment of personal factors.

The standard 2 x 2 typology can be considered as a two dimensional continuum. However, since the early 1980s a social constructionist viewpoint has criticized this rather simple typology on the grounds that our thinking about the environment is more complex than this would imply and that while this classification is extremely useful, it cannot predict what will be seen as controllable or uncontrollable, internal or external. Not all the cells of the typology may be filled. If you believe that people cannot do anything about "human nature" then internal causes which centre on people's abilities or character will always seem uncontrollable. Instead of regarding the locus of control as a continuum, it is often found that beliefs can clump around a particular set, e.g. political attitudes, where strong intercorrelations exist between different types of belief. The generation of the elements of such belief structures, and their combination into a finite number of sets, is a social process carried on within society as a whole, in its media and cultural traditions, and within different groups.

The very fact that controllability is such a primary focus of our explanations can be seen as a reflection of the instrumental view of the material world which is so central to western culture. This is part of the creation of a worldview and how we understand the causes of things, what things are like such that they act as causes, are a fundamental part of our explanations and justifications. Whether we use internal or external attributions (personal characteristics for example or system blame) is likely to affect the repertoire

of explanations which is available to us and whether we consider a cause to be controllable or otherwise, (e.g. economic factors) depends on a complex structure of explanation and understanding. Those living in a culture that explains events as part of the natural world will be more likely to use external attributions more than those who live in a western individualist culture which places causality with individual actions (Miller, 1984). As is illustrated by the example of "economic factors", what is considered controllable or otherwise has a political dimension. Examining the political context and ideological content of such explanations is an important dimension to be considered with regard to such contested topics as job insecurity and unemployment. The naturalization of explanations, such that they become both external and uncontrollable, being in such a view no different from thunderstorms, earthquakes and other acts of God, is a crucial development in the ideological process.

Ideology will be here defined as a set of explanatory and/or justificatory beliefs which are used to make sense of the situation and evaluate it. Both Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) and Hartley et al. (1991) regard interpretation of the situation as of key importance. Other authors draw attention to the way in which situations or symbolic statements can be interpreted in ways far removed from the intent of the actors (Sutton et al.,1986, Burchell et al., 1999). Since job security is considered to be in the eye of the beholder, how people explain, classify and define a situation will be crucial to whether they perceive insecurity at all, and how they will react if they do so. Such explanations are commonly called accounts in social psychology (Scott and Lyman, 1968). An account is considered to be the explanation that people produce when they are questioned or challenged about their attitudes or behaviour. Although classical social psychology differentiates between causal explanations (attributions) and accounts (justifications) detailed consideration of how people talk about rules of justice (Stock, 1999) shows that in answering a question "Why?" people both explain and justify in their use of "because" statements: if you ask someone why people must be paid according to their effort, they will quite likely reply "Because people need to be motivated". If you make the question a specifically evaluative one, as in "why is it right to pay people according to their efforts", you will receive the same reply. People are like that which is why proportional-to-effort distributions happen, in order to maximize economic output. Proportional-to-effort distributions are the right and proper thing to do because people, being responsive to such motivation, then produce the maximum economic output which is the right thing to happen in those circumstances.

All such explanations involve a web of entailed explanatory/justificatory beliefs, many of which imply each other (Edelman, 1981) and our classification of them as explanation or justification is usually based on their rhetorical function: whether they are used to explain the way things are, or justify the way things should be. In interactional justice (Bies, 1987) accounts are an important predictor of perceptions of procedural justice, and although distinction is made between those that are "ideological", justifying some state of affairs, as opposed to causal accounts or a social comparison, any account has the potential to be a part of an ideology (in the sense used above). The process of naturalization hinges upon some factor coming to be seen as "causal" in the same way as a physical cause, thus requiring no justification at all. It is only those explanations which are likely to be contested which require justification, otherwise one simply states the case: equal distributions do not work because people need motivation. Only someone who disapproved of the latter would bother to say e.g. "people need to be motivated because they are alienated from their environment". Many

studies of organizations (e.g. Marchington et al., 1994, McGovern et al., 1998) stress the importance of the framework within which distributive and other issues are interpreted.

It is possible to combine the ideological perspective with the more traditional categories. Once we have identified the explanations which people are using, whether this is achieved by the researchers' own familiarity with the situational and cultural context, or by qualitative techniques recording the explanations generated by participants, these explanations can be classified according to the internal/external x controllability typology. Careful consideration of the way in which participants use such explanations must be taken to avoid the trap of classifying as internal to the situation factors, such as company performance or policy, which are actually seen as external by participants, and one must remember that as the frame changes so may the nature of such classifications: where people discuss their own managers, company policy may be seen as something they can influence; where the same people discuss the company (run by the self-same managers) within its economic context, that same policy may be seen as externally driven and beyond the control of its management.

Hartley et al.'s (1991) study in three different countries (Britain, Israel and the Netherlands), which demonstrates the importance of attributions in both perceptions of the situation and responses to it, explicitly takes the discussion of job security into the domain of ideology. Causal attributions can reflect both personal characteristics (internal versus external locus of control) and ideological processes (accepting causal/justificatory accounts of job loss or altered terms of engagement). For example, the factors that people perceive as bearing upon the probability of losing a job include intra-organizational safeguards and the perceived strength of workforce representation as well as locus of control (ibid. p. 75). Where people were asked why they did or did not feel concerned about job security (p. 73) those who were concerned cited factors external to the individual, such as the organizational or industrial relations climate or safeguards resulting from one's position in the organization, whereas the reasons for feeling secure are largely internal, individual factors such as skill or experience (see also Burchell et al., 1999). Who gets to say which employees are retained and which laid off, should the situation arise, is clearly in a position of power. Who decides which jobs guarantee such security is a political issue.

The importance of such explanations can be seen from the way in which external versus internal attributions, to factors which may be seen as controllable or uncontrollable, are correlated with different responses to job insecurity (Hartley, et al. 1991). The external versus internal instrumental (i.e. acting upon the situation) responses of Jacobson's respondents depend upon beliefs about how the situation works and can be influenced for their definition. Notably, the "hope" subcategory of job insecurity-induced feelings is not always a matter of subjects themselves being able to change the situation, whereas the helplessness subcategory reflects respondents' lack of control in the face of external forces.

According to our cultural traditions of responsibility (Heider, 1958) one is only responsible if one is in control of the situation, therefore external versus internal attributions are the key to whether blame can be ascribed. The different responses of individual as against collective self-blame which Jacobson distinguishes depend upon whether the locus of control lies with the individual or with a group. In the latter category the respondents' failure is not a question of personal traits, but as part of a

collectivity. Attributions to external authority and low trust, which is effectively an attribution of intent, lead to feelings of anger.

Attributions affect both the quality of the experience and the action a person may take (Hartley et al., 1991). Both depressive affect and job satisfaction are related to the attribution of causes internal to the individual but beyond individual control (such as ill health, age or ethnic background), and job satisfaction is related to individual controllable causes (such as education or effort). Similarly, how a person explains the situation frames the possibilities for action. It does not make much sense to participate in collective action if you do not actually believe that collective action can make any difference to external causes of job security such as management policy or political climate. Hartley et al. analyzed the relationship between three common coping strategies, avoidance, individual action (such as looking for alternative employment) and collective action (such as supporting industrial action). In one of their studies, avoidance responses (withdrawal, neglect, denial) are predicted by individual-uncontrollable attributions. If there is nothing you can do then passivity makes sense. Individual action (i.e. doing something about the situation such as searching for another job) is negatively related to making such attributions but positively related to making individual controllable attributions. Collective action is predicted by individual/uncontrollable (if you believe that certain of your personal characteristics count against you perhaps participation in a larger group may give you a chance) and social/controllable attributions: if the factors affecting job security function at the level of social organization, something which can affect that social organization is worth pursuing.

Once one starts to put the flesh upon the bare bones of the standard typology of attributions, it becomes clear that a complex process of explanation and interpretation takes place. What gets into that process, in terms of possible factors, and the effect different social actors have or do not have, is important. Greenhalgh (1983) suggests that the complexity of interpretations in such situations reflects the complexity of our relationships with work.

1.5 Cognitive versus affective components of job security/insecurity

Hartley et al. also bring us to a consideration of another dimension of the job security phenomenon. They look at the effect of job security on indicators of personal well-being. In keeping with the construction of job insecurity as an inherently aversive phenomenon, the Dutch study looks at the difference between respondents high and low in felt job security, in their experience of negative affect. This is not at odds with the expectancy value model, but it does introduce the third in the classic triumvirate of social psychological responses: cognition, behaviour and affect (by which is meant emotional responses, matters of feeling or mood). In particular they discuss *feelings* of job insecurity. Two of the studies used three item scales that primarily cued cognitive responses: 'To what extent are you likely to lose your job' (p.37). They are essentially judgements about the situation. The Dutch study also asked about satisfaction with job security which can be construed as asking for an appraisal of how the person generally feels about job security. In the British study two questions were directly about how the respondent felt; although both related to the likelihood of job loss, a third used the cue word 'worry'.

Qualitative work (Jacobson, 1987) has shown that job insecurity induces feelings of demoralization, suspicion and external anger. Hope, stress (including physical symptoms), self blame (in a personal or collective capacity) and the desire to cope may be experienced, with the latter characterized by attributions of self efficacy and personal responsibility. The operation of attributions in these categories points to the way in which cognition and affect interact: you *feel* bad in response to how you *understand* the situation.

The expectancy value model can be considered to generate a purely cognitive (thought) process. However, the use of the word 'threat', and the evidence that job security has an influence on experienced affect suggests that this does not sum up the whole experience of job security. Indeed, it would be strange if it did. Jacobson's (1987) categories suggest that the cognitive and affective components do not simply correspond to the likelihood of loss and severity of threat. Both of these perceptions entail judgements but Hartley et al. refer to the 'affective "concern over job loss" dimension (p.38) which would seem to imply an affective reaction to the overall threat of job loss. For now the affective component of reactions to job security and insecurity will be taken as a further dimension of the response rather than as a component, i.e. both likelihood and powerlessness can have both cognitive and affective components which interact to create the overall experience.

One further interesting possibility is that, just as emotional responses to others tend to be globally positive or negative, the affective dimension of insecurity may be equally all or nothing. This raises the possibility of threshold effects in both perceptual processes (e.g. only after "threat x powerlessness" exceeds a certain level do we report insecurity) and/or functional responses: although we may be feeling less and less secure or perceiving the situation to be less secure, we do not actually demonstrate the cognitive, physiological and behavioural responses until insecurity rises above a certain level. In addition having a job is an all or nothing event even if threats to job features do sum over a situation. This possible non-linearity, allied with the positive feedback effects in organizations (Greenhalgh, 1983 talks of 'keeping job insecurity below crisis proportions') leads to the possibility of complex system-level processes that may cause an organization or individual to jump from one apparently steady state to another in a very short space of time.

1.6 Measures of job (in)security

Three main approaches to the construct of job security are used. Studies seeking to explain reactions to job security and its lack or loss at the psychological level, use the perceived "threat x powerlessness" model described above (e.g. Armstrong-Stassen, 1994). Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1993) use it as a basis for examining the effects of procedural fairness. Brockner et al. (1992) treat the elements of the model, economic dependence (outcome severity) perceived threat (likelihood of job loss) and powerlessness (locus of control) via separate factors. Bender and Sloane (1999) use a similar approach as do Felstead, Burchell and Green (1998).

Other studies, of which Hartley et al. (1991) is the most significant, use scales which incorporate two or more of these dimensions. Two or three items scales are used in preference to the multidimensional scales of Ashford et al. (1989). The work history data used by Burchell (1994, 1999) and others (see Gallie et al., 1994) ask employers

three different questions about job security: likelihood of losing their present job in the next 12 months, whether their employer saw the job as permanent or temporary, and how they would rate the security of each job in their work history.

Many of the descriptive studies however, use single item variables, (e.g. Burchell 1993, Burchell et al., 1998, 1999). Where more than one item is considered it is often an objective measure, such as ease of dismissal in a workplace in contrast to felt insecurity. One of the most common measures is the likelihood of losing one's current job within the next 12 months. Consideration of the "threat x powerlessness" model suggests that this alone is not enough. Moreover "satisfaction" with job security (Gallie et al., 1998) is not the same as job security. One can argue that satisfaction with security may include the severity of the threat - people may be likely to lose their jobs but unworried about it due to the ready availability of other jobs, or their financial independence - it is not the same as felt insecurity. Gallie et al. (1998) who use such a measure, equate it with worry and anxiety about job security. In contrast, Davy et al. (1991) were able to use structural equation modelling because their data had multiple indicators of the latent constructs.

Although Jacobson's (1987) study supports the "threat x powerlessness" model, there is a case to be made for further in-depth work as many of the specific attributions are context dependent, and the explanations current in a culture, or microculture, vary between historical time periods. There is however, a problem with relying solely upon verbal report, and this applies to both quantitative and qualitative work; not every factor that is associated with job security may be reported (Burchell et al. 1999, p.23), either because it is below the level needed for conscious recall, or because the respondent has discounted it as of little importance[1] or has simply forgotten or failed to notice what might have been obvious to a different observer.

1.7 Summary: What is security?

Job security is a well researched phenomenon concentrating on feelings of security and insecurity with respect to a respondent's current job. It is conceptualized as a subjective perception of uncertainty of continuity with respect to a current work situation and thus covers both job security and work security as defined by this study.

The response, whether considered as an overall affective state, or as cognitions about the likelihood and possible consequences of job loss (or the loss of a valued job feature, or promotion, training and other prospects), is a result of a process of sensemaking and interpretation that can be profoundly affected by the nature of the explanations that are current in the situation. Attributions of causality and responsibility to people, institutions and abstract factors (such as 'the economy') and the possibility of influencing any of these, are important determinants of responses to the situation. Indeed, such attributions are part of the perceived situation.

The most influential, and widely used, model of job insecurity is the nested expectancy value formulation of Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984). Felt insecurity is

[1] Respondents will deny experience of any example of injustice at one point in an interview, only to give an explicit example a few minutes later (Stock, 1999).

the product of a threat and the person's perceived powerlessness to avoid it. The threat is the product of the probability of losing a job, or aspects of a job, and the magnitude of the negative consequences ensuing. The different components of the threat are assumed to be additive, and there is evidence that the more features are threatened, the greater insecurity is felt. Qualitative work has confirmed the relevance of the model.

The experience of insecurity has cognitive (thoughts and beliefs), affective (feelings and emotions) and behavioural (coping responses, job search) components, and each can be both an antecedant or a result of any of the others: feeling depressed about the situation can lead to withdrawal and neglect at work; acting in the situation can lead to an enhanced sense of self-efficacy. The most detailed psychological studies use multi-item scales covering the probability, severity and powerlessness components.

The antecedants of powerlessness are rooted in someone's understanding of the situation, in the explanations people make as to what is going on and what can be influenced. But who or what is responsible, and whether these things can be changed are parts of an ideology which describes the world as it is, and what we ought or must do as a consequence. Such descriptions and attributions justify as well as explain a state of affairs which has its roots in the power relations between different people and groups of people. Examination of the attributions people make can reveal the way in which components of an ideology (in the sense of a set of ideas supporting a particular social arrangement) are working in a specific situation.

However, nearly all this applies to the concept of job insecurity. Should we conceptualize job security as simply the opposite of security, i.e. beliefs that threats are nil, or that we have the power to avoid adverse consequences or that the outcomes will not actually be so negative? Or simply as the absence of insecurity? While the first view is logically correct, the examination of evidence in the next section will argue that the significance of the phenomenon of job security is something in its own right, that it represents a phenomenon distinct from insecurity focussing on the nature of relationships in the workplace.

2. What do we know about job security/insecurity?

The psychology of job security is a little like perceptions of justice: it is only visible in the breach. Just as we do not customarily go around pointing to examples of things being fair or right or just, we only comment upon security and insecurity at work when the possibility of the latter comes into view. Some studies, e.g. Hartley et al. (1991) specifically examine the experience of moving from a secure to an insecure situation at work. More recently, with the rise in a generalized belief that job security is much less than it was, chronic job insecurity and feelings of insecurity independent of subjective likelihood of job loss have become a focus of study.

2.1 The occurrence of job (in)security.

Job insecurity and its antecedents

The seniority rule for redundancies (longer serving workers are the last to be made redundant) means that tenure or seniority (Armstrong-Stassen and Latack, 1992) predicts greater job security. Previous experience is also important. Respondents cite

job security as among their reasons for joining a firm rather than a reason for leaving (Brown, Curran and Cousins, 1983). Job security has been shown to vary by age and class (Brown, Curran and Cousins, 1983, Axelrod and Gavin, 1980, Bender and Sloane, 1999). Heaney et al. (1994) find that job security is predicted by job class (hourly pay or salary) and Armstrong-Stassen (1993) showed differences in perceived job security after layoffs between technical and supervisory staff and the different criteria for the distribution of redundancy within these two groups. Job insecurity is also seen as greater for older workers (McGovern et al., 1998, Westergaard et al., 1989) although seniority conventions (Gallie et al., 1998) are considered a legitimate basis for layoffs (last in, first out). Older workers are more likely to have firm-specific skills and thus be less "employable" elsewhere, and their greater job attachment means that the severity of threat is greater, not least because their loss of future earnings is the greater (Wass, 1996).

One of the most important psychological studies of job security is that reported in Hartley et al. (1991). This combines the results of three studies in each of Britain, the Netherlands and Israel, looking at different organizational contexts because measures varied, cross cultural comparison is limited; however, comparison of secure and insecure workers from each background affords the opportunity to test the "threat x powerlessness" model outlined in section 1.

Hartley et al (1991) found that economic dependence increased job insecurity, age was only a significant predictor in the British study as was seniority, and education was only significant in the Dutch study. Predictors of security or insecurity included trust in management, the existence of organizational safeguards, whether control of the situation was seen as external to the organization, the financial status of the company, and perceptions of the labour market. Thus the different forms of socio-economic security are related to one another.

The rise in perceptions of job insecurity is well documented and often put in the perspective of changing work relations. Burchell (1999) demonstrates a sea-change in levels of experienced insecurity after 1979 as do Gallie et al. (1998). Burchell's (1999) work uses the change in a job (characterized as from secure to insecure or vice versa or no change) as the unit of analysis. Social class, sector of the economy, a break in employment and reasons for leaving predict a move to insecure employment. There are also gender differences in these factors. Where people move job for increased pay they are most likely to be moving to a secure job (65.1 per cent of changes). Where the reasons are family circumstances the move is less often to secure employment, and where an employer termination precipitated the move, 58.2 per cent of the changes are to secure jobs (Burchell, 1999). It should be noted that fully 38.1 per cent of all changes in employment were to less secure jobs. Trade union members are more likely to move to insecure jobs, whereas other studies have considered trade union membership as protective against insecurity (Hartley et al., 1991). Bender and Sloane (1999) using SCELI data find that there is only a significant relationship for male, manual workers, and, while it is a complex relationship (quadratic in form) membership of a union decreased reported job insecurity.[2] Job insecurity may encourage workers to join

[2] The Social Change and Economic Life Initiative (SCELI) looked at unemployment and related work and non-work attitudes in samples at six different locations, through detailed structured interviews during 1986.

unions. They find a significant relationship between length of tenure and job insecurity: the longer workers have been employed, the more secure they believe themselves to be. Gallie et al. (1998) find a relationship between job security and trade union membership on both objective (ease of dismissal) and subjective (satisfaction with job security) measures for male workers. They, too, find that the longer people have been in employment the less likely they are to think they can be dismissed. Such perceptions of ease of dismissal are not linked to those variables, such as the introduction of new technology, which can be taken as indicative of experience of actual work restructuring.

Fifteen per cent of Gallie et al.'s sample were dissatisfied with job security and this measure was not a simple reflection of the objective ease of dismissal: the factors which predicted perceptions of ease of dismissal were not the same as for dissatisfaction with job security. This data also shows that while there has been an increased absolute risk of unemployment for professional and managerial workers, the relative risk remained the same. Worry about insecurity was, however, spread across classes, again underlining the importance of subjective perceptions, since the ease of dismissal varies with class, with the less skilled jobs having least employment protection. Temporary contracts were the single most important predictor of insecurity and this mediates part of the effect of previous unemployment. Working long hours was also associated with increased insecurity. It should be noted that Gallie et al. (1998) talk about "worry" and "anxiety" but only the question about dissatisfaction was asked.

The Rowntree study by Burchell et al. (1999) looked at 20 establishments, gathering data from senior managers shop floor and supervisors. 17 of these firms had instituted redundancies in the previous few years, 10 of which had made employees redundant across all grades. These redundancies had often been in several waves, and whether redundancies had been voluntary or compulsory (even where a policy of voluntary redundancies was supposed to be in operation) varied between organizations. In most organizations there were clear criteria for inclusion in voluntary redundancy, but in controlling the selection process and looking for "the right kind of people" (ibid., p.11) possibilities are opened up for criteria (such as removing union activists) which may not be accepted by the workforce. As noted above (p.16), we have virtually no data on whether the different types of distribution (e.g. equal or unequal, those least likely to be able to find another job - likely to be interpreted as need) of layoffs are regarded as fair, what criteria should form the basis of a proportional distribution, for example skill, age or seniority (ibid., p.13). In plants experiencing multiple layoffs where remaining employees may consider themselves to be potential candidates for the next round, the criteria used previously may not be perceived as fair.

Geographical and temporal flexibility, in the form of compulsory relocation, and changes to hours worked, including "zero hours" contracts, effectively mean that geographical location and personal circumstances (e.g. family commitments) become the basis for redundancies and/or job security. These criteria are considered to be unfair as the basis for a distribution of job opportunities (Stock, 1999). They may also be interpreted as a form of personal treatment (considered as a good to be distributed in both the work and social domains) for which rules of proportional-to-seniority and equality are endorsed in the work domain, with a strong support of equality in the social domain (ibid., ch. 4).

Job security has also become contingent upon certain criteria, "employability" in the current rhetoric or "jobs for high performers" (McGovern et al., 1998, Hendry and

Jenkins, 1997). Thus people do perceive there to be a distribution of job security: it is certainly not perceived as equal, and to the extent that people can identify characteristics which can secure continuity of employment, they are observing a proportional distribution based upon such criteria as performance, age, job class or contacts. However, although detailed studies such as Burchell (1999) and Gallie et al. (1998) reveal a distinguishable distribution of job security and insecurity, there are no studies asking directly how people think job security is distributed, and none about their responses to such perceived distributions.

The Rowntree study asked both for the likelihood of job loss over the next 12 months and "how secure do you *feel*[3] with your present employer". It is the cross tabulation of this latter variable with possible moderating variables and with 0 measures of work intensification which form the bulk of the results published so far. These interactions will be considered under the appropriate headings. This study also used the threat x severity model in its variables and thus presents the possibility of analyzing the relationships between the theoretical constructs. Severity of threat was associated with increased "worry" about job insecurity (a separate variable).

Some studies ask how insecure people feel in addition to the question on perceived likelihood (Burchell et al., 1999, Dooley et al., 1987) and different measures of insecurity do not reveal quite the same picture. 7.8 per cent of the Rowntree sample said they were likely or very likely to lose their job during the next year (the rather conservative measure of job security used be e.g. Felstead et al.) but 30.2 per cent said there was a chance they would lose their job in the next year. 19.1 per cent said they felt insecure or very insecure with their employers (more than the SCELI data but less than the Skills survey) and 16.7 per cent said they worried about losing their job very or fairly often.

Reinforcement, positive feedback and labour market trajectories

Structural factors can reinforce each other. Gallie et al, (1998) found previous unemployment, occupational class (and skill level for manual workers), predictive of both unemployment and satisfaction with job security. So people who have been unemployed are more likely to find themselves in insecure jobs, which carry the threat of further unemployment.

Burchell (1993) argues that movement within the labour market has to be seen as a process rather than an individual phenomenon. Where employers make people redundant they are more likely, in the case of men, to move from larger to smaller places of work. These, in turn, are associated with poorer pay, and lower levels of trade union membership, and with greater insecurity. Unemployment is then associated with a move to a poorer paying job (Gallie et al., 1998, p.150) and predicts a move to an insecure one (Burchell, 1999). Insecure employment also predicts unemployment and although those made unemployed do not necessarily experience greater insecurity (Westergaard et al., 1989) they are more likely to become unemployed again: 25 per cent of those re-employed after being made redundant from a steel plant were made redundant a second time. Logistic regression of factors in recent work history on

[3] Author's emphasis

becoming unemployed (Gallie et al., 1998, p.134) shows that by far the most important antecedent is previous unemployment.

Burchell and Rubery (1990), also using work history data point out that employers structure the labour market not only by the objective requirements for a job, but by assumptions, enshrined in the terms and conditions of different posts, about what will motivate potential workers. If employers set pay rates assuming women will be more concerned about hours and location (Brown, Curran and Cousins, 1983) demonstrated the importance of a "convenience" orientation to work in the reasons for liking and disliking a job or for seeking one) then workers who are less concerned about pay will be more likely to take them, opening up the possibility of positive feedback in labour market processes.

Burchell and Rubery (1990) analysed constellations of job attributes (including career path, job security, job class, experience of unemployment and expectations about future work patterns). They revealed a clumping into distinct groups of workers (which correspond to the Weberian definition of class as market position) characterized by their trajectory in the labour market, in spite of no significant differences in their commitment to work (Gallie, 1994 demonstrates the unemployed can actually demonstrate greater work commitment than the employed). They also identified the importance of different reasons to work. Thus people can be distinguished by their labour market trajectory, and by the often reinforcing effects of these, essentially external, labour market processes. Burchell (1994) shows that this clustering is linked to health outcomes and is not merely a heuristic device. Such findings may be the reason that aggregate measures of job insecurity, and more general measures of job stability, such as the number of jobs in a given time period, may not only fail to identify significant changes in the quality of working life for some groups of employees, but cannot do justice to the complexity of the situation (see Burchell, 1999 for further discussion).

In this way, labour market segment inequalities in the distribution of job insecurity can reinforce each other. In similar ways, the effects of the different forms of insecurity in the work domain can combine to have severe effects upon the marginalized: lack of both employment protection and anti-discrimination laws push people to the margins of economic activity, where their jobs are less secure, less safe, and their lack of representation makes it difficult to change this, or to make sure they acquire the skills they need (Standing, 1993).

Education and training is a further source of inequality as those better educated obtain better paid jobs in sectors where the risk of unemployment is lower through both external economic reasons, and employment protection. Gallie et al. speak of the "revolving door" and Burchell (1994) shows that the least advantaged labour market segment has characteristic responses very little different from the unemployed. There are class differences in the trajectories of those who become unemployed (Westergaard et al., 1989). Qualitative work, following first big shakeout of British manufacturing industry over 3 years, distinguishes the experience of job insecurity from being unemployed by its collective rather than individual focus. While people are in work they share with others the experience of insecurity, but once unemployed the phenomenon becomes individualized, and where it is rarely discussed publicly it becomes almost invisible.

It is the relative unimportance of personal factors versus labour market conditions (transferability of skills) or external economic conditions (size of organization, whether it was in financial difficulties, public or private sector - employees in the former are less likely to feel dissatisfied with job security - manufacturing or other sectors) which is striking in the SCELI data (Gallie et al., 1998, p.145). Clearly, people are able to observe their environment, both intra- and extra-organizational, and draw conclusions about their own prospects.

Changing levels of job insecurity

Felstead, Burchell and Green (1998) compared beliefs about job security between 1986 and 1997. They construct an index of employment insecurity (EI) based upon the product of the likelihood of losing one's job (the job security index (JI), 0-5) and the difficulty of obtaining an equivalent job. This is thus a measure of occupational security as defined above. There was little change in job insecurity, measured as probability of losing one's job, between 1986 and 1997 and a small decrease in the difficulty of reemployment. This underlines the discrepancy commented upon before, that objective measures of insecurity may not changed as much as subjective perceptions. However, there were significant differences between different groups of employees: low paid employees showed decreases in employment security, whereas higher paid employees were more likely than before to feel insecure. Those in the construction industry, those in temporary jobs, and those in the financial sector saw increases in the perception of job insecurity, while those in manufacturing showed a decrease: possibly after the large scale redundancies of the 1980s, anything was an improvement.

The increase in the job insecurity and employment security indices was largest in the financial sector, from a job insecurity index of 0.19 in 1986 to 0.84 in 1997, and an employment index of 0.72 in 1986 to 2.65 in 1997 (sample JI 0.67 to 0.71, EI 2.13 to 2.10). Gallie et al. (1998, p.143) suggest that it is the increase in the numbers of professional and managerial jobs which has increased the absolute numbers of people from these backgrounds experiencing insecurity, leading to the more general perception that these jobs are now just as insecure as manual posts. However the relative risk of professional workers becoming insecure relative to manual workers has not changed, and the largest proportion of insecure workers are still manual workers.

Underlining the importance of personal knowledge and experience, these authors find that job insecurity is much more sensitive to changes in unemployment in someone's locality. When they investigated unemployment in a travel-to-work area, the proportion of people feeling insecure tracked local unemployment. Thus what has changed is the likelihood of encountering people of such background who are insecure or have been made unemployed, even though the risk of manual workers becoming unemployed is 2.5-3 times greater than that of someone from professional and managerial classes. It is the "assumptive world" (Fagin and Little, 1984, Hayes and Nutman, 1981) the social psychologically constructed symbolic world and the representations it engenders which are mediating experience of job security.

The Rowntree study also reports the results of the 1997 Skills Survey where 23 per cent of respondents thought they were likely to lose their job within the next 12 months. 26 per cent of the respondents in the Rowntree study considered themselves likely to lose their job and this figure rose to 32 per cent when the healthcare employees, who

were much more secure than the others, were discounted. This is a considerable increase on the 15 per cent reported in the SCELI data.

However, both the index of job security and the index of employment security used by Felstead et al. are likely to underreport job insecurity as only those who report some actual likelihood of losing their jobs whereas there may be a broader sense of insecurity not so tightly linked to the specifics of the job situation (see also p.17). Balchin (1996) found that of a sample of people contacting and advice line on job insecurity, 51per cent knew of job losses either in their firm or in general, but most were in work. Although this is an unrepresentative sample, it adds weight to the argument that the widespread knowledge of job loss is having an effect. The same study found that 22 per cent of respondents did not know how much notice of redundancy was required, which casts doubt upon the findings about perceived safeguards at work predicting increased job security. The Hartley et al. studies were performed in large and unionized workplaces.

There is very little information about such more general beliefs regarding job security and its incidence, which may be present in the general cultural milieu. Even though most studies use an appraisal of the likelihood of losing one's job as the likelihood component of a threat x severity model of job security, people may still feel insecure, even if they do not immediately envisage losing their job. This may be due to a threat to some valued job feature (see below, 2.1.4) but it could also be a result of what someone hears in the media, experiences among their personal acquaintances or observes in similar work situations to their own. Similarly, there is no work on the effect of these more general beliefs, and the justificatory structures we would expect to go with them, upon the attitudes and responses of people facing specific job insecurity.

Work insecurity

The Rowntree study by Burchell et. al. (1999) has been one of the few to investigate the phenomenon of work insecurity: threat to valued aspects of the work situation such as control over workload, hours and overtime worked, pressure of work, relationships with supervisors and colleagues, and the overall feel of relationships in a workplace.

The findings document the increase in the speed of work and the effort required over the last five years. 64 per cent of employees (N = 340) reported an increase in work speed and 61 per cent an increase in work effort. Where respondents believed they were paid less than they deserved (56 per cent) the basis for this judgement was less comparative (24 per cent) than effort (14 per cent) and responsibility (18 per cent). This reflects the criteria deemed appropriate for the distribution of income (Stock, 1999). 80 per cent reported an increase in the skills required, 75 per cent an increase in responsibility and 78 per cent an increase in the variety of their tasks. None of these last three factors necessarily reflect a worsening of the job situation, but 27 per cent reported a decrease in promotion prospects and 54 per cent no change. However, it is in the "sheer quantity of work" that the increasingly negative quality of working life showed itself. Two-thirds of the sample said they regularly worked longer hours than their basic week, and 30 per cent of the full-time male employees worked more than 48 hours a week. (The author has also heard anecdotal reports of pressure being brought to bear on new recruits to sign a waiver of the 48 hours working directive). Qualitative and quantitative results describe the problem known to many working people, of too few people doing the work previously done by many more. 50 per cent of the Rowntree

respondents considered that staffing levels were inadequate. Importantly, the pressure at work variables were associated with poorer health outcomes (see below).

In all, these results document a deterioration in the working lives of many people. Long hours, pressure of work and job insecurity all have their effect, as will be discussed in the next section. But the design of this study, and the abundance of its data should permit the examination of whether job facet security adds up to global job security, whether there are, indeed, threshold effects, and the extent to which different aspects of the work situation, which will differ in salience, contribute to the experience of job insecurity.

Work security also comes into a structural equation modelling study of procedural fairness and job satisfaction. Davy et al.'s (1991) multiple indicators of job security include items for promotion opportunities, career path, "certainty" about one's future with the company and the probability of layoff. Although there was no direct effect on outcome variables all these factors contributed to job (in)security.

Summary

The experience of job insecurity, whether measured by perceived likelihood of job loss or dissatisfaction with job security or felt insecurity, varies across classes, gender, establishment size, and trade union membership. These are not simply independent factors affecting all employees. Instead the labour market can be shown to cluster around working life trajectories and self reinforcing processes that tend to increase the polarization of job security and insecurity between different sectors of the economy and the working population.

At any one time, the number of people who believe they may lose their job within the next 12 months is a minority (20-30 per cent) but it has been growing. Job insecurity independent of perceived probability of job loss seems now to be a significant phenomenon. Class differences in job insecurity have remained stable, but perceptions of insecurity have been shown to be sensitive to people's own experience (especially the experience of unemployment) and to the economic and organizational conditions they observe around them. In addition generalized beliefs about the increase in white collar insecurity, however widespread in the political and cultural climate, do not clearly mirror the actual differences in the incidence of job insecurity, but they do reflect the fact that job security has increased for many previously secure employees. One might hypothesize that it is this change which has the largest psychological effect: the most disorienting experience maybe that things once considered part of the natural order have changed; arrangements which were so natural they were "part of the wallpaper" in society. However unpleasant the experience of insecurity may have been for blue collar workers, the fact of such insecurity was nothing new. For service and financial sector jobs, this has come as a shock, not just for those unfortunate enough to be affected by it, but for everyone, since it indicates a seismic shift in the socially constructed ground of beliefs beneath our psychological feet.

2.2 The effects of job (in)security

Although it is job insecurity which is the focal issue, the opposite in mind: if this is what is happening when people feel insecure, what role is security playing, whether as the absence of insecurity or in its more positive manifestation of continued membership

of an organization? Greenhalgh (1983) sees part of the reaction to job insecurity as involuntary, a reaction to the uncertainty and possibly fear, in the face of change. But there is also a knock-on effect as those reactions to uncertainty give rise to the very attitudes which will continue the process of organizational decline. If reactions are involuntary, one might say "instinctive", then not only may there be an important affective component, but this affective component may colour cognitive appraisals of the situation, and even drive the perceptual processes. This may also result in non-linear step-changes in response.

Attitudes at work

Brown et al. (1983) present a detailed review of early data and the results of their own study in Newcastle, looking at the differences in work orientation (Goldthorpe, 1966) over time and in different settings. Different workplaces are characterized by a clustering of attitudes around what are identified as general orientations to work. Job security is seen as an external factor in comparison with, say, intrinsic skill and nature of work factors and is associated with an economist's orientation. There are also differences in these orientations within different sections of a single workforce. Job satisfaction varies with orientation (ibid., p.23) and job security is given as an important reasons for being satisfied or dissatisfied. They report that job security has changed in (ranked) importance over time (see also section 2.1.3). Job security was found to be an important reason for joining a firm, but a less important reason for liking a present job. These authors stress that the subjective meaning of work is important which suggests that as the external cultural milieu has changed, so might interpretations of job security. Job security is usually the second reason after pay, for satisfaction with a job. Again this can vary between blue collar and white collar workers and may well have changed with more widespread perceptions of labour market insecurity.

Job insecurity is associated with decreases in organizational commitment, job involvement, organizational morale, neglect, and loyalty. It is associated with increased complaints, turnover and turnover intention. In some cases the effect on attitudes is through influence on job satisfaction (eg. Davy et al., 1991). Job security is also associated with the degree of control someone has over their work, less control usually means more insecurity (Burchell et al., 1999) and increases resistance to change (Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996). Table 1 summarizes the research work related to these factors.

Hallier and Lyon (1996) reported that some managers had a qualified identification with their employer after being made redundant, but a greater identification with the interests of other employees. Allen et al. (1995) showed that not only did organizational commitment, work involvement and satisfaction with job security decrease after layoffs, the changes remained 16 months after downsizing. Thus organizational changes which trigger a move from job security to insecurity appear to have lasting effects. A case study of 20 managers (Newell and Dopson, 1996) experiencing major organizational upheaval showed that fear of losing one's job was an important component of response and that those who responded with a conscious decision to decrease the priority of work in their lives moved to a more instrumental relationship.

Job security was found to promote a favourable view of total quality management (Edwards, Collinson and Rees, 1998) and this case study also drew attention to the context specific variation in responses. Job security can affect how employees react to

changes in work practice. Trust is also important in such responses, and job security can be construed as a question of trust: an expectation, often a normative one, that one's present position will continue and in circumstances where people are sure that they are protected and hence secure, powerlessness is unimportant (Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996 and see below section 5.1 for the introduction of trust into the "threat x powerlessness" model). Insecurity can lead to decreased trust in management, especially if employer responses to the new situation come to be experienced as empty rhetoric, but this can vary widely between cases (McGovern et al., 1998, Marchington et al., 1994).

Table 1. The effects of job insecurity on attitudes at work

Attitudes	Effect of job insecurity on attitudes	References
Organizational commitment	Decreases	Hartley et al., 1991; Hallier and Lyon, 1996 Stassen Armstrong, 1994 Newell and Dopson, 1996 Kozlowski et al., 1993 McGovern et al., 1998 Greenhalgh, 1983 Davy et al., 1991 Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996 Allen et al., 1995
Job involvement	Decreases	Brockner, Grover and Blonder, 1988 Pazy, 1988 Allen et al., 1995
Loyalty	Decreases	Turnley and Feldman, 1999
Morale	Decreases	Armstrong-Stassen, 1993 Cameron, 1994 Kozlowski et al., 1993 Jacobson, 1987
Job satisfaction	Decreases	Axelrod and Gavin, 1980 Heaney et al., 1994 McGovern et al., Davy et al., 1991 Hartley et al., 1991 Pazy, 1988 Axelrod and Gavin, 1980
Turnover	Increases	Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996 Feldman, 1989 Turnley and Feldman, 1999 Davy et al., 1991
Neglect	Increases	Turnley and Feldman, 1999 Feldman, 1989
Withdrawal	Increases	Hartley et al., 1991 Jacobson, 1987
Resistance to change	Increases	Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996 Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton, 1988

Burchell et al. (1999) found that increased job security is associated with increased perceptions of cooperative relations in the workplace, although Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996) found no effect. The former found a strong effect for job insecurity on self-

reported demotivation. Although conventional wisdom has it that too much job security leads to complacency, this review has uncovered no evidence to this effect and Burchell et al. report the comments of managers who clearly perceived a relationship between insecurity and poor morale (p.55).

Non-work attitudes

People do not exist solely as employees. The overwhelming importance of paid employment in our culture and in our waking hours mean that conditions at work to affect our functioning in other domains of life. Dalbert (1993, cited in Lerner 1996) demonstrated that working women threatened with job loss report less satisfaction with life. The managers interviewed by Hallier and Lyon (1988) found those who had had a spell of redundancy before finding another job, their organizational commitment decreased, especially if they had had the opportunity to pick up the reins of e.g. their home life.

Lampard (1994) finds that those holding insecure jobs at the time of their marriage are more likely to suffer the breakdown of that marriage, and this effect holds even when controlling for subsequent unemployment. The Rowntree study reports a modest association between tension at home, which asked a direct question about the effect of problems at work) and job insecurity. There were no differences between men and women or full time and part time employees (ibid., p.48). Long hours, understaffing and pressure of work are important, but it is the perception that someone is regularly working long hours, rather than total hours worked, i.e. perception of overwork rather than duration, which is associated with family tension, and over half the sample (N=340) thought their family life was damaged by work problems.

A study by the West Midlands Low pay Unit (Balchin, 1996) found that 36 per cent of their sample of insecure workers were having trouble paying for household essentials, 62 per cent had put off major expenditure and changed their day to day purchasing. 35 per cent of this sample were not confident about their family's financial future.

Affective responses

Dalbert (1993) reports that those threatened with job loss are more likely to report negative moods. Hartley et al. (1991) report an increase in depressive affect among those high in job insecurity. The Dutch study showed a range of affective responses including anger, guilt and fear, all of which showed a significant difference between those high and low in job security. The largest differences were in nervousness, sadness and fear. There is an association between such affective responses and willingness to participate in collective action (p.98).

Hallier and Lyon (1996) qualitative study identified feelings of rejection as a part of the experience of job insecurity. There was a re-evaluation of their relationship with the organization aimed at resolving the discrepancy between their previous organizational commitment and their job loss. Self worth, value, betrayal and self-blame were involved. It was the evaluative review of past career and future prospects which was important in the sense-making process, with consequences for self-esteem. Career and occupational security are as important as security in a particular position.

The respondents in Jacobson's study of Israeli civil servants reports demoralization, suspicion, anger (more often externally directed but also personal and collective self-blame) hope, helplessness and a desire to cope. The first two categories being the most frequently reported. Job security is related to positive and negative feelings about work (Burchell et al., 1999).

Perceptions of fairness affect emotional responses to layoffs and Armstrong-Stassen (1993) found that layoffs created a profound sense of shock. In experimental groups, the announcement of the departure of members leads to negative affect, and a cohesive group responds similarly whether all leave or all stay (Astrachan, 1995). Moreover, the negative affect remains after the loss of a minority member. Anxiety after layoffs is related to likelihood of layoff and economic dependence, as well as both procedural and distributive fairness (Brockner et al., 1992).

Behavioural responses

Hartley et al. (1991) discuss three types of response: avoidance (denial, withdrawal from the work situation), individual action (seeking alternative employment) and collective action (strikes and similar industrial action). There were differences between respondents high and low in perceived job insecurity for all of these measures in the Dutch and Israeli studies. Job insecurity did not affect union membership but did influence willingness to take part in collective action (whereas Bender and Sloane did find an association. The three forms of coping behaviour are unrelated, and thus may be considered as three separate options. However, they are related to the attributions people make and to their affective responses. Motivation to work (dependence/severity of outcome) increased the probability of taking individual action. Personal outlook and resources also affects active rather than avoidance responses (Armstrong-Stassen, 1994) although Davy et al. (1991) found that the effects of job security on turnover intentions were through job satisfaction.

Qualitative work from the Israeli study (Jacobson, 1987) identified the most frequent response as being inaction. Just as unemployment can be experienced as an individual phenomenon, in spite of being widespread (Westergaard et al., 1989) so too, it appears, is job insecurity, where withdrawal and even denial, are widespread responses. Trying to put events at a distance also been used to explain responses to layoffs, and fairness perceptions (Brockner and Greenberg, 1990).

Hallier and Lyon's qualitative study (1996) of 42 managers facing redundancy showed a variety of different coping responses dependent upon precisely what form redundancy took. Demotion to a technical job could, for some managers, result in a positive outcome where they formed good relationships with their new workgroup, relationships often different in quality (e.g. paternalistic but welfare oriented) from those characterizing their previous managerial position.

Armstrong-Stassen (1993) found that employees who had not previously been exposed to redundancy, and for whom the shock is inferred to be greater, were less likely to exhibit action coping (making active efforts such as working harder or longer hours) although their perceived job security was still greater than their more experienced colleagues. Whereas threat of job loss leads to both active (e.g. job search) and passive (avoidance) responses (Armstrong-Stassen, 1994), perceptions of powerlessness reduces the likelihood of taking any action. Both the threat of job loss and powerlessness predict turnover intentions and self-reported effort. Unsurprisingly,

since they are part and parcel of such a response, active or passive coping attitudes also predict also predicts these variables. There are also significant interactions between the components of job insecurity and coping strategy. For those where control coping was high, the higher the threat, the less likely they were to plan to leave. Job performance is related to the level of threat only for those demonstrating a higher level of control coping attitudes, where high threat led to higher performance. The opposite effect was seen for escape coping (withdrawal and denial attitudes) where high threat lead to a decrease in performance. The attitudes taken toward the situation will dictate different courses of action, yet again it is construction and interpretation of the situation which mediate responses.

If, when layoffs are announced, the perceived severity of the threat is high, employees are less likely to adopt active coping strategies, whereas perceptions of one's employability in the labour market leads to more practical coping attitudes and job search (Lerner and Somers, 1992). The same study found there was little change in the responses to job insecurity as redundancy loomed once layoffs had been announced. Anticipation seems to be the important psychological precursor, and since certainty in this situation was absolute, as all jobs were going, this lends support to the idea that it is not mere mechanical problems with an uncertain future that are at the heart of responses to insecurity.

Job insecurity in situations involving layoffs can result in either decreased or increased performance (Armstrong-Stassen, 1994). Brockner et al., (1992) found an inverted U-relationship. When subjects' perceived insecurity was high (perceived probability of job loss was high and there was no financial support available to mitigate its consequences) or low (probability of loss was low and financial assistance was available) then performance, as measured by self-reported work effort decreased. When the threat posed by job loss was moderate (either the probability was low but no assistance was available, or the probability was high but assistance was available) then performance increased. It is important to note that this is a non-linear relationship. However, this relationship only applied to those for whom the economic need to work (i.e. severity of threat) was high. For those whose economic need to work was low, there was no relationship between insecurity and work effort. The results bear out the two factor model.

This is a much cited paper but several points must be noted: first, self-reported retrospective measures must be treated with caution; secondly, fairness had no effect on response and the availability of assistance from the employer was labelled "control". One may doubt the relevance of a measure which took account only of the actions of some other to perceptions of control. However, as will be discussed below, it is the perception that those who have power are concerned for the welfare of employees which is important for trust, and fairness.

Rosenblatt and Ruvio (1996), on the other hand, in addition to finding that the powerlessness dimension was not a significant predictor, found no relationship between job insecurity and performance. They also raise the problems of common method variance with self-report measures, as well as the need for more objective ones.

Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton (1988) point out that the responses mediated by job insecurity, can form a positive feedback loop in the process of organizational decline through increased turnover and resistance to change (Staw et al., 1981).

Health and well being

Burchell (1994) and Heaney et al. (1994) both review studies of the effect job security was on psychological health and other health indicators. The latter regard the "uncertainty and ambiguity" as a potential stressor. Job security has effects on a number of mental health indicators and cardiovascular symptoms. Burchell et al., (1999) report findings from the British Household Panel Survey which show that where job insecurity continues, the detrimental effect on mental health outcomes increases. Self evaluation, general optimism, self esteem and locus of control all affect well-being in an insecure environment (Lerner and Somers, 1992). Perceived severity of the threat predicts well being (see Table 2).

Recent work as part of a large epidemiological study of civil servants (the Whitehall II study)[4] which has been fundamental to our knowledge of health inequalities (Marmot et al., 1991), has been able to demonstrate the effect of job insecurity in a large sample. Ferrie et al. (1995) found significant differences in self-reported health, on three different measures (self-reported general health, mean number of symptoms in immediate time period, and number of health problems in previous year) between men in departments facing privatization and those remaining within the civil service. Results for women were less consistent, only demonstrating a significant difference for the number of reported symptoms. Most important, this data, in addition to control ling for previous health status, shows that it is the *anticipation* of change that brings on the effects since the effects disappeared once the transition was complete. This argues for the importance of uncertainty in contrast to the view of Lerner and Somers (1992). Keefe (1984) in reviewing the stresses of unemployment notes that there is an anticipatory effect which can include physiological changes.

Stansfeld et al. (1997), also using Whitehall II data, find that the anticipation of a change (privatization), especially within a context of job insecurity (although there is not direct measure) is associated with poorer mental health, although again this effect disappears after the transition is complete. This lends credence to the hypothesis that uncertainty is a major component of job insecurity. A later paper (Stansfeld et al., 1999) shows that changes in the nature of the work situation, including job demands, decision authority have considerable effects for perceived effort-reward imbalance. For now it is enough to note that changes to the nature of a job, a question of work security can have important adverse effects. The Whitehall II data is also important for demonstrating these effects over long periods of time (up to 8 years).

The Whitehall study is also notable for demonstrating a class gradient in health outcomes (Marmot et al., 1986); the supervisors of blue and white collar workers, who might be inferred to have different status within the management structure, demonstrate differing anxiety responses to job insecurity (Axelrod and Gavin, 1980).

Other large scale studies of job insecurity have shown that perceived job security is one of the best predictor of psychological symptoms; only negative life events outside work had a larger effect. Dooley et al. (1987) asked both for perceived likelihood of job loss and for felt insecurity, and either response categorised the respondent as insecure,

[4] The Whitehall II study is the second phase of a large scale epidemiological study investigating class gradients in health outcomes, in a population of 10,308 British civil servants.

(N=8000). Changes in the actual economic climate also predict mental health outcomes and the changes over time indicated that being in a sector of the economy which had experienced job losses also led to physiological symptoms.

Heaney et al. (1994) demonstrate an effect for chronic job insecurity (people who reported being insecure at time 1 and time 2 in a panel sample) over and above the effects of insecurity at time 2. Using the "threat x powerlessness" model, they examined the influence of job insecurity on self-reported physical symptoms of stress-related minor ailments. These are predicted by both previous and chronic insecurity. In-depth interviews revealed that chronic job security had been a major stressor over the last ten years and they suggest their results may, if anything, under-report effects, due to the existence of high levels of chronic insecurity in the years leading up to the study. Consideration of inequality at work demonstrates the importance of long term stress in the workplace both from the lack of status (or downward mobility), career opportunities and increased workload (Siegrist et al., 1996). Particular groups in society with distinct risk constellations may be most affected and the neurohormonal pathways that mediate the effects of threatening situations are also linked to threats to social identity (Siegrist et al., 1996).

Burchell (1994) working from SCELI data looks at the effects on mental health of being in the different parts of the labour market. The least advantaged of the five labour market groups identified, not only had GHQ[5] scores significantly higher (indicating worse mental health) than that of the most advantaged group. The difference between the best and worst scores was greater than the difference between the unemployed group and the sample mean. In addition there was no significant difference between the most insecure group and the unemployed. Panel data also show that it is a change in employment status that leads to a change in mental health status. Where people return to employment their mental health improves, but for men, the improvement is greater for those returning to secure employment than for those whose job is insecure, the latter change having no significant effect. In addition, the experience of unemployment does lead to increased job insecurity for men. The beneficial effects of reemployment on men were moderated by job security.

The experience of women is different. The panel data showed that where they remained unemployed their mental health worsened slightly, whereas those returning to either secure or insecure employment experienced an improvement. These results are important, not merely for showing that insecurity, especially an insecure labour market trajectory with all the attendant expectations and experience that accrue, is associated with worse mental health, but that it is a cause of deterioration.

Hartley et al. (1991), as mentioned above, demonstrate the effects of job insecurity upon both depressive affect and psychosomatic symptoms (op.cit., p.80) and the powerlessness component of insecurity is particularly important (Siegrist et al., 1996). It is known that unemployment can increase the risk of suicide but a move from employment to unemployment, which can be taken as an indicator of insecure employment, can also be a significant risk factor (Lewis and Sloggett, 1998). Job

[5] The General Health Questionnaire is a well validated instrument of some 30 items measuring several aspects of health. It is a standard component of many epidemiological studies and is used by the SCELI study, the Whitehall II study, and, in an abbreviated form of ten items, in the Rowntree study.

insecurity and labour market security (as measured by the availability of alternative employment) also have an effect on psychosomatic complaints over and above the effects of either stress at work, or the effects of a stressful external environment (Frese, 1985).

Table 2. The response to job insecurity

Responses	Effect of job insecurity on responses	References
Negative feelings, emotions, mood, anxiety	Increases	Dalbert, 1993 Hartley et al., 1991 Hallier and Lyon, 1996 Jacobson, 1987 Burchell et al., 1999 Armstrong-Stassen, 1993 Astrachan, 1995 Brockner et al., 1992 Axelrod and Gavin, 1980
Self esteem, evaluation		Lerner and Somers, 1992
Denial, withdrawal, inaction	Increases for some	Hartley et al., 1991 Jacobson, 1987 Armstrong-Stassen, 1994
Performance	Can increase or decrease depending on the strength of the threat, experience, resources	Armstrong-Stassen, 1993 Brockner et al., 1992
Job search (see also table 1 for turnover intention)	Increases for those low on powerlessness	Armstrong-Stassen, 1994 Lerner and Somers, 1992
Mental health	Deteriorates	Burchell et al., 1999 Heaney et al., 1994 Burchell, 1994 Stansfeld et al., 1997, 1999 Dooley et al., 1987
Physical health outcomes	Deteriorate for some groups (especially men)	Marmot et al., 1986, 1991 Siegrist et al., 1996 Hartley et al., 1991

Summary

The experience of insecurity in the workplace has important, and almost entirely negative, effects upon both the individual employees and the organizations in which they work. These responses are mediated by the subjective experience of insecurity successfully modelled by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's (1984) "threat x powerlessness" conception.

Both attitudinal and behavioural responses to job insecurity are detrimental to the successful operation of organizations, in particular the negative effects on various measures of performance and work effort give the direct lie to the efficacy of the "keep 'em lean and treat 'em mean" dictum. There is no evidence whatsoever that job security leads to complacency. There is evidence that it leads to decreased productivity, decreased trust, commitment and increased resistance to change.

If this is true of work-related insecurity, and there is also evidence that it applies to career/occupational insecurity, as well as security in a specific job, then there are likely to be similar effects when the focus of attention turns to the social domain in response to income and labour market security. If anything, such effects may be more pronounced, since income and labour market security are so fundamental to life in our society.

Perhaps even more sobering is the effect of job insecurity on health and well-being. Although it probably comes as no surprise, job insecurity has significant deleterious effects on people's physical and mental health. There is also an effect for chronic insecurity which must raise concerns over the prevalence of a general belief in job insecurity that "nobody's job is safe these days". The finding (Burchell, 1994) that for the least advantaged workers in the labour market, mental health outcomes are no better than the unemployed must give pause for thought over the emphasis of work as a remedy for poverty and unemployment. This finding suggests that it is simply not true that any job is better than none.

2.3 Moderators of job insecurity

Both Hartley et al. (1991) and Hallier and Lyon (1996) emphasize that the context of insecurity affects precisely what responses of coping strategies are available and will be taken.

Attributions: Judgements of power and responsibility

Hartley et al (1991) showed that the way people explain things can mediate the coping response to job insecurity.

Lerner and Somers (1989) show that workers do not necessarily accept conventional explanations and justifications for layoffs, and may blame the companies or the government. Explanations are not necessarily self-serving: managers involved in layoffs blame themselves in spite of the common wisdom that they are only implementing company policy (Lerner, 1996). The use of different attributions can frame a situation quite differently such that judgements of fairness, deriving also from attributions of responsibility, can be affected (Montada, 1996).

The importance of the beliefs people bring to the situation is shown in the moderating effects of what is termed 'just world beliefs' (Benson and Ritter, 1990) where those who believed that the world is basically a just place, and people do get their just deserts had a higher degree of negative affect after layoffs than those who did not. When just world beliefs are combined with available explanations they can increase insecurity: if the company acted fairly and these really are external forces beyond control, then there is an increased probability that the same thing can happen again. The work ethic can have a similar effect (Brockner, Grover and Blonder, 1990) where the response to the severity of layoffs on job involvement was only significant for those who believed in the work ethic.

The "threat x powerlessness" model can account for the importance of explanations (or accounts), and has the advantage that it can provide a comprehensible ordering of many potential moderating factors which might otherwise appear to form an ad hoc array of simple variables. Although the specifics of a situation may be highly variable,

and require in situ measures to ascertain the precise content, the basic typology and its relation to the ideological process provides an initial framework for research questions.

The change in frame when different explanations are made, culled from the standard explanations available in the surrounding culture, can affect judgements of fairness (Montada, 1996). There is a need to step back from conventional explanations, and see them as part of a process of justification. The provision of account, well known to be crucial in fairness judgements, as discussed in section 3.2.3.

Social support

Many of the studies already discussed have found important effects for social support. Stansfeld et al. (1997, 1999) show that social support has a protective effect upon mental health in a work situation characterized by high uncertainty, measured by both GHQ scores and by absence due to psychiatric symptoms. Both co-worker support and supervisor support can moderate the relationship between job security and turnover intentions, and supervisor support also moderates the effect of insecurity upon organizational commitment and the effects of layoffs on self-reported effort (Armstrong-Stassen, 1994). Where support from co-workers versus that from friends and family has been examined, it is support from co-workers that has the buffering effect, and support from supervisors tends to have more effect than that from colleagues (Burchell et al., 1999). The significance of co-worker support in adapting to a position of insecurity has also been identified in qualitative work (Newell and Dopson, 1996). There can be significant differences between groups of employees who may have more or less security with respect to such job features as performance feedback and supervision (Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996).

Social support is known to be important in unemployment and Keefe (1984) identifies the 'feeling of belonging and of being esteemed by a group of significant others.' Where people have a chance to build up a group identity this affects their responses to the loss of one or more group members (Astrachan, 1995). Thus social support at work is not merely a buffer against the effects of insecurity and work intensification (Burchell et al. 1999), but is one of the primary resources lost on being made redundant. Losing one's job has effects over and above no longer doing a certain piece of work. Unemployment and the prospect thereof take away a primary source of self esteem and identity. Both those made unemployed (Westergaard et al., 1989) and those facing unemployment (Keefe, 1984) experience a loss or threat of loss, of personal value, and regard themselves as being "thrown on the scrap heap".

The evidence of the buffering effect of social support is not entirely consistent (Kaplan, Sallis and Patterson, 1993), and the relationship between the quality of social support and health, as opposed to say the extent of a social network, is less well established. The evidence suggests interaction with other factors. Certain forms of "social support", such as supervisor appraisal, can actually increase the risk of ill health and such a reverse buffering effect was seen for supervisor support upon the relationship between pressure due to volume of work and health outcomes (Burchell et al., 1999). Health outcomes are poorer where there is pressure from managers or supervisors but, in turn, this effect is buffered by emotional support from others. Adequacy of staffing levels also impinges upon mental health scores, being buffered by emotional support (as opposed to simply giving people more information). However, this last study found no buffering effects of social support on measures of job insecurity

(p.43). Dooley et al. (1987) similarly found no buffering effect for work-related social support although both work and non-work social support had an effect of improving mental health outcomes. Previous non-work social support has a direct effect upon health outcomes. Positive feedback on performance can reduce stress after restructuring (Tombaugh and White, 1990).

The effects, both main and interactions, of social support testify to the importance of relationships in situations of job or work insecurity. This may be seen as a buffering effect against stress, but the absence of interactions between job security and social support indicate that something more than stress may be the issue. Keefe (1984) sees social support as a two way process but one whose precise content depends on the relationship in question. We look for, receive and value different types of support in different situations: we ask for practical help from those immediately around us, but we rely upon our wider circle of business acquaintance for information about opportunities. (This last is considered to be an important component of social capital, see for example Fukuyama, 2001).

Communication and trust: keeping people informed

Many commentators (e.g. Greenhalgh, 1983, Sutton et al., 1986) emphasize the importance of communication when job security is threatened. Job security is related to the clarity of communication from management (Burchell et al., 1999) and the provision of explanations of why job losses are necessary (Brockner et al., 1994). Good communication is seen as necessary to prevent distrust in management resulting from insecurity. The giving of advance notice, and the manner of this are important, so much so that new legislation has been enacted in the US (Brockner et al., 1994, Latack, 1990). The quality of communication within an organization can be more important than, the provision of information by supervisors, (Burchell et al., 1999). The source of layoff announcements is important (Mansour-Cole and Scott, 1988) and this is moderated by the nature of the relationship between supervisors and employees.

Trust is a major predictor of job insecurity (Hartley et al., 1991, p. 73, Burchell et al., 1999) and differs slightly between union members and non-members. Economic commentators have drawn attention to the decreased trust perceived to be consequent upon increased job insecurity (TUC, 1996, Buechtermann, 1993). The Rowntree study found that 44 per cent of respondents had no or very little trust in management "to look after your best interests" although about 50 per cent of the workforce showed at least some trust in management, 51 per cent of union members and 64 per cent of non-union workers. However, these are associations and there are no panel studies to establish causal direction.

Poor communication was one of the less frequently mentioned reasons (ibid., p. 37) for distrust although the association between communication and insecurity was significant. Important thought subjective interpretation is, it is not necessarily the whole story.

The reasons for trusting or distrusting management differ. Reasons for distrust centred around the self-interested motivation of the company and previous experience of poor treatment. The reasons given for trusting management were indicative of good working environments and experience of support, as well as beliefs in the congruity of interests between employer and employees. The reasons cited for people's distrust do not suggest that the adversarial relations in the workplace have decreased: in the

Rowntree study, only 26 per cent of workers agreed with a statement that the firm is a team. Seeing the workplace in these terms does not necessarily lead to increased trust (Westergaard et al., 1989). Realistic information in insecure situations is considered important because it prevents the appearance of being deceitful, which is considered harmful to long term cooperation (Sutton et al., 1986, p.27). Decreased trust is also associated with demotivation (Burchell et al., 1999).

The importance of trust in situations of uncertainty and insecurity needs little explanation. The severity of a threat is clearly less if you believe that any action taken will have regard for your welfare, powerlessness is not a problem if you can trust those who do have the power to influence the situation. It is worth noting that trust in authorities is one of the central variables in the social capital literature (Halpern, 1998) where trust is seen as facilitating certain types of social relationship. Procedural justice research emphasizes that perceptions of fairness create a cushion of support for those in authority which allows the latter to take unpopular decisions (Lind and Tyler, 1988). One of the reasons for distrust mentioned in the Rowntree study is management's lack of power (ibid., p.37). The literature on psychological contract violation shows that trust is destroyed when employers are perceived to have reneged on their promises. Relational contracts require trust in order to promote long term reciprocity.

Trust, like both security and justice is visible primarily in the breach. We do not go around commenting on how much we trust this person and that, we only comment upon it when the possibility of distrust has been raised. What we call trust is the manifestation of the, largely unthinking, belief that people will behave according to our expectations and their obligations: we trust them to do what they are supposed to do and therefore are happy to leave them to get on with it. What we expect of them depends upon our relationship with them and thus trust is actually a reflection of the smooth operation of a relationship. Job insecurity brings doubt over the continuation of a relationship between employer and employee, and raises the possibility that adverse outcomes may accrue to one party, usually the employee. Employees are often powerless to affect the situation and thus their trust in those who do have such power is crucial to their feelings of security or insecurity. Since trust in authorities is central to the burgeoning literature on social capital and powerlessness is often the most important component of insecurity, it would appear that we need to consider adding trust to the model of security. Trust in "the powers that be" is hypothesised to lead to beliefs in beneficial outcomes, i.e. decreased severity of outcomes.

The significance of moderators of responses to insecurity: a revised model

The importance of attributions as moderators of responses to insecurity, and the layoff situation lies in the construction and explanation of the social situation, by which people examine and assess their possible courses of action. Beliefs, and the messages of self value which we get from others are inputs to the "threat x powerlessness" calculus. Trust is also a factor: if power is of crucial importance, then expectations of the behaviour of those with power are similarly important. Social support and trust reflect the matrix of relationships within which a person is embedded and research on closely related issues demonstrates the importance of the nature and quality of those relationships, and draws attention to the importance of different types of fairness as moderators of responses to changes in relationships within the workplace.

2.4 Findings from related research

Much of the evidence about the possible effects of job insecurity comes from studies which do not necessarily have direct measures of insecurity itself. Reference has already been made to the changes found in organizational commitment and work effort where recent layoffs have been made. In particular the work situation after redundancies, which is not only intuitively likely to increase job insecurity, but does actually result in increased perceptions of insecurity has been studied in some detail.

The survivors of downsizing

Table 3 indicates that many studies, though lacking a direct measure of job security, add to the body of evidence. The survivors of organizational downsizing are prime candidates for insecurity, having seen their colleagues made redundant (Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton, 1988). Both case studies (McGovern et al., 1998) and questionnaire surveys (Armstrong-Stassen and Latack, 1992) reveal that all jobs are seen as less secure after downsizing, and that it is the organizations in which job losses have been largest that the decline in trust and commitment is greatest. However, it is important to note that this will not necessarily be so, since where people do not identify with those made redundant, they may not expect to be made redundant, even when they have direct and objective knowledge of the situation (Hallier and Lyon, 1996).

Downsizing is known to have an effect on the organizational commitment of survivors, intention to leave, anxiety, absenteeism, morale and stress (Feldman, 1989, Davy et al., 1991, Kozlowski et al., 1993, Tombaugh and White, 1990, Cameron, 1994). Communication (including the source of the announcement) and social support are also relevant (Feldman, 1989, Mansour-Cole and Scott, 1988, Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton, 1988). The changes to previously well-defined roles and specific jobs lead to increasing stress and dissatisfaction (Tombaugh and White, 1990) and the altered nature of relationships is salient. Burchell (1999) cites work by Horstead and Doherty (1995) which found that after redundancy programmes, loyalty decreased, and stress and negative attitudes increased.

Mansour-Cole and Scott (1988) demonstrate the importance of the quality of relationships in the workplace in adjusting to layoffs, and of legitimacy and fairness, both integral to how a relationship is experienced. The relationship to the victims as well as to supervisors is at issue, and the quality of the latter relationship cast in terms of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX, Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), which moderates the relationship between the source of a layoff information and organizational commitment. Although LMX is not a primary focus of studies described here, it is worth noting that it defines leadership in terms of trust, respect and mutual obligations between subordinates and superordinates.

Cameron (1994), in a 4-year study of 30 organizations, highlights the problems of decreasing morale, resistance to change and competitive rather than cooperative relations, all of which can influence the course of organizational adaptation or decline. Involving employees and communication are considered to be two of the most important factors in attaining the objectives of downsizing, and many of the typical strategies (such as layoffs and work intensification) do not result in successful downsizing. He also draws attention to the importance of considerations of voice and other aspects of procedural justice and interactional justice. Changes to performance

appraisal can seem 'inequitable or punishing' (p.206). Kozlowski et al. (1993) in reviewing responses to layoffs, identify decreased morale and performance, resistance to change and increased turnover intentions as important. They also point out that these factors can lead to further organizational decline since they can mediate positive feedback loops within the organization (Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton, 1988).

Table 3. The responses of survivors to downsizing

Responses	Effect of downsizing on responses	References
Job insecurity	Increases	Greenhalgh, Lawrence and Sutton, 1988 McGovern et al., 1998 Armstrong-Stassen and Latack, 1992
	For those who identify with victims	Hallier and Lyon, 1996
Organizational Commitment	Decreases	Feldman, 1989 Horstead and Doherty, 1995
Intention to leave	Increases	Feldman, 1989 Davy et al., 1991 Kozlowski et al., 1993 Tombaugh and White, 1990
Anxiety Absenteeism	Increases	Feldman, 1989
Morale	Decreases	Cameron, 1994 Tombaugh and White, 1990 Kozlowski et al., 1993
Stress	Increases	Tombaugh and White, 1990 Feldman, 1989 Horstead and Doherty, 1995
Satisfaction	Decreases	Tombaugh and White, 1990

Psychological contract violations (PCV)

Job insecurity can also be seen as a breach of what is termed the "psychological contract" (Turnley and Feldman, 1999, Thornhill and Saunders, 1998, Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994, Morrison and Robinson, 1997). The psychological contract is that set of informal promises that an employer is believed to have made to the employee. Morrison and Robinson (1997) consider that such beliefs cannot be ascribed to the organization, but do suggest that organizational agents may have different expectations from employees. Job security is one of the most important employer obligations which can contribute to psychological contract violation (PCV).

There are a range of expectations about future benefits which are seen as informal promises made by the organization, very often at the time of recruitment (Robinson, 1996, Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). It is important to distinguish between expectation and promises. The language of psychological contract violation is that of moral norms, of 'obligation' and 'entitlement'. Although unmet expectations do mediate some of the responses to PCV, it is not sufficient by itself to explain outcomes (Robinson, 1996, Robinson and Morrison, 1995).

The psychological contract is formed against a background of social norms (what Morrison and Robinson (1997) term the "social contract"), shared understandings and a

process of sense making. Such a process may indeed be set in motion by an adverse outcome which may be subsequently appraised as a breach of the psychological contract. As with the identification of what is fair, the specification of the contract, may not take place until after a failure of expectation. The adverse event is then interpreted according to the shared meanings current in the situation as well as the subject's own individual beliefs. However, beliefs are not always shared across all participants in a situation. Employees and supervisors may have perspective related differences in their beliefs about what is right, fair and appropriate in a situation. PCV may result from either reneging on a promise actually made, or from the incongruence between what the two sides understood to be the case (Morrison and Robinson, 1997, Turnley and Feldman, 1999).

Factor analysis of the concerns which people consider to be important parts of the psychological contract demonstrates two distinct dimensions: transactional versus relational concerns (Robinson and Morrison, 1995, Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994) corresponding roughly to a committed, long term or to an instrumental, short term orientation (Herriot and Pemberton, 1996). Relational contracts are characterized by reciprocity over the long run, where there is not an explicit exchange of contributions between employees and organizations. Rather there is a series of mutual obligations which can be called upon at any time, supported by trust that each will honour its obligations. Such a long term commitment involves emotional commitment and results in an emphasis on procedural justice - which is all about one's value within a group (Lind and Tyler, 1988).

The transactional contract is a more straightforward economic exchange of goods, characterized by short term reciprocity. It does not require trust and emphasizes distributive justice in the form of equity (proportionality rule) where rewards should be proportional to investments. The perception of psychological contract violation depends upon am equity-type balance between the ratio of benefits provided by an organization to those promised, and a similar ratio of the contributions of employees (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). If the relationship were a strict exchange, then, as time passes and the employees' cumulative contribution increases, the employers' obligations would increase (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994). This could suggest (what is undoubtedly the case) a power based relationship where the party with the superior power is able to dictate terms and the employee has no expectation that it will voluntarily change them. Employers' relational obligations are more important predictor of employee perceived obligations than transactional ones.

The psychological contract may pertain to many different organizational outcomes, such as training, career development, job security, a breach of any or all of which may lead to a withdrawal of employee contributions. Panel studies (Robinson, 1996, Robinson and Rousseau, 1994, Robinson, Kraatz and Roussean, 1994) demonstrate effects of PCV on performance, satisfaction, civic virtue ("going the extra mile", commitment or contribution over and above contractual expectations),[6] organizational

[6] This construct can be difficult to operationalize and is also referred to as "extra-role" behaviour, see Robinson (1996) for detail.

commitment vs. careerism, and turnover intentions, "voice behaviours"[7] loyalty and withdrawal from the relationship (Turnley and Feldman, 1999). What is more, these effects act over significant spans of time. Robinson and Morrison (1995) demonstrated effects of promises made 18 months before the perception of PCV, on performance, turnover intention and "civic virtue" behaviour, measured two and a half years later. The effects on performance and turnover intention are mediated by unmet expectations and trust, which latter is seen as fundamental to the relationship, but the more diffuse, "civic virtue" or extra-role behaviour is mediated only by trust. (Robinson, 1996). It is important to note that, along with the language of promise and obligation, psychological contract violation can be discriminated from unmet expectations (Robinson and Morrison, 1995). PCV is a better predictor of employee or employer obligations than previous obligation (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994). There is something more than a failure of mechanical prediction going on, there is some extra quality involved in the experience.

This kind of distinction is important in justice research where fairness perceptions are considered to be something over and above satisfaction, and not entirely explained by expectation. Procedural justice is important in the interpretation of psychological contract violation (Morrison and Robinson, 1997, Turnley and Feldman, 1999) where both procedural fairness perceptions and the availability of justifications can moderate the effects of PCV (Turnley and Feldman, 1999). When PCV was broken down in this latter study into failures of obligations with respect to different job features, job security was the most important factor, above even regular pay increases.

Where downsizing is going on, PCV, especially with respect to job security, is more frequent and of greater magnitude than when there is no expectation of job security (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994). Turnley and Feldman (1999) use a measure of PCV which is the weighted sum of breaches of the components of the contract (analogous to the severity x probability construct of threat). The higher are peoples' expectations, the greater may be their experience of PCV. (There is no data concerning goodness of fit of this multiplicative function to a global measure of PCV or other indicator variable).

Thus the nature of the relationship at work can direct attention to different outcomes and whereas an employer's breach of relational obligations leads to a qualitative change in the relationship itself (McClean Parks and Kidder, 1994) whereas breach of a transactional relationship simply leads to a diminution of the employee's obligations (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994).

As noted above, PCV has a significant effect on that group of behaviours known as "civic virtue" (Robinson and Morrison, 1995) and notably, it is the more diffuse relational obligations which affect the similarly diffuse extra role behaviours, the same behaviours that are mediated by trust alone, as opposed to unmet expectations. Trust also has a larger effect upon performance and turnover intentions than unmet expectation. This is in line with the conceptualization of trust as a manifestation of a properly working relationship. If the role of trust and social support flagged up the

[7] Speaking up, or taking issue within the organization, not quite the same as the classic "voice" of procedural justice research where being heard mediates the effects of fairness.

importance of the relationships in the workplace, then consideration of psychological contract violation puts them centre stage.

To summarize: there is a set of informal obligations, seen in terms of a promise by employers, which forms a "psychological contract" between employees and their organisations. Violation of these obligations leads to a reduction in employee contributions to the organization. It is the failure of obligations bearing upon a committed, long term relationship which predict these responses, mediated by trust more than by unmet expectation. Violation of the psychological contract breaks down the relationship between employee and employer, crucial to which is trust and perceptions of procedural fairness. Job security can be part of that contract, but the presence or absence of it can also be a marker of a relational or a transactional relationship.

2.5 Career development and the importance of long term relationships

Both psychological contract violation and the perspective of changing career structures bring us to the consideration of the relationships between employer and employee. Justice research has demonstrated that standards of fairness are particularly important in long term relationships, or even where someone expects future interaction with another. This suggests precisely the sort of long term, morally evaluated exchange that is represented by the psychological contract. Perceptions of job security are negatively correlated with psychological contract violation. This suggests that once the contract is breached the employee finds him or herself in a different relationship in which job security is no longer expected.

The threat of job loss can thus be seen as a fundamental change in the relationship between an employer and employee. Where once the implicit contract was seen as an exchange of loyalty on the part of the employee against job security on the part of the employer, securing employee cooperation (Burchell et al., 1994) now employees must manage their own careers (McGovern et al., 1998). Herriot and Pemberton, (1996) suggest that what has happened over recent years is a change from a relational contract to a transactional one where the time horizons are short term, thus job insecurity does not merely trigger a fundamental shift in organizational relationships, but is itself part of the new relationship.

The failure of the traditional implicit contract of loyalty for job security and career development is highlighted in case studies of organizations by McGovern et al. (1998), who cast doubt upon the effective renegotiation of any new contract, concluding rather, that the old model has fallen apart without being replaced by something else. Given that organizational commitment and other attitudes can vary over a career (Jans, 1989) a career can be seen as a series of renegotiated psychological contracts as relationships change over time. Organizational commitment is predicted by different aspects of the situation at different stages of the career cycle. That team cohesion, organizational climate, relations with supervisor are all significant predictors of organizational commitment at different times (Brooks and Sears, 1991) suggests that different relationships, meaning both with different people and different in type, are salient at different career stages.

Hendry and Jenkins (1997) in reviewing the changes that have taken place in the labour market, also draw attention to the fundamental changes in relationship engendered by the loss of job security for many employees. But they also draw attention to the way in which aspects of the work relationship were in balance with the social environment of an organization. The exchange of job security for loyalty took place within a framework of a slowly changing external market environment, but it also maintained that framework. The external environment changed slowly because people tended to remain with their organizations, so that training and skill development tended to be in-house, in contrast to today's greater willingness of employees to take their marketable skills elsewhere. This represents a fundamental shift from a relational orientation to a transactional one with short term financial considerations and low job involvement coming to the fore. However, the authors point out that a new framework is more rhetoric than fact and that the management side does not always realize how changes are being experienced. Again it is the differential interpretation of change which is important: the new reciprocity must be spelled out. A failure of promises and procedural justice are identified as primary factors in the dislocation experienced by so many employees. Note the use of the moral terms "promise" and "fairness". The structure of an exchange relationship, its development and negotiation is a question of the moral domain.

Job security is part of the traditional contract, but so is career development. Failure in this, which bears upon occupational security can lead to turnover (Beehr and Taber, 1993, Johnston et al., 1993), and to changes in organizational commitment (Jans, 1989, Johnston et al., 1993, McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992, Orpen and Andrewes, 1993). Failure of career expectations can lead to a loss of "affiliative satisfaction", dissatisfaction with the relationship itself Korman et al. (1981) leading to both personal and social alienation and changed work attitudes. Career dissatisfaction can lead to negative attitudes (Aryee, 1993). Herriot et al. (1994) in testing this model, found that "fair dealing", a composite of procedural fairness and trust in promises, was the single largest predictor of career satisfaction. Noe et al. (1990) found that managerial support and "work salience", a scale which was a measure of attachment to the work role, were associated with career satisfaction, and both these constructs can be interpreted as bearing upon the quality of relationships at work. Perceived failures in career progression has effects upon perceptions of fairness and organizational commitment (Schwarzwald et al., 1992). Promotion opportunities are important job features which contribute to job insecurity (Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996), but employment contexts with different types of relationship were not significantly different in job insecurity with respect either to the loss of co-workers or team participation. Recent experience of promotion also leads to increased job security (Bender and Sloane, 1999).

A similar approach to organizational citizenship behaviour (roughly conceptualized as contribution above and beyond the strict demands of the employee/employer contract) distinguishes between covenantal and transactional relationships (Van Dyne et al., 1994). The covenantal relationship is similar in conception to relational contracts, being based upon long run fairness and reciprocity, and is characterized by greater affective commitment and a more diffuse perception of obligation than in a transactional contract. Although the transactional (instrumental) and relational (committed) orientations can be seen as the anchoring points of a continuum (Morrison and Robinson, 1997) in justice research the different relational orientations associated with different distributions are considered to be qualitatively different from each other

(Deutsch, 1985, Fiske, 1992). Newell and Dopson (1996) distinguish between affective and a "continuance" relationships.

Hallier and Lyon (1996) found that managers faced with redundancy rebuilt new relationships in their changed situation, relationships which involved significant changes in the nature and extent of their obligations to co-workers and the organization. Where managers demoted to technical grades were accepted within a team of new colleagues, their attitudes to the employer became more instrumental.

The discussion of psychological contract violation has already drawn attention to both the similarly "moral" dimension which distinguishes between unmet expectation and breach of contract, and to the role of trust. Trust is seen as arising from the bonds created in a relationship (Robinson, 1996). Perceived obligations comprise the fabric of the psychological contract, (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994). This is similar to the structural view of social relations taken by Fiske (1992) where social relations are constituted by the existence and experience of obligations. Where no obligations exist, no relationship exists.

The role of job security is beginning to appear: whereas the experience of insecurity hinges on threat and uncertainity, job security is about the stability of work relationships. Long term relationships characterized by commitment, generalized reciprocity rather than strict exchange, trust and procedural fairness are a norm from which the more short term, instrumental relationships of recent years depart. Organizations rely upon the general commitment, the willingness to put oneself out rather than watch the clock, and the flexibility this engenders for their performance in what is often a hostile commercial environment. This is all about having a place within a group or organization, of having that place recognized, of being valued by the group, of forming affective bonds and trusting others to behave in ways consonant with the relationships in place. The onset of job insecurity does not question one's physical membership of the group, whether one continues as an employee, but breaks down the trust established by putting a question mark over the continuation of a relationship. Security and trust are two manifestations of the same phenomenon: the smooth operation of an established relationship. Insecurity breaks the relationship where security was considered as part of the rewards of loyalty and contribution, so that even where some kind of employment relationship remains, it is of a different type, and trust (even of an cynical and instrumental kind) has to be re-established. Employees will feel aggrieved at what they may perceive as their wrongful treatment, the failures of obligation also lead to perceptions of unfairness. Procedural justice concerns gain greater importance as people try to identify where they now stand within the organization or group. The PCV perspective identifies distributive justice as important to determining the characteristic of a transactional relationship, on the other hand, research suggests that the form of distributive justice inside in a group is both marker and product of, and antecedent to, the qualitative type of relationship obtaining therein.

The later relational model by Tyler (1992) of procedural justice emphasizes the way in which the observance of procedural norms is bound up with the relationship between a member and a group or organization, and that many of the norms are about the fair treatment of members. Fairness and the honouring of promises, i.e. moral obligations are crucial to the relational contract. Honouring obligations contained within a working relationship is an important factor in responses to an uncertain situation (Newell and Dopson, 1996) and generating and maintaining loyalty and trust. Failure in

this respect generates negative attitudes. "Trust acts as a guideline" (Robinson, 1996) and affects how an employee perceives the situation. Those who have greater trust in their employer are less likely to perceive breach of the psychological contract (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994) as are those who exhibit extra-role behaviour (which might be taken to indicate a committed relationship). Procedural, interactional and distributive fairness is seen as a marker of future conduct and an important part of long term reciprocity: if an organization has acted fairly now, there is a greater probability that it will do so in the future (Morrison and Robinson, 1997).

2.6 Conclusion

The findings above would suggest that job insecurity is a serious problem affecting both the performance of the firms within which it takes place and the health and welfare of those affected. At the very least, it suggests that mitigation of job security or its effects must be considered by any society which claims to pursue the welfare of its citizens.

3. Fairness and job security

The responses to layoffs demonstrate a moderating effect for fairness, and fairness is known to be particularly important in long term relationships. Distributive, procedural and interactional justice issues are all important in the layoff situation. Distributive justice (or fairness) refers to perceptions of the fairness of outcomes; procedural justice refers to the fairness perceptions of procedures for arriving at those outcomes; interactional justice refers to fairness perceptions of one's personal treatment during a procedure, and has effects over and above procedural justice. Many of the specific criteria involved in both procedural justice (having a voice in the procedure, consistency and transparency in procedures, absence of favouritism) and interactional justice (equal respect for all participants, being told of decisions personally and being given an explanation) may reflect the particular beliefs in our culture as to what is "fair" in those particular circumstances, but one aspect of interactional justice, the provision of accounts or explanations, has been shown to be of key importance in explaining fairness perceptions and responses.

The accounts provided are one of the most important determinants of the reactions of both survivors and victims of redundancy in both field and experimental settings (Bies Shapiro and Cummings, 1988). Although accounts are treated as a part of interactional justice in the justice literature, the attributional perspective taken above, the importance of sense-making, and the construction of meaning in the work situation, all suggest that the explanations involved in insecure situations are deserving of separate treatment altogether. Indeed, one of the seminal papers on this issue (Bies, 1987) effectively recasts the experience of injustice as a failure of accounts.

Before proceeding to discuss the work dealing with fairness perceptions, two methodological points need to be made. Firstly, no study actually asks about the fairness of job security *per se*. Most studies do not even ask for perceptions of the fairness of the distribution of layoffs, but look at the procedural fairness of the situation. Only two studies ask questions about the distribution of layoffs, and only one of these specifically asks for the fairness of a particular criterion (Armstrong-Stassen, 1993).

Secondly, some of the studies which report results about fairness do not actually have direct measures. Fairness is operationalized through a specific component of the decision process (e.g. advanced warning as a marker of procedural fairness, Brockner et al., 1994) or a specific outcome (compensation of the victim as a marker of distributive justice). While there is ample evidence that the adequacy of accounts is an important predictor of procedural justice (Brockner and Greenberg, 1990, Bies and Shapiro, 1987), the inference of perceptions of distributive justice from the provision of some assistance to those laid off is more questionable. Although these are outcomes, they could as easily be described as part of interactional justice (how people are treated) as distributive justice. Moreover, even if this can be a marker of how fair the layoff was, it tells us nothing about the criteria for the distribution of the layoffs.

3.1 Understanding the phenomenon of justice and fairness

The conceptualization of justice in the social psychological literature is often ill defined. For example, a recent discussion by Montada (1996) defines the problem thus: "To state injustice presupposes answers to questions such as 'Are anybody's entitlements violated?'" (1992, p.134)."

Talk of entitlements is very characteristic of a culture defined by legal rights, government provision and individualism. Social scientists, however, are trying to look at how fairness functions within society. This distinction is extremely important. As soon as one identifies "entitlement" as part of justice, then one is defining the specific content of what is, in fact, a formal category. We all have different ideas about what constitutes justice, and different ideas relevant to different contexts, but the specific ideas about the nature of justice do have certain properties in common, and it is these properties that social science is trying to identify. The object of justice research is to identify the underlying form of justice and its functional effects in social processes. What is "what we call justice" doing in our society? Once that is understood, then the effect of specific ideas being labelled as justice can be assessed.

Work from the development of moral reasoning (Shweder et al. 1991) draws attention to the fact that moral categories are part of a much broader spectrum of dos and don'ts which children learn as they mature. These prescriptions range from quite practical things such as "do not drink out of your teacher's cup", to highly revered moral commandments such as "thou shalt not kill". Cross cultural work places this in the context of a continuum of rules that range from the dictates of the physical world, to the commandments of religion. Precisely what is considered just varies between cultures. But the consequences of something being considered just have more in common: committing unjust acts brings sanction down upon the head of the doer, results in guilt, retribution, anger from others and demands for restitution. What is considered just is variable in content, the consequences of justice, what it does, how we see it and how it functions have much in common.

Looking at justice as part of a continuum of "things which are done" explains why the positive phenomenon of justice is more important than merely mopping up the debris of injustice. The whole point is that if something is considered just then we think that it ought to be done, we will do it, encourage others to do it, support others in doing it, and expect yet more people to see that justice is done. The fact that we do not always actually do what is just reflects the fact that it is not the only criterion in a decision

process, but that which is just is characterized by a high weight in that process. It is seen as universal and applying to all persons (although in e.g. caste societies, what is required of different people may vary, but all must do what it is just for *them* to do). It is experienced as an external force motivating the person to act (Heider, 1958).

Mikula, Petri and Tanzer (1990) asked people for examples of what is and is not just, and the resultant analysis shows that distributive issues are only one part of a larger domain covering many aspects of our social life. The way in which words such as "justice" and "fairness" are used (Stock, 1999) demonstrate that not only are the words similar in meaning, but that they are also terms for a more general idea of what is right, what is done, what should be done. All these different functions have one important thing in common: they represent positive decision criteria in processes of evaluation. What is right, fair and just, what ought to be done, these are the way we talk about decision criteria which are characterized by a heavy weight.

The idea of a continuum of criteria from the dictates of the physical world to the prescriptions we make for our societies gives a useful perspective on this question of high weight. We all know that the nature of justice is contested and this at first seems to contradict what has just been said. But the reason that the content of justice and moral norms is contested is because the inclusion of a specific act, principle, outcome or procedure within the domain of what is right and what is done, what should always be done, has important consequences for the people concerned and for the relative position of different groups in our society.

What is done, with or, more often without, comment or deliberate decision, has a powerful effect upon the social situation. If something, such as not making people redundant, has a high weight both in the decision processes of individuals and in the public deliberations of a group, then there is a much higher probability that the relevant action, avoiding redundancies, will be performed. But if there are other factors which are perceived to be part of the natural order of things, such as the need for competitiveness in a global economy, then these criteria will have an overwhelming weight in decisions. For example, Bies, Shapiro and Cummings (1988) found that such "givens" as company policy or budget constraints were the key to accounts being considered adequate (and see Burchell et al., 1999 for a discussion of the pressures on firms trying to operate no redundancy agreements). Murder is considered to be wrong, completely and utterly wrong. Murders do happen but they are not, contrary to the evidence of detective stories, very common. Making people redundant is also considered wrong, but not quite as much so as crimes against the person. But what if we lived in a world where making people redundant was regarded as tantamount to murder?

Not only is "what is done" part of what constitutes a situation, part of what tells us what situation we are in ("this is an office therefore I should be working not doing my sewing"), it has serious consequences for the way in which people are treated, the outcomes which result and for the way in which we relate to each other.

3.2 Procedural justice and job security

Procedural, distributive and interactional justice are all considered important to the layoff situation. (Brockner and Greenberg, 1990, Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993) Fairness criteria are seen to form part of the context of "microeconomic" employment

security (Buechtermann, 1993) and it is perceptions of procedure and the role of accounts which have attracted most attention. It must be remembered that in the field of justice research "justice" and "fairness" are considered to be synonymous. Researchers discuss the role of justice but actually ask their respondents about fairness. The importance of accounts is considered to be part of interactional justice (Bies, 1987, Bies and Moag, 1986) which is essentially the perceptions of the fairness of how one is treated personally within a procedure. The role of accounts has an especial importance from the social constructionist viewpoint. The discussion of the nature of justice and fairness above draws attention to the way in which definitions and explanations of a situation contribute to that situation: you cannot get married if you do not know what marriage is (Godelier, 1986). Accounts build up our picture of the situation, therefore what gets into those accounts is of prime importance. The work on attributions and job security has shown that attributions, which are explanations and thus form part of an account, influence our responses to the situation.

Just as attributions of causality lead to certain conclusions about what can be done in a situation, explanations of why people receive certain outcomes, why they are being laid off, bear upon the evaluation of that act, whether it was right or wrong, fair or unfair. Some accounts are considered more "adequate" than others (Bies and Shapiro, 1987), they better justify the events that have happened, they make it alright that someone has been harmed, undesirable, perhaps, but acceptable, appropriate, and even unavoidable. Where the account is considered acceptable, no retribution or negative response is considered necessary but where the account is considered unacceptable other processes take place. The important phenomenon is the acceptance of the account, what has happened has been classified as "to be done" and therefore not to be undone.

The effects of procedural justice in the layoff situation

Fairness is seen as important in the layoff situation because jobs are scarce resources (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993). Where negative outcomes occur, the fairness of the procedures which allocate them are of crucial importance in determining the reactions of those left behind (Armstrong-Stassen, 1993, Brockner and Greenberg, 1990, Brockner, Tyler and Cooper-Schneider, 1992, Brockner et al., 1993, 1994, Lerner and Somers, 1989). Procedural justice is the key to the acceptance of negative outcomes or decisions against someone's wishes, it produces a "cushion of support" for leaders to take unpopular decisions (Lind and Tyler, 1988, Tyler, 1992).

The discussion of the importance of relationships in section 2.5 underlined the importance of procedural justice to a relational contract. McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) show that procedural and distributive justice are important in the evaluation of those personal (job and pay satisfaction) and organizational outcomes (organizational commitment and evaluation of supervisor) that are the long term product of a relational contract. Where procedural justice is low, people are more responsive to distributive justice. Procedural justice perceptions can have an effect upon affective commitment to the organization.

Construction of the situation is important because many of the effects of fairness are in interaction with other situational variables. Job security is seen as a moderator of responses to fairness (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993, p.130), but the relationship could as well be put the other way around. Table 4 summarizes the effects, including the moderating of fairness on work related variables.

Table 4. The moderating effects of fairness

Variable	Effect of fairness	References
Trust	Where procedural fairness is low negatively related to poor outcomes	Brockner et al., 1994
Work effort	Fairness increases productivity after layoffs, especially for those low in self esteem, or high in attachment	Brockner and Greenberg, 1990 Brockner, Tyler and Cooper-Schneider, 1992 Brockner et al., 1987 Brockner, 1990 Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993
Retaliation	Acceptance of outcomes when procedural fairness is high	Skarlicki and Folger, 1997
Identification with, and attachment to others and the organization	Fairness is more important where prior commitment is high	Mansour-Cole & Scott, 1988 Brockner, 1990, Brockner et al., 1992, Brockner et al., 1993, Brockner et al., 1994 Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993 Orpen and Andrewes, 1993
Turnover	Direct effects of fairness but more important for those with prior attachment Weaker effect of PCV on exit when justification is adequate	Brockner et al., 1992 Turnley and Feldman, 1999 Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993 Brockner et al., 1993
Career satisfaction	Affected by both procedural and outcome fairness	Orpen and Andrewes, 1993

The interaction between fairness and other factors is crucial to understanding the importance of relationships. The quality of relationships between employee and supervisor, in terms of the trust, mutual respect and obligation they feel, affects fairness perceptions (Mansour-Cole and Scott, 1988). The different forms of fairness also interact: distributive justice (pay outcomes) only has an effect on retaliation in a work setting when either interactional or procedural justice are high (Skarlicki and Folger, 1997). In this study the procedural and interactional measures were similar (voice, consistency, accuracy of information) underlining the overlap between concepts, but one was in relation to the formal procedures, the other to how the person was actually treated. Procedural concerns seem to have primacy over distributive ones. Deutsch (1985) suggests that procedural concerns are to the fore when the actual distribution is accepted. Since the proportional distribution of pay at work is scarcely questioned (Stock, 1999), this is hardly surprising. Outcomes and the manner of communication (which can be considered a procedural/interactional issue) also affect organizational trust and support (Brockner et al., 1994) and affective commitment (Mansour-Cole and Scott, 1988). From whom one hears about redundancy matters, especially in the context of one's relationships with one's co-workers and supervisors, or the way in which layoffs are handled, can have significant effects on morale and turnover intentions (Kozlowski et al., 1993, Sutton et al., 1986). Fairness moderates the effect of perceived job quality on turnover intentions (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993). When the psychological contract has broken down, procedural fairness becomes important and can moderate turnover responses (Turnley and Feldman, 1999). Supervisor favouritism, which can be construed as a form of procedural injustice, predicts increased dissatisfaction with job security (Gallie et al., 1998). Being "evenhanded" is an

important norm in this situation, as are the requirements of personal respect, maintaining the other's dignity, avoiding the appearance of arbitrary decisions and being honest about the situation (Sutton, et al., 1986), all of which are typical of the concerns of interactional and procedural justice.

The group value model

Procedural justice is considered to be important because how one is treated by the procedures of an organization or group tells one how one is valued by that organization or group (Lind and Tyler, 1988, Tyler, 1992). It demonstrates one's position in the group, makes it patent. Studies of those made redundant (Leana and Feldman, 1992, Westergaard et al., 1989) draw attention to the way in which redundancy makes people feel useless, "thrown on the scrap heap". In other words, the procedure and the manner in which employees are treated sends them messages about where they are in the organization, and thus has consequences for self-esteem and self-worth. Clear procedures are held to be important in giving employees information in times of uncertainty (Greenhalgh, 1983) where more objective criteria for layoffs, such as seniority, may be preferred to merit. Where the latter is used the transparency of the appraisal system is all important (Tombaugh and White, 1990) and much of the stress of the post-layoff environment focuses on the uncertainties about roles and changed job definitions. In experiments, the messages that participants receive about how another has been treated affects the work effort they subsequently expend in laboratory tasks (Brockner and Greenberg, 1990). Where a co-worker is dismissed without compensation, work effort is less than when he or she is compensated or no layoff takes place, but the effect is only for those who identified with the one laid off. All layoffs are seen as unfair in this situation, but compensated layoffs are regarded as more fair than uncompensated and the effect is more marked for those who identify with the victims of layoff. Prior attachment to co-workers has an effect on turnover intentions and organizational commitment, and interacts with fairness perceptions (Brockner et al., 1993).

It is this finding that underlies the conclusion that fairness affects work effort in the layoff situation, even though direct measures of distributive fairness are not used. The availability of such compensation also affects organizational commitment in the field (Brockner et al., 1987, Brockner, 1990), where absence of such compensation results in lower commitment but only if there is identification with those who have been laid off. This interaction is what is predicted by the group value model: procedural fairness is more important to those who are attached to the group in question (Brockner, Davy and Carter, 1985). The interaction between identification with the co-worker and increase in work performance is also found in the laboratory experiments and subjects responded differently to merit based dismissal of the co-worker from their reactions to a random choice of the other. Where the choice of who was to be dismissed was random, subjects increased their work effort (Brockner and Greenberg, 1990, p.57). In the case of random layoffs, derogation of the victim took place. Where the layoff was merit based no difference in work effort from the control group was observed (Brockner et al., 1986). Subjects appear to be changing their behaviour in response to information from the environment. This can be interpreted as process of psychological distancing of oneself from those affected or as a way of restoring equity, i.e. a balance between inputs and outputs, in such a way as to bolster a perception that the same fate cannot be applied to the self. The importance of equity itself is underlined by the effects of effort-reward imbalance on mental health reported above (section 2.2.5).

The survivors of layoffs also respond to the reactions of their laid off co-workers (Sutton et al., 1986). Where co-workers' responses are negative, and where the process is seen as unfair, the distress of the survivors is increased. In laboratory studies, where those reactions were more unfavourable, work quality decreased more than where the reaction was more favourable and this effect was moderated by liking for the other. In a field experiment (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993 p.128) the same results were replicated but only in conditions where there was little communication with co-workers about the layoff. Where communications were high, this moderating effect disappeared and the change in work effort tracked the favourability of others' reactions. People are not only using information from their environment but their relationship with others colours how they respond, and presumably how they are interpreting the information. The overriding of the attachment effect where people communicate freely is reminiscent of the effect of transparency of communication in negotiating situations (Lamm, Kayser and Schwinger, 1982) where the more communication takes place, the more participants are likely to respond to standards of fairness rather than self-interest. Providing help for those who leave can be seen as a marker of the relationship between employer and employee, an indication of future conduct (Sutton et al., 1986).

It should be noted that Mansour-Cole and Scott (1988) found no effect of prior affective commitment to the organization (as opposed to the layoff victims). Rather it was post-layoff affective commitment which was related to procedural fairness. The leader-member exchange relationship which moderated reactions to how information was given, stresses trust, respect and obligation, characteristic of a relational orientation. It is therefore unsurprising that procedural fairness is important nor that the quality of the relationship moderates the association between source of announcement (which is considered a marker of procedural justice by other authors) and commitment.

What is at issue is a process of sense-making, of building up a picture of the situation, a model or representation which will mediate the behavioural responses observed: the relationship between people is an important part of the phenomenon. People are trying to orient themselves at a time of uncertainty and see where they stand in relation to the organization, and what might affect them in the future. Fairness is an earnest of future conduct (Morrison and Robinson, 1997): fairness is known to be particularly important where people expect future interaction (Robinson, 1996). The discussion of psychological contracts emphasized the importance of fairness to relational orientations. Expectation of future interaction (Lamm, Kayser and Schwinger, 1982, Shapiro, 1975) can affect the type of allocation made, increasing the likelihood that an allocator will use equality rather than equity. The rules about distributions, and who is entitled to what under them, can work in both directions, thus both justifying a situation and creating standards for future action (Mikula and Schwinger, 1978).

The group value model also accounts for the importance of voice: being given a voice in the decision process is considered to be a recognition of group membership. Yet voice does not inevitably lead to perceptions of procedural fairness (Daly and Geyer, 1994). In a study of organizational change, where decisions over relocation were taken on site there was a relationship between voice (having input to decision making) and procedural fairness, but not where decisions were taken centrally in the organization. It may be explained by the absence of any expectation that the employees should be consulted in the latter case. This points to a different sort of voice, and thus procedural fairness, being expected in different types of relationship.

Voice has an effect upon job satisfaction as well as fairness perceptions (Davy et al., 1991). Structural equation modelling in a field setting has shown that job security also has an effect upon job satisfaction but that its effects upon organizational commitment were indirect, being mediated entirely by job satisfaction. Having a voice in the decision process is related to perceptions of job security. Hence job security is related to representation security. Greenhalgh (1983) points out that drawing people in to the process can change relationships from potentially destructive competitions for scarce resources to cooperation (ibid., p.435). Voice does not necessarily mean only employees stating their views, a two-way dialogue can be important (Marchington et al. 1994). The Rowntree study noted that representation was a topic that emerged from the in-depth interviews.

The importance of accounts

Organizational commitment is responsive to the accounts given during downsizing, and to the way people are treated both of which are important components of interactional justice (Naumann et al., 1995).

In several studies of the effects of procedural fairness, interactional justice is operationalized as a perception of the accounts given of the layoff. Although adequacy of accounts is highly correlated with procedural fairness, it must be borne in mind that these are not necessarily direct measures. Whether someone accepts an account is the crucial issue (Lerner and Somers, 1989). Some studies do not conceptualize "adequacy" very clearly, but Mansour-Cole and Scott (1988) assessed the "legitimacy" of accounts as whether employees believed the causal account given. Where they did so the survivors had greater organizational commitment and perceived greater procedural fairness. This supports the view that acceptance is the crucial phenomenon.

Armstrong-Stassen (1993) found that perceptions of distributive and procedural fairness affected whether employees responded to layoffs with active coping measures such as increased work effort, time and energy devoted to work, working harder, working longer hours. It was hypothesized that supervisors, by having better information about the layoffs and likely to understand and agree with the rationale for them, would perceive the layoffs as fairer than technical employees. This hypothesis was supported and interviews revealed that the supervisory employees were better informed and more likely to agree with the companies account. These effects remained even when controlling for prior experience of layoffs and prior commitment.

Just as accepting the explanation can be the basis of legitimacy (Mansour-Cole and Scott, 1988), so the giving of an explanation leads to perceptions of procedural fairness (Daly and Geyer, 1994, Brockner et al., 1990). The clarity of the explanation offered has an effect upon work effort after layoffs, and the "unusualness" of the account with respect to the prevailing organizational culture interacts with clarity of the account. Where clarity is low and unusualness high, the change in work effort is lower than in other conditions and the effect of the clarity of the explanation is most noticeable where it is an unusual one (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993, p.127). In other words people are trying to make sense of something and where an event is explained in terms of unusual reasons, it is more important to explain clearly. But the use of an unusual explanation raises the question of the relationship of an account to the background cultural context. What is "clear" and what is "adequate" are themselves evaluations based upon

standards, beliefs about what is right, and how things work. Whether people accept company policy as an adequate justification is a question in itself.

Whether people believe that layoffs are avoidable or not has a significant effect on perceptions of fairness and organizational commitment and turnover (Brockner et al., 1990); in this study, work effort was more closely related to the level of provision for those laid off. Deciding whether layoffs were avoidable is an attribution of control: did the organization choose to make people redundant, was there an alternative route, or was the organization powerless in the face of external events? There is a weighing of the explanation and sometimes it may be found wanting. How people explain the situation is an important mediator of their responses and those explanations, including those offered by authorities are most important where there is great uncertainty (Brockner et al., 1990) and when the clarity of the account leads to more favourable reactions.

The beliefs that people bring with them into a situation are also important. Just world beliefs (a tendency to perceive the world as fair, to believe that people deserve their outcomes), for example, can moderate group rather than personal discontent (Hafer and Olson, 1993) and coping responses (Tomaka and Blascovich, 1994). They also predict behavioural responses such as group behaviour. Just world beliefs are important for job security because they lead to attributions and beliefs about the future (Lerner, 1996) Those with just world beliefs are more likely to experience depression when affected by redundancies although they show greater efforts at job search and positive attitudes, but this does disappear after a while (cf. Westergaard et al., 1989 who found that those who initially were successful in finding a job were no better off three years later than those who had not). The implicit contract is also relevant to perceptions of fairness and job security and the perceptions of job insecurity or layoffs outcomes as an undeserved deprivation can be crucial to adverse responses (Lerner, 1996).

3.3 The lack of direct evidence about distributive justice and job security

The group value model emphasizes the importance of procedural justice for the nature and quality of relationships in the workplace, but distributive justice has, if anything, an even more significant role. Work on distributive justice recognizes three broad allocation principles: need, proportionality (equity) and equality. Proportionality can be an actual ratio, proportional to a given criterion such as effort, skill, output, or it can be a simple rank ordering, based upon a criterion such as seniority or responsibility. It is characterized by salient, and usually large, inequalities. These three broad principles are associated with different types of social relationship: need with welfare based relations, proportionality with competitive or individualistic relations, and equality with cooperation (Deutsch, 1985, Fiske, 1992, Lerner, 1991, and Tornblom, 1992 for a review of the multiprinciple approach).

The relationships are manifested in a set of attitudes, expectations and obligations, which result in judgements of fairness, of what ought to be. Moreover, aspects of the relationships, such as telling people that others are similar to themselves, can lead to the adoption of the appropriate distribution (Deutsch 1985, 1987), while working in a group organized by one of the distribution principles induces the attitudes, such as a wish to beat others or highlighting differences between people, which make up a social

relationship. A social relationship (Fiske, 1992) is regarded as being made up of a set of obligations, expectations, "oughts", about what goes with what, not dissimilar to the idea of a psychological contract (see section 2.4). This bundle of "oughts" generate expectations about what should happen and how others should behave. Since what ought to be is part of the same basic phenomenon as fairness, these obligations are the basis for judgements of fairness.

In an important way, distributions set up the conditions and state of mind, which bring different types of social interaction into being. And most important of all, the distributions can have their effects (e.g. equality leading to more cooperative working) against the grain of people's initial opinions (Deutsch, 1985, Stock, 1999). It is the actual experience of a distribution which has the greatest effect on attitudes. When people talk about the distribution of different resources within one situation, and where these are seen to follow different distribution rules (e.g. proportionality for income, equality for how people are treated and need for healthcare), the very same situation will be described in terms of different types of relationships (Stock, 1995, 2000).

Nearly all the studies looking at fairness perceptions in a layoff situation deal with procedural justice measures. However, both Brockner, Tyler and Cooper-Schneider (1992) and Armstrong-Stassen (1993) look at distributive justice, in referring to perceptions of the fairness of the criteria used to determine who was laid off. The former asked their respondents to indicate which of several criteria (performance, seniority, skills, job function and influence with others) was used to determine who was laid off, but do not report these results. The fairness of the criteria used for layoffs does not have a main effect, but does interact with prior commitment to the organization for both organizational commitment and turnover intention, the effect is marginally significant for work effort. Organizational commitment was much lower and turnover intention much higher where fairness was low and prior commitment high. Yet again, fairness is important for relationships.

Armstrong-Stassen (1993) compared the responses to the fairness of layoffs of white and blue collar workers, specifically examining their perceptions of the fairness of the distribution of layoffs between the two classes of employee. Three groups of employees, supervisors and technicians with and without experience of previous redundancies, rated the fairness of the distribution and the procedure. Organizational commitment, job security and organizational morale were the dependent variables. There were significant differences between the groups for all of these measures but there were no differences in their trust in management. Retrospective measures of job security, well being, organizational morale and intention to remain all showed a decrease over a year. There were differences between the different groups of employees on all these measures, although not all were significant. Unfortunately no regression analysis was undertaken and little can be said about the relationships between the variables. Correlations, controlled for tenure, layoff exposure and prior organizational commitment, show associations between fairness of the account and all the other measures, with the largest correlation between account fairness and the fairness of the layoff and some between account fairness and trust in the company. The fairness of the layoff distribution was associated most strongly with job security.

Daly and Geyer (1994) found that perceptions of outcome fairness (distributive justice) had a direct effect upon intent to remain. Meeting expectations with respect to several job facets, including job security, can lead to global fairness judgements of

allocators (Mueller et al., 1999) and the latter indicates a cumulative effect (similar to that postulated for perceived threat) of satisfaction with multiple job features.

There are, however, no studies of how people perceive the distribution of job security in society. Although there was no effect for age upon perceptions of insecurity in the Rowntree study, age was the most frequently cited reason for believing one's prospects in the labour market were poor. Age, job status, family status and low income are all significant predictors of whether someone will be made redundant during restructuring (Wass, 1996). This is effectively a perception of a proportional distribution based upon age. Perception that promotions are based upon merit (i.e. career security) leads to positive fairness judgements (Orpen and Andrewes, 1993). This last study found that variables representing procedural issues accounted for more of the variance in fairness perceptions that actual outcomes.

Montada (1996) considers that the unfairness of unemployment (of which job insecurity is a threat) is based upon the undeserved nature of a negative outcome. This is similar to the way in which some people consider poverty to be unfair because it is an undeserved hardship, even when they have misgivings about paying unemployment benefits to those who do not work (Taylor-Gooby, 1987, Stock, 1999). Fairness judgements about unemployment are affected by the experience of job security, the rules of justice people prefer, political orientation, attributions of responsibility and just world beliefs (Montada, 1996) and also by fundamental beliefs about the nature and operation of society (Montada, 1996, Stock 1999). Montada also distinguishes between opinions in the abstract about what should be done about unemployment and individual willingness to share in some redistribution. This divergence is also familiar from social attitudes to taxation and redistribution (Taylor-Gooby, 1987).

Clearly people can have different perceptions of the same situation, both in rating the fairness of outcomes and the criteria that underlies them (Armstrong-Stassen, 1993). But do they perceive an overall pattern in the job security that they and other people have, or do not have? How do they perceive the degree to which different people, different jobs, different professions, have or do not have job security or is job security an all or nothing phenomenon? We know even less about how people perceive the wider issues of income and employment security.

If nothing else job security is a social good with a pattern of distribution. Burchell's (1999) study of the distribution of job insecurity presents the distribution of subjective perceptions of job insecurity. There is no information about peoples' perceptions of the distribution of (own and others') job security. There will be associated fairness judgements of this distribution and we would expect such judgements to be related to what respondents consider to be just, right, what ought to be.

3.4 Indirect evidence about distributive justice

Nearly all the work on fairness in the layoff situation has studied procedural justice, but the few studies which asked direct questions about distribution show that distributive fairness is correlated with job security, organizational commitment job satisfaction, and turnover intention. Procedural and distributive justice are correlated. So, even if we have little direct evidence about the importance and effects of distributive justice and job security, we do have a great deal of evidence about

distributive justice and organizational variables such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction, the same variables which are affected by job security. The existence of direct evidence about job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job security means that it is possible to integrate what is known about organizational fairness into the "threat x powerlessness" model of job security via its effects upon organizational commitment.

Davy et al.'s (1991) structural equation modelling has demonstrated that the effect of procedural fairness upon turnover and organizational commitment is mediated by job satisfaction, as is the effect of job security. Since procedural and distributive fairness are associated, one can infer the existence of indirect effects of distributive justice mediated by procedural fairness and job satisfaction. This, however, assumes that the influence is reciprocal: that this is a reasonable assumption is supported by the reciprocal nature of the associations between the elements that make up the social relationships of which distributions are a part. One can view fairness and job security, along with trust, as arising out of the operation of long term relationships. Fairness and job security are particular manifestations of the smooth operation of different types of relationship. Things are happening as they "ought" to happen.

Where we know the effects of organizational commitment, job satisfaction and procedural justice, we can be reasonably sure that distributive fairness will be important as well. When we are seeking to understand the effects of job insecurity within a complex field setting, the consequences of distributional issues, and their fairness, will depend on the relationships obtaining. Conversely, understanding what is considered fair in those circumstances, will illuminate the relationships which underlie the situation.

It may also be possible to say something about fairness and occupational security, insofar as we have information about career satisfaction. If this latter can be accepted as a proxy for occupational security, or, as with procedural justice, a mediator of effects, then one may infer that both procedural and outcome fairness will be important for career security (Orpen and Andrewes, 1993).

3.5 The justice perspective

Modern justice research suggests that how you are treated and what you receive, procedural and distributive fairness, are crucial to perceptions of how you fit in and who you are within a social group.

Procedural justice is what oils the works of a social group, being of particular importance where outcomes are negative. Even where decisions are not in someone's favour, they accept the outcomes as legitimate if they perceive the procedure to be fair. If everyone started to argue with decisions they disliked, our system of governance would soon be compromised. Procedural justice is part of the "psychological infrastructure" that allows a complex society to function. But procedural justice also marks out the relationships in a group so that you know where you are within it.

Distributions, on the other hand, are fundamental to the type of relationship of which one is part. Different types of distribution are associated with the perception of different types of social relations, different aspects of people and different description of the social group (Stock, 2000). Indeed, certain types of description only occur with

some of the rules: when people are discussing a situation of need, they rarely refer to the characteristics of individuals, which are salient when a proportional distribution is considered. These elements form mental models of what goes with what, what "ought" to be in that situation, which will be used to generate expectations, judge outcomes and make fairness evaluations. Because a great deal of information is needed to make judgements of fairness, it is thought that it is stored together in a template or schema, often called a justice ideology (Kayser and Schwinger, 1982).

Job security is clearly differentially distributed. As a salient resource within society, the distribution of job security will have a powerful effect upon people's perceptions and expectations of the society around them. The same process that creates these expectations will generate responses congruent with the distribution. Proportional distributions, for example, lead to competitive and individualistic social relations and are rarely associated with increased productivity.

Justice research demonstrates that it is not simply a matter of treating people decently, although procedural justice emphasizes that dignity in interpersonal treatment is important. Rather, the distribution which obtains, who does and should get what, will drive forms of relationships which will have profound consequences for perceptions of and responses to, a social group, or even society itself.

3.6 Morality and the boundaries of the moral community

Beliefs about distributions, particularly of income and power, are inherently political. They are about the shape of society, about who is favoured and who is not, who is entitled to certain goods, who merits special treatment. Beliefs about distributions are ideological in the sense, not merely of forming a coherent set of ideas, but of being the psychological infrastructure that supports, through explanation and justification, a certain state of affairs. The ideological process works to explain and justify particular social arrangements, and (as discussed in section 3.1) they come to seem inevitable, and part of an immutable natural order. Burchell et al. (1999) observed that management did not consider themselves absolutely bound by no-redundancy agreements (p.57). Economic circumstances have become the absolute and primary values.

Ideology is part of the world-view we create not simply to explain the world, but in order to act within it. The moral norms and rules constructed have the function of creating both the appearance of regularity and regularity (of behaviour) itself. Without some points of reference in our perceived world, we cannot function psychologically. The obligations inherent in relationships produce a regularity which is as vital to the functioning of society as to the organization or its employees. Complex, coordinated action cannot take place without reliable regularity of people and processes. If this regularity is removed it is like pulling the rug out from under people's feet, hence why uncertainty is so aversive, and insecurity so stressful.

If a social relationship is made up of a bundle of obligations, then the most important question becomes, to whom do we owe such obligations? One of the functions of ideology, and of the models of relationships described in the previous section, is not only to explain a distribution, but to specify to whom it applies: the nature of the recipient is one of the elements of a justice ideology (Cohen, 1987, Kayser

and Schwinger, 1982). In doing so ideology is dictating the boundaries of the moral community, those persons to whom we carry some obligation (Habermas, 1979). It is for this reason that the explanations of who is or is not employed, who is or is not secure in their work, why jobs are not available, or the probability of finding a job, are crucial to the maintenance of a particular distribution of gains and costs (Montada, 1996).

However, ideology does not, in so large and complex a society as ours, define a simple ingroup and outgroup, it defines many types of outgroup and the relationship one's own group has to these others. Thus membership of the outgroup does not put someone beyond the social pale, but changes the norms which are considered to apply. Hallier and Lyon (1996) found that managers failed to realize their jobs were under threat simply because they distinguished themselves from the subordinate group at risk.

It is not merely that job security and/or redundancy are seen as moral issues, nor even that they are social goods which can be distributed according to a rule. Job security is about both the kind of relationship you have or do not have with your employer and, on another level, about whether you are to have such a relationship in the future at all. That this larger level is important can be seen in the way that both survivors and layoff victims judge the fairness of a company's actions by whether some compensation or help was provided to the departing employees (Brockner et al., 1992, Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1993, Greenhalgh, 1983, Leana and Feldman, 1992). All obligations did not cease with the termination of employment. Kahneman, Knetch and Thaler (1986) demonstrate that lay people do think that economic actors, whether individuals or organizations, are bound by rules of fairness.

Consideration of the different types of socio-economic security presented in section 1, demonstrate the way in which security in the workplace is part of the wider society. Labour market security is about whether you are or are not to have the role of worker in your society. Occupational security is about whether you are or are not to follow your particular calling. In each case it is a question of whether certain people, or the society around you, has certain sorts of obligation toward you. In societies with extensive welfare provision, obligations to the unemployed are recognized. You have basic socio-economic security: you have security of food and shelter, basic healthcare, education and protection from crime. Under all circumstances, no matter how your time is spent, you are still a member of society and these basic securities are extended to you. The psychology of distributions tell us that you will know what kind of society you are in from the relative remuneration available. Precisely what your society is prepared to guarantee speaks volumes for the nature of your primary membership of society.

A job is the lynchpin of social identity in western culture, without it people have no proper place among their fellows and cannot fit themselves, nor be fitted by others, into that map of the world we all need in order to function. It is for this reason that job security may have effects over and above the sum of its facets, and why job security is distinguishable from income security. This paper has drawn attention to the possibility of a non-linear phenomenon, and of the unknown but potentially greater effects of chronic insecurity. Uncertainty itself is an aversive experience, one's identity in society is fundamental to the worldview created to deal with such uncertainty. Part of that worldview is a model of society defining the relationships therein. Insecurity is an important, possibly defining, facet of those relationships. Fairness and trust, like security, are manifestations of the appropriate functioning of those relationships and all three have profound effects upon those attitudes to society which are the outward form

of the relationship. Work-related security has, as a result, profound effects upon personal well-being and upon the nature of relationships within society and hence upon the nature of society itself.

4. A model of socio-economic security

This paper has concentrated on job security, as the type of work-related security that is the most studied, and the results are primarily from the UK and US. Table 5 summarizes some recent studies focusing on other countries.

The ILO InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security sees security at work (job security, work security, and occupational (career progression) security) as embedded in a wider matrix of socio-economic relationships which give rise to representation, employment, labour market and income security, all of which are founded upon basic security. The phenomenon of security, however, whatever its range or focus, has a common core: people feel secure when they are able to rely upon expectations about the future arising from the social relationships they have.

Table 5. Recent studies of job security and insecurity

Country	References
Portugal & Spain	Bover, Garcia-Perea and Portugal, 2000
Sweden	Burstrom et al., 2000
Canada	Tivendell and Bourbonnais, 2000 Maurier and Northcott, 2000
Croatia	Sersic and Sverko, 2000
Turkey	Cam, 1999
Switzerland	Wolter, 1998
Australia	De Ruyter and Burgess, 2000
Germany	Wagner, 1997

The developments encountered in this paper suggest, at the least, some modification of the original "threat x powerlessness" model in order to incorporate trust and fairness, and this large body of evidence suggests the need to embed the model in a wider context. This last section will suggest a widening of the original model, retaining its powerful features, but, through a nested model of the different forms of socio-economic security, enlarging its remit to make it relevant to security and fairness at the social level.

4.1 "Threat x powerlessness", coping resources, response contingencies, experience and belief [8]

One of the primary conclusions of this paper is that the basic, multiplicative, "threat x powerlessness" model retains its utility. It is comprehensive, well-tested,

[8] The following model was developed in conjunction with Richard Anker of the ILO's InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security.

simple, and powerful. It does, however, need some development to cope with the more sophisticated context of a constructed psychological environment, and an enlargement of range to encompass the wider society.

The principal problem is that breaking down cognitive processes into discrete factors (in order to have standard variables to apply) often obscures the complex interrelations between different types of perception and information. For example, attributions of causality and control are the key to subjective understanding of the situation and can predict the coping strategies used (such as avoidance, job search, collective action). But it is the same set of explanations (or accounts) which are used as the basis of fairness judgements, to evaluate the probability of change and the severity of outcomes as well as to define and appraise possible response options. A single variable such as perception of self-efficacy can be both a factor in people's susceptibility to threat (in making them more likely to perceiving a negative outcome as probable) and a resource with which to cope. And trust, an important moderator of responses to insecurity, and a crucial factor in fairness, contracts and relationships, needs to be incorporated into the model.

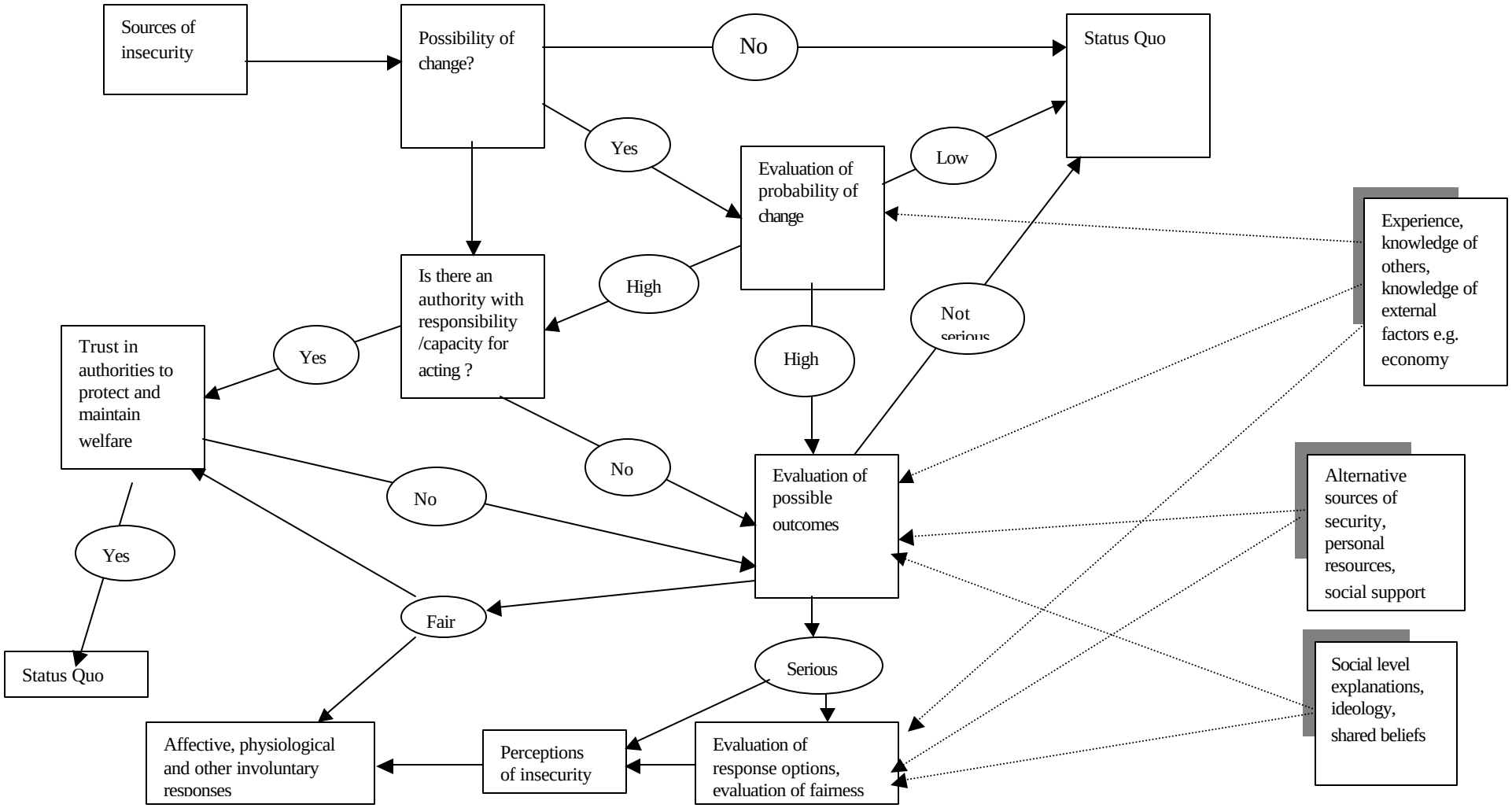
Figure 1 illustrates a reworking of the original model, taking in some of the knowledge gained over the last two decades about antecedents, responses and moderators of responses to insecurity. Section 2.1.3 showed that there has been an increase in both job insecurity and labour market insecurity in the UK in recent years. It is thus plausible to consider insecurity, not as an event occurring at a particular time, but as a potential (and potentially permanent) feature of the work domain in which the evaluation process in the figure is part of the psychological backdrop of the work situation.

The model is presented as a process in order to incorporate the factors identified in the above review and to sketch in the feedback loops and multiple inputs which give rise to the complexity of the situation. The model is seen as applying to individuals, small groups, organizations or communities. For the sake of clarity, not all possible paths are shown.

In the original model change is regarded as inherently negative, here it is always potentially negative, and things continuing as they are taken as the normal mode of operation for people. The elements of the original model were threat (probability x severity) x powerlessness (control). What the original model said still stands: all three of these factors must be greater than 0 for perceptions of insecurity to occur.

It was also remarked that insecurity is differentially distributed. The essential question then becomes: who is insecure, and why? People are differently vulnerable: it is usually easier to make manual workers redundant than managers - and they may or may not have a degree of employment security, representation or other safeguards. In considering the situation of any group within the workplace or labour market, at any one time, there are likely to be several sources of insecurity. These may be made salient at any time, and then trigger the evaluative process portrayed in the model. Vulnerability is a function of the objective situation of an individual or group, and should be distinguished from an individual's tendency to feel insecure.

Figure 1. The security evaluation process



Vulnerability, or a personal predisposition toward insecurity, are essentially inputs to the evaluation process. These inputs can be divided into those that are primarily a function of subjective perceptions and those which are characteristics of the situation/environment which may for these purposes be regarded as objective.

The subjective factors break down into three broad categories: the first is personal experience and observation and includes knowledge of similar others, past experience of redundancy and insecurity (Armstrong-Stassen's (1993), and personal knowledge of e.g. the existence of benefits or other income supplements that would mitigate possible job loss (e.g. Brockner et al., 1992). This experience contributes to evaluation of the threat, of possible outcomes and response options.

The second category includes factors which vary significantly at the individual level such as the susceptibility to insecurity referred to above, belief in a just world, self efficacy and general optimism, - a sort of "it doesn't happen to people like me" attitude. Again these affect evaluation of probability and severity of outcomes, and the construction of response options. Trust in authorities is also a subjective judgement but because of its importance is included as a separate factor in the model. Individually varying tendencies to trust the authorities are an input into the appraisal of whether the relevant authority can be trusted along with past experience and fairness judgements.

The last set of subjective inputs are the beliefs used to explain and justify the situation. Some may arise from personal experience, but many are constructed in the discussions that take place in the media or between friends and colleagues. Individual level variation in e.g. just world beliefs, should be considered as a personal factor whereas a belief that the unions are responsible for the situation is likely to be derived from other sources, including explicit political ideologies, and be shared with others. People do think for themselves, but where they draw upon sources of information outside their personal experience they resulting beliefs will be shaped by the ideological processes obtaining in the wider society. The distinction is between shared beliefs and those patterned at the individual level.

The final set of inputs are the resources available to people, such as alternative income sources, transferable skills, financial assets. These resources such as membership of health insurance schemes, pension rights, owning one's home, union membership are not primarily a function of subjective perception and must be distinguished from perceptions of resources which come under the heading of personal knowledge and experience.[9] These resources, by shaping the coping contingencies available, enter into calculations of both possible outcomes (severity of threat) and coping responses. Armstrong-Stassen (1994) found that coping resources predicted responses.

Powerlessness, on the other hand, has been a problematic concept. This model offers a slightly different, and more action based, perspective to the original so that the internal/external attribution of control is considered alongside trust in authorities. In

[9] They can be divided into the kind of resources about which someone is likely to have accurate information, e.g. alternative sources of income, personal financial assets, and those about which their knowledge is quite likely to be incomplete, such as benefit entitlements, employment rights, advice services etc.

most situations, especially the workplace, the existence of an authority is salient. and its seems intuitively probable that in many cases people will assume that others will act.[10] Explanatory ideologies will specify not just who can act but whose responsibility it is to act. The question of who *should* act, the moral dimension will have a force of its own, intimately linked, because it is part and parcel of the same phenomenon, to fairness judgements.

If a responsible authority is identified, then it is a question of whether the authority can act and whether the person trusts it to do so. If someone has experience of that authority acting fairly, then it is likely they will trust them to do so again. Failures of such expectations lead in their turn to judgements of unfairness, which themselves result in negative responses, and may moderate responses to layoffs, which lead to insecurity and psychological contract violation, which may be caused by insecurity.

It is, of course, possible that the judgements of responsibility and controllability may be conflated. This model is not intended to be linear, since it represents an evaluative process which may take place over weeks and months, in discussion with others, in committee meetings, as well as in the worry of any individual. The importance of controllability is retained and the factors of trust and fairness enter the model. In addition, from this perspective, more than one course of action may be possible. Powerlessness is effectively being recast as avoidability.

The revised calculus looks as follows:

Perceived insecurity = S_{source} (probability of change x severity of outcome) x powerlessness

Powerlessness = 1/ avoidability

Avoidability = S [(existence of an authority [0,1] [a] x ability to act x trust)]
+ S [individual response capabilities]

[a] there either is (1) or is not (0) a relevant authority.

Trust, controllability and individuals response capabilities can be construed as a set of probabilities (or probability evaluations by the actor) although they may be non-linear as the existence of an authority is assumed to be. A summation, rather than integration, is used as the simplest model in the absence of direct evidence.

Just as the original model could be summed over a range of job features, so this model sums over a range of sources of insecurity. Roughly speaking, the more things someone has to worry about, the more insecure they will feel. It also sums across the range of possible actions by the individual, representative bodies or governments. The probability of avoiding a negative outcome is the sum of the probabilities of all *independent* avoiding actions. The more response options a person has the more secure they will feel. If action is available to both individual, group and specific authorities, then the probability increases that one, at least, of these possibilities will achieve the desired effect.

[10] The existence of a source of authority or a distribution mechanism which is an authority (e.g. "the government should provide jobs…") is a typical element of explanations of distributions (Stock, 1995).

The specific inputs to each of the stages of computation, probability of change, severity of outcome, will be influenced by perceived alternative sources of security and safeguards, actual alternatives and safeguards, individually varying beliefs and attitudes (self-esteem etc.) and socially derived (and potentially ideological) beliefs. Strictly speaking, of course, the perceived severity of outcome *after* such a process of appraisal will be a function of the evaluation of response options, hence the feedback loop in Figure 1.

However, insecurity, like fairness and distributions, is located within a frame of reference and that frame can change. Job security may be threatened but the evaluation process outlined in figure1, may show that the outcomes may not, in fact, be so bad, because someone else in the family earns (the household is not threatened). Others might value their current job such that an alternative was of little value to them or might consider only the local labour market (limiting range) and the opportunities within their community. Or else, evaluation of the current economic climate might direct attention to national problems and other social resources, such as healthcare (a component of basic security), might appear to be under threat. Questions of security in the workplace, as well as fairness (section 4.2), exist within the context of the wider society and job security exists within the context of other forms of security.

4.2 Where security becomes a resource

The factors affecting perceptions of, and responses to, insecurity draw attention to other forms of socio-economic security (section 1). Transferability of skills is an individual asset which creates possible coping responses to job insecurity and is also a source of labour market security. The current definition of job insecurity as "a threat to the continuity of a desired (work) situation can be extended to encompass socio-economic life in general and a longer time perspective: ""the threat to the continuity of a desired state of affairs or aspects thereof, or of a desired progression or future expectations".

The type of insecurity is defined by the particular resource which is perceived to be threatened e.g. income, but the unit which is threatened must also be defined. This may be the income of a household, an individual's chance to work or the jobs of a particular group of workers. The same situation may present a different threat to an individual from that facing a group (even one of which the individual may be a member). But it must be remembered that the frame may change, and so the response to job insecurity may not remain focussed upon the shortcomings of a particular employer or industry. Just as pay at work is also the primary component, for most people, of their income, income itself tends to discussed in the context of society (Stock, 1999).

Considering the other forms of socio-economic security mentioned in section 1 raises the question of the effects of insecurity at a societal level. By analogy to job security, one would predict that where basic or income security is lacking, insofar as the frame of reference is the wider society, social relationships, particularly trust in authority or a societal equivalent of organizational commitment (e.g. to the rule of law) may be seriously eroded leading to increasing opting out (turnover) and decreasing work effort (productivity at work, or in voluntary activities). If insecurity has similar effects to those seen in the workplace, then one would predict increased tension in both

industrial relations and within civic society. Where that insecurity is seen as unfair, it will be even more corrosive of social commitment and trust.

Insecurity in the workplace has serious outcomes for individuals and organizations, it has the potential for equal serious outcomes at a social level. Complex human groups, whether viewed as societies, communities or organizations, depend heavily upon trust and collaboration. Insecurity has a close relationship with perceptions of fairness, a crucial factor in the evaluation of leaders, and the acceptance of negative outcomes giving rise to the cushion of support needed for governments to function. (Lind and Tyler, 1988, Tyler, 1992). Insecurity in society, and the degradation of social relationships which give rise to it, is a direct threat to social cohesion and cooperation.

5. Conclusion

This review has presented, and updated, the primary model of insecurity used in the psychology of job security. The array of studies considered suggests that insecurity has been increasing in recent years, that it is important to people, and that it is differentially distributed (in distributive justice terms, a proportional distribution based on age, class and employment sector). The studies show that it leads to changes, mainly negative, in attitudes at work (particularly organizational commitment, motivation and intent to remain), in work effort, and (increased) turnover. It has consequences for the health of individuals and their family relationships.

If, as this paper has suggested, security, fairness and trust are outward manifestations of the underlying phenomenon of social relationships, we will need to address those relationships and the obligations constitute them. Trying to "create trust" or "being seen to be fair" are not addressing the real problem. Section 1.2 notes that ameliorative actions on the part of authorities are apt to be misconstrued, to be expected if the underlying relationship model (see section 4.1) has not.

Job insecurity, psychological contract violation and fairness all affect the same array of variables, and all are linked to the quality of the relationships within the workplace. Both perceptions of justice and insecurity in the workplace are embedded within the larger frame of relationships in society. Insecurity is not just a problem for the individual workplace. It is a question of the health and well-being of individuals, and of their families and communities and of the society constituted by those very relationships which insecurity undermines.

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