

The consequences of flexible job search behavior: from unemployment to underemployment?

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WSE-Report

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF FLEXIBLE JOB SEARCH BEHAVIOR: FROM UNEMPLOYMENT TO UNDEREMPLOYMENT?

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Een onderzoek in opdracht van de Vlaamse minister van Financiën, Begroting, Werk, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Sport, in het kader van het Vlaams Programma Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek.

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Table of Contents

Table of ContentsIV

List of Figures V

List of TablesV

Abstract..... 5

1. Introduction 6

2. Flexible job search behavior..... 7

3. Flexible job search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes..... 9

 3.1 Underemployment as mediator between flexible job search behavior and job attitudes..9

 3.2 Unemployment duration as moderator between underemployment and job attitudes ..10

4. Method..... 11

 4.1 Labour market context Flanders 11

 4.2 Procedures and Participants 12

 4.3 Measures 13

 4.3.1 Flexible job search behavior 13

 4.3.2 Underemployment..... 14

 4.3.3 Job attitudes..... 15

 4.3.4 Controls..... 15

5. Results 15

 5.1 Descriptive statistics..... 15

 5.2 Path analyses..... 16

6. Discussion..... 17

 6.1 Implications for theory 18

 6.2 Implications for policy and practice 19

 6.3 Limitations and future research 20

 6.4 Conclusion 21

7. Appendix I: Nederlandse samenvatting 21

 7.1 Abstract 21

7.2 Introductie en theoretisch kader 21

7.3 Data 22

7.4 Bevindingen..... 22

7.5 Conclusie en beleidsrelevantie..... 22

8. References..... 23

List of Figures

Figure 1: Hypothesized model between flexible search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes. 30

Figure 2: Standardized path coefficients of the relationship between flexible search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes..... 31

Figure 3: Interaction of unemployment duration and skill underutilization predicting needs-supply fit and organizational commitment 32

List of Tables

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Study Variables (n=304)..... 29

Abstract

Though unemployment frequently ends up in underemployment, few studies have combined insights from both job search and underemployment research. Drawing on both research fields, this study explores the relationship between job search behavior and reemployment quality. So far, most studies found little explanatory power for models that examine this link (Koen et al., 2010). By using underemployment as a mediator, we did find support for this relationship and gained more information on *how* search behavior influences reemployment quality. Next, our results also give more insight in *how* people end up in underemployed jobs, which so far has rarely been investigated (Feldman, 1996; Maynard, 2011). To this end, we focused on flexibility as a job search behavior. Flexibility is considered to be one of the key behaviors in the job search process by both policymakers and scholars (see e.g. Van den Broeck, 2010; Venn, 2012). Our results demonstrate however, that there are downsides of searching flexibly during the job search process in terms of job quality. To perform our analyses, we draw on longitudinal data of 304 Flemish unemployed individuals, collected in 2011-2012.

Keywords: flexible job search behavior, job attitudes, reemployment quality, underemployment, unemployment

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1. Introduction

Unemployment is one of the most dramatic events people may encounter in their career. Unemployed individuals are often confronted with financial difficulties, loss of status and recognition and lower mental and physical health (e.g. Price et al., 1998 and 2002). Because unemployment can have such detrimental consequences, unemployed individuals often try to escape this situation as fast as possible and so are sometimes inclined to look for and accept just any possible job. Still, recently, scholars have begun to recognize that a successful job search does not simply imply finding just any job, but rather finding a *good* job which has the prospect of long-lasting employment (Koen et al., 2010; McKee-Ryan et al., 2009). Job search scholars therefore increasingly examine the impact of job search behavior on reemployment quality indicators, like job satisfaction, person-job fit, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. However, so far, the support for the link between job search behavior and reemployment quality has remained weak at best (Koen et al., 2010; Saks, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2002).

Two main reasons have been put forward to explain this lack of support. First, studies examining the link between job search behavior and reemployment quality have approached job search behavior in a rather narrow way (Koen et al., 2010; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). That is, scholars have mainly focused on *quantitative* measures of job search behavior, like *how much* effort jobseekers put in their search or *how often* they perform certain search activities during a specific period of time (cf. Blau, 1994). These measurements have been found to be good predictors of quantitative search outcomes, like the number of job offers and the likelihood of reemployment (e.g. Kanfer et al., 2001; Wanberg et al., 1999), but their predictive power for more qualitative search outcomes, like reemployment quality, remains low (Saks, 2005; Koen et al., 2010). To be able to explain more variance in reemployment quality, it has therefore been suggested to also look at *qualitative* measurements of job search behavior (Koen et al., 2010). Second, little attention has been paid to potential mediators of the link between search behavior and reemployment quality; or, as Saks and Ashforth (2002) put it: scholars have failed “to consider both direct and indirect relationships”.

In this study, we aim to address these gaps. In particular, we focus on one specific qualitative job search behavior, namely flexible job search behavior (De Coen et al., 2011; Van den Broeck, 2010; Venn, 2012; Wanberg, 2010) and introduce underemployment as a mediator of the ‘flexible job search – reemployment quality’ relationship. Flexible job search behavior refers to the extent to which unemployed individuals also respond to vacancies for jobs that differ from their previous job and/or studies for instance in terms of content, pay/job-level or commuting time (De Coen et al., 2012; Van den Broeck, 2010; Venn, 2012). The more unemployed jobseekers also search for jobs that are different content-wise, have a lower wage/hierarchical level, or demand more commuting time, the more flexible they are defined to be on the respective domain. We expect that jobseekers who search in a flexible way, have a greater chance of ending up in underemployment – i.e. in a job that is substandard – and will therefore have more negative job attitudes (i.e. lower reemployment quality). By focusing on

flexible job search behavior and adding underemployment as a mediator, we believe to find more support for the job search-reemployment quality relationship.

In addition, we expect that the job search-reemployment quality relationship may be affected by contingency factors, like the circumstances under which job search behavior leads to reemployment quality. In this study, we test one such contingency factor, i.e. unemployment duration. In particular, we expect unemployment duration to moderate the relationship between underemployment and job attitudes. Since people's employability tends to decrease the longer they stay unemployed (Berntson et al. 2006), individuals who end up in a substandard job after a longer period of unemployment may feel more trapped into their job and may as a result have more negative job attitudes (Gamboa et al., 2009; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2009). By investigating this potential moderation effect of unemployment duration, we try to take into account the broader context in which people end up in underemployment and try to improve the understanding about the determinants of reemployment quality.

This study makes several contributions. First, by focusing on flexible job search behavior and using both mediating (underemployment) and moderating (unemployment duration) variables, we try to find more explanatory power for the job search-reemployment quality relationship. Second, by introducing flexible job search behavior as an antecedent of reemployment quality, we apply a richer approach to job search behavior (Koen et al., 2010; Saks & Ashforth, 2002) and address the calls for more studies on the outcomes of this job search behavior (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Third, by linking job search behavior to underemployment, we shed light on *how* people end up in underemployment. So far, most underemployment scholars have merely focused on the impact of being in underemployment or on who becomes underemployed (see McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011 for an overview). As a result, little is known about *how* people end up in underemployment even though this is expected to impact its outcomes (Feldman, 1996; Maynard, 2011).

2. Flexible job search behavior

In recent years, flexible job search behavior, i.e. the extent to which jobseekers also look for jobs that deviate from their studies and earlier work experience (Venn, 2012), has received increasing attention, both from policymakers and scholars (see e.g. Van den Broeck, 2010; Venn, 2012). From a policy perspective, more flexible job search behavior among the unemployed population is related to a higher labor market efficiency. First, it is believed that promoting this type of job search behavior may help to address the increased mismatch between labor demand and supply (Herremans et al., 2011). In recent years, countries across the world are confronted with both a rising number of job openings and a rising, or at least stable, unemployment rate (Barlevy, 2011; Kosfeld et al., 2008; Herremans et al., 2011), a situation resulting from a mismatch between, on the one hand, the characteristics and requirements of the available jobs and, on the other hand, jobseekers' preferences and skills (Kosfeld et al., 2008). Stimulating unemployed individuals to broaden their job search and take into account job opportunities that deviate from their initial preferences would increase the labor supply for a given labor demand and is therefore expected to improve the matching process. Second, more flexible job search behavior is also believed to diminish the negative side-effects of providing unemployment benefits, like longer

unemployment spells (see e.g. OECD, 2006; Mortensen, 1977 & 1990; Venn, 2012). Though most countries want to offer income security to unemployed persons in the form of unemployment benefits, these unemployment benefits also lower the cost of being unemployed and therefore tend to reduce beneficiaries' search efforts and increase the wage level at which they are willing to work (i.e. their reservation wage). As a consequence, it often takes longer to find work. Since flexible job search behavior may positively influence people's search effort (Zikic & Saks, 2009) and implies lowered wage and other demands (Venn, 2012), promoting this type of behavior among unemployed is expected to offset the negative consequences of providing benefits to unemployed jobseekers (Venn, 2012).

Not only policy makers, but also scholars attach importance to flexible job search behavior among unemployed jobseekers. First, unemployed persons who search in a flexible way are believed to increase their chances of being recruited. Since companies are increasingly working in a turbulent environment and are in need of human flexibility to address this context, they are believed to increasingly hire individuals who demonstrate flexibility (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Second, the importance attached to flexible job search behavior also reflects the importance that career scholars attach to flexibility – or what is often referred to as *adaptability* – as an important competence in today's career landscape. In the last decades, traditional, steady career paths guided by the employer have increasingly been replaced by so-called 'boundaryless' careers, i.e. careers where physical boundaries are blurred and can easily be crossed (Arthur, 1994; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2004). In the notions of these boundaryless careers, being able to adjust swiftly to different work and career circumstances – i.e. being adaptable – is deemed indispensable when one makes a transition (e.g. Hall, 2004; Koen et al., 2010; Mervish & Hall, 1994). Since unemployed jobseekers are on the eve of a transition, being adaptable is considered to be a necessary career skill for them (e.g. Koen et al., 2010).

Though both policymakers and scholars believe that flexible job search behavior is important for unemployed individuals and may help them to find reemployment, little attention has been given to the potential downsides of this behavior. Yet, Van den Broeck and colleagues (2010) point out that searching in a flexible way may increase the likelihood of arriving in an inferior job, which may lead to lower reemployment quality. Since hardly any empirical studies have investigated the impact of search flexibility, nothing is known about these potential adverse effects. With this study, we aim to address this gap by looking at the impact of flexible search behavior on reemployment quality.

We use a multidimensional concept of flexible job search behavior which builds on the flexibility demands of OECD policymakers regarding unemployed individuals (Ministry of Finance, 1998; Hasselpflug, 2005; Venn, 2012). Studies mapping the job search requirements in OECD countries (Ministry of Finance, 1998; Hasselpflug, 2005; Venn, 2012) suggest that policymakers mainly expect flexible job search behavior from unemployed individuals in terms of content (i.e. an unemployed individual must also accept job offers in other occupational areas than his previous job or studies), pay (i.e. an unemployed individual must also accept job offers which offer a lower wage than the previous job or than the usual wage for that occupation) and commuting time (i.e. an unemployed individual must also accept job offers which demand a certain predetermined transportation time). Likewise, in our notion, flexible job search behavior refers to the extent to which jobseekers also apply for jobs that

deviate in terms of content, pay/hierarchy and commuting time from the jobs that they have had in the past and/or from their previous training. Moreover, these first two types of flexible job search behavior also correspond to two often distinguished dimensions in underemployment research, namely skill underutilization (having greater skills and working experience than necessary to perform the job) and pay/hierarchy underemployment (being underpaid or at a lower hierarchical level compared with the previous job or level of education) (e.g. Feldman, 1996; Maynard, 2011; McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011).

3. Flexible job search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes

Despite the importance that policymakers and scholars attach to flexibility, this type of search behavior may also include certain risks, in particular the risk of ending up in underemployment. We expect that searching in a flexible way more often leads to ending up in an underemployed job which in turn adversely influences people's job attitudes (figure 1). Next to this mediating effect of underemployment, we also expect that unemployment duration moderates the relationship between underemployment and job attitudes. That is, we believe that people who become underemployed after a relatively longer unemployment period, will have more negative job attitudes.

3.1 Underemployment as mediator between flexible job search behavior and job attitudes

Since people's behaviors tend to affect the state they end up in (Lent et al., 1994), we expect that flexible job search behaviors impact job seekers' subsequent level of underemployment. Individuals who search in a flexible way during their job search process look for jobs which differ from their previous job and/or studies in terms of content, pay/job-level and commuting time and are likely to accept such jobs if offered. As they more often participate in the application process for these jobs, it is likely that they will more often receive job offers with underemployment characteristics (Côté et al., 2006; Crossly & Stanton, 2005; Saks, 2006; Saks & Ashforth, 2000) and subsequently accept such a job (e.g. Côté et al., 2006). Consequently, we expect that jobseekers who search flexibly more often end up in underemployment (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). Moreover, as we distinguish different types of flexible job search behavior, we expect each type to be linked with a different form of underemployment. If unemployed persons are looking for a job which differs in terms of skill usage from their previous job or studies, we believe that they are more likely to end up in a job which underutilizes their skills. Likewise, persons looking for a job which differs in terms of pay/hierarchy or commuting time from their previous job or studies, are believed to end up in a job which pays less or demands more commuting time. Hence, we state the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a. Skill search flexibility relates positively to skill underutilization.

Hypothesis 1b. Pay/hierarchical search flexibility relates positively to pay/hierarchical underemployment.

Hypothesis 1c. Commuting search flexibility relates positively to commuting underemployment.

Next, we expect that underemployment is related to people's job attitude. Having a job which is substandard has frequently been demonstrated to lead to negative job attitudes, like lower

organizational commitment, higher turnover intentions, lower job satisfaction and lower person-job fit (Feldman, 1996; Feldman et al., 2002; Maynard et al. 2006; Burke, 1997; Brasher & Chen, 1999; McKee-Ryan et al. 2009; Johnson & Johnson, 2000, among others). Relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976) is often drawn on to support the negative link between underemployment and job attitudes (e.g. McKee-Ryan et al. 2009; Erdogan & Bauer, 2011; Feldman et al., 2002; Kraimer et al., 2009). Relative deprivation theory states that individuals' attitudes are determined by the comparison they make between their current situation and their former or optimal situation. In a working context, this means that individuals compare the features of their current job (e.g. wage, commuting time, content) to the features they feel entitled to given their background and the features of their former jobs (McKee-Ryan et al., 2009). If a discrepancy is observed, this will give rise to feelings of relative deprivation. If people experience to be working in a substandard job, it is likely that they feel entitled to a better job and feel relatively deprived. In response to these feelings, the deprived employees may feel less fitting in the organisation and may therefore experience a lower person-job fit. In addition, they may "psychologically distance" themselves from the job and the organization they work for and consequently reduce their level of commitment and/or increase their intention to leave the organization (Feldman et al. 2002; McKee-Ryan et al., 2009). We assume therefore that underemployment leads to poorer job attitudes, in terms of lower person-job fit and affective organizational commitment and higher turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2. Underemployment relates negatively to job attitudes. That is, underemployment leads to a lower person-job fit and affective organizational commitment and to higher turnover intentions.

3.2 Unemployment duration as moderator between underemployment and job attitudes

Up to now, little is known about the conditions under which underemployment leads to these assumed negative job attitudes, despite calls from several authors (e.g. Feldman, 1996; Maynard, 2011). We believe that the strength of the relationship between underemployment and job attitudes is influenced by individuals' unemployment duration.

A first reason why we assume that unemployment duration acts as a moderator between underemployment and job attitudes is related to its impact on individuals' perceived employability, i.e. the perception of their chances to achieve a new job (Berntson et al., 2006). The longer jobseekers remain unemployed, the more their human capital decreases, because their existing transferable skills cannot be maintained and may even decline due to a lack of use or technological change (cf. Becker, 1964, 1993; De Grip & Van Loo, 2002). This may in turn decrease their perceived employability (Berntson et al. 2006). Therefore, individuals who end up in underemployment after a longer period of unemployment may feel more trapped into their job and may see no real possibilities to improve themselves in the near future. As a result, they may have more negative job attitudes (e.g. Gamboa et al., 2009; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2009).

Secondly, the reasons why jobseekers end up in underemployment after a longer unemployment spell may be more related to necessity or even desperateness rather than deliberate choice. This may increase their levels of counterfactual thinking and regret with the decision and as such lead to more

negative job attitudes. The longer people are unemployed, the more their level of anxiety, stress and financial strain increases (e.g. Jackson & Warr, 1984; Kinicki et al., 2000; McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Warr & Jackson, 1984). Hence, individuals with a relatively longer unemployment duration may feel more pressurized to make certain decisions in their job search process, both by internal and external factors. Therefore, if they become underemployed, it may more often be because of reasons of necessity or desperateness, whereas individuals with a relatively shorter unemployment duration may more often end up in underemployment because of a conscious and well-considered choice. It is probable that individuals whose underemployment can be attributed to more or less their own free choice may expect to end up in underemployment and therefore cope better with this situation and be less prone to change it (cf. attribution theory; Kelly, 1973). These individuals may then better be able to mentally prepare themselves for the consequences of working in underemployment and therefore have less pronounced negative job attitudes. Individuals who were relatively longer unemployed on the other hand, may find it harder to accept their situation of underemployment and have more severe reactions to it, especially since they have been searching for a job for a relatively long time but still ended up in a job which is below standard. Since their actual situation (underemployment) is more likely to be in contrast with their reference outcome (finding a good job), they are likely to have more feelings of regret and will be more prone to counterfactual thinking (e.g. “What if I would have further prolonged my search for a job?”) (Reb & Connolly, 2010; Pieters & Zeelenberg, 2005) which is likely to decrease their well-being (Thompson et al., 1998). Moreover, counterfactual thinking further reinforces the feelings of regret and its associated negative emotions (Kahneman & Miller, 1986; Pieters & Zeelenberg, 2005; Roese et al., 2007).

Based on the above arguments, we believe that persons with a longer unemployment duration will have more pronounced negative job attitudes than those with a relatively shorter unemployment duration:

Hypothesis 3. Unemployment duration negatively influences the negative relationship between underemployment and job attitudes. That is, people who are relatively longer unemployed and become underemployed, will have more negative job attitudes.

----- insert Figure 1 about here -----

4. Method

4.1 Labour market context Flanders

For this study, we collected data in Flanders during 2011-2012. Flanders is the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium, which had an unemployment rate of 6.5% in October 2011 or around 191 000 non-working jobseekers (VDAB, 2011). The Flemish labour market is increasingly often described as a “bottleneck economy” (Leroy, 2009; Sels, 2010). Not only has the number of bottleneck jobs and vacancies remained at an unusually high level during the recession, but quantitative shortages on the labour market seem to be ever more persistent, regardless of the state of the economy. Moreover, there are indications that matching on the Flemish labour market is continuing to deteriorate, partly due

to sharply increasing replacement demand on the labour market and changes in the composition of non-working job-seekers (e.g. greater distance from the labour market, or the increasing proportion of those aged 50-plus).

Since the Flemish labour market is increasingly contending with matching problems, re-orientation into occupations, organisations and sectors with structural labour shortages and/or growth potential has become higher on the agenda of Flemish policymakers (Vansteenkiste et al., 2011). Indeed, at the policy level, several initiatives have already been taken to actively support re-orientation. Examples include the premiums for training courses which lead into bottleneck occupations, closer collaboration between the Flemish public employment agency (VDAB) and sectoral social partners in determining training provision for job-seekers (Morissens et al., 2009) and the possibility of obliging unemployed people after six months of unemployment to take up job offers that ‘deviate from their profile’ (Vansteenkiste et al., 2011). In the first 6 months of unemployment, unemployed jobseekers may – without financial penalty – refuse jobs which are not in line with their own preferences. Afterwards, however, unemployed individuals risk losing (part of) their unemployment benefits if they not search for or refuse to accept jobs which are deemed “fitting” according to the criteria defined in the ‘Law of Suitable Employment’ (Wet van de Passende Dienstbetrekking). In this law, jobs are regarded as suitable even if they are in a different profession than the one in which one used to work, if they are not in line with one’s educational background, if they demand a commuting time of up to 4 hours a day and if they pay at least as much as the unemployment benefit. Moreover, the public employment agency VDAB has the option of shortening the protected period of six months if this is deemed sensible (e.g. when the person’s education or previous work experience can objectively be regarded as offering poor chances of reintegration into the labour market).

4.2 Procedures and Participants

The data was collected with a random sample of unemployed job seekers in three waves, each with a time interval of three months. We targeted 6000 short-term unemployed individuals who had had a paid job before they became unemployed. We chose to focus on short-term unemployed individuals since we wanted to exclude as much as possible that people would feel obliged by the public employment agency to search in a flexible way. As such, we try to measure the effect of a flexible search when it is performed in a rather ‘voluntary’ way. Contact information was provided by the Flemish public employment agency (VDAB). Participants had the opportunity to answer the questionnaire online or on paper. The first wave was conducted in October 2011 and reached 1747 respondents ($RR_{T1} = 29\%$), the second wave 1159 respondents ($RR_{T2} = 66\%$) and the last wave 965 respondents ($RR_{T3} = 81\%$).

Given our focus on reemployment quality, we restricted the dataset to those respondents who had found reemployment within the data collection time frame. In order to maximize the number of respondents in our analyses, we pooled the data on two time moments, as is frequently done in longitudinal research (see e.g. Allen & de Grip, 2012). For the respondents who already had found employment when the second wave was conducted, we used the antecedents (e.g. flexible job search behavior) measured during the first survey and the employment outcomes measured during the second

one. For the respondents who were still unemployed at the second survey, but employed at the third one, we used the antecedents of the second survey and the employment outcomes of the third one. As such, every respondent has an interval of three months between his measured antecedents and outcomes. Our pooled dataset contains information of 304 respondents who were unemployed at T and were employed three months later (at T+1). The average age of our respondents was 37 years (sd 9.81); 59% of the respondents were female and 21% were lower educated (i.e. at most second stage of secondary education). Respondents had on average been unemployed for 2,37 months (sd 1.89) at the first measurement moment.

4.3 Measures

4.3.1 Flexible job search behavior

We generated an initial set of items to measure flexible job search behavior based on the flexibility requirements of OECD policymakers regarding unemployed individuals (Ministry of Finance, 1998; Hasselpflug, 2005; Venn, 2012) and inspired by existing flexibility and underemployment scales (e.g. Van den Broeck et al., 2010). As policymakers mainly expect flexible job search behavior from unemployed individuals in terms of content, pay/job level and commuting time, we distinguished these dimensions in our initial set of items. Input was received on a first version of the scale from scholars at the EGOS Colloquium of 2011 in Gothenborg. Items were further refined in response of the received comments on this conference. This refined version was discussed with several experts (e.g. people from the Flemish unemployment agency VDAB) and scholars in the field. Finally, the face validity of the scale was tested by trying out and discussing the multidimensional scale with a number of unemployed individuals. In total, we retained 9 items which measure the three proposed dimensions of flexible job search behavior. Firstly, search flexibility regarding *skills* comprises three items which measure the degree to which respondents (also) respond to job openings that are not in line with their previous job or studies. For example, “In my search for a new job I (also) respond to job openings of which the content differs strongly from that of my previous job”. Secondly, *pay/hierarchical* search flexibility consist of five items which measure the extent to which respondents (also) respond to job openings that are underpaid or at a lower hierarchical level compared with their previous job or educational level. An example includes: “In my search for a new job I (also) respond to job openings which pay less than my previous job”. Thirdly, *commuting* search flexibility is a one-item measure that assesses the degree to which respondents (also) respond to job openings that have a longer commuting time between home and work than in their previous job. Most studies that examine commuting measure it as a one-item construct and focus merely on the commuting time or distance between home and work (e.g. Chapple, 2001; Clark et al., 2003; Gutiérrez-i-Puigarnau & van Ommeren, 2010; Rouwendal, 2004; van Ommeren et al., 1997 and 1999). In line with these studies, we also take up a one-item measure for commuting search flexibility. Participants indicated their response on all 9 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (definitely).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation on all 9 items confirmed the three factors as explained above. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) shows a good fit to the data of the three-factor model: $\chi^2(12)=25.38$, $p=0.01$; RSMEA= 0.06; SRMR= 0.03 and CFI=0.99. The three-factor model better fits the data than a two- or one-factor model. The reliability of the skill and pay/hierarchical search flexibility scales were $\alpha = 0.83$ and $\alpha = 0.85$, respectively.

4.3.2 Underemployment

Like flexible job search behavior, underemployment is considered as a multi-dimensional construct (Feldman, 1996; McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011). In line with the measurement of flexible job search behavior and based on previous underemployment research, we differentiate between three underemployment dimensions: skill underutilization, pay/hierarchical underemployment and commuting underemployment. Firstly, *skill underutilization* was measured with three items based on Caplan et al. (1975). The items assessed the degree to which respondents were able to utilize their knowledge and skills in their new job (e.g. "Often I cannot use the knowledge and skills that I have acquired through prior work experience in my current job"). Secondly, *pay/hierarchical underemployment* was measured by assessing if respondents were underpaid or working at a lower hierarchical level given their educational level and previous work experience. Five items were used to assess this construct (e.g. "My current job pays less well than my previous one" and "My current job has less responsibility than my previous one"). These items were based on the pay underemployment scale of Feldman et al. (2002) and the pay/hierarchical underemployment definition of McKeeRyan & Harvey (2011). Lastly, *commuting underemployment* was measured using one item that assessed if participants had a longer commuting time between home and work in their current job than in their previous job. Commuting underemployment is not a dimension that is often distinguished in underemployment research. However, since commuting generates significant psychological costs for the individual (see e.g. Koslowsky et al. 1995 and Koslowsky, 1998), we believe that spending more time commuting could also be an important contributor to the experience of being underemployed. Indeed, like other underemployment facets, commuting is often considered as a stressful experience, which causes adverse emotional and physical reactions and has a negative impact on family life and health (Stutzer & Frey, 2008). The items of the three scales were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1=totally disagree and 5=totally agree).

Given the potential overlap between the different underemployment dimensions (McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011), we performed EFA and CFA to determine the underlying dimensionality. The EFA with varimax rotation established the three factors. However, one item of skill underemployment had to be removed due to high factor loadings on two factors. Next, a confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) was conducted and demonstrates that the three-factor model fits the data well: $\chi^2(6)=12.54$, $p=0.05$; RSMEA= 0.06; SRMR= 0.03 and CFI=0.99. Moreover, the three-factor model yields a better fit to the data than any two- or one-factor model. The alpha-coefficient of the skill underutilization and pay/hierarchical underemployment scale was respectively 0.83 and 0.82.

4.3.3 Job attitudes

We measured three indicators of job attitudes, namely needs-supply fit, affective organizational commitment and turnover intentions. These three indicators have been extensively used in previous underemployment and job search research as indicators of employment quality (e.g. Anderson & Winefield, 2011; Bolino & Feldman, 2000; Erdogan & Bauer, 2011; Maynard et al., 2006; McKee-Ryan and Harvey, 2011). *Needs-supply fit* was assessed by the 4-item scale of Resick et al. (2007). Participants pointed out how good their current job fits their needs or desires. A sample item is “my job fits me well”. Responses were given on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 representing totally disagree and 5 representing totally agree ($\alpha=0.93$). *Affective organizational commitment* was measured by 6 items developed by Meyer et al. (1993), e.g. “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization”. Responses were indicated on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). Reliability of this scale was 0.90. The three-item scale of Jiang & Klein (2002) was used to measure *turnover intentions*. A sample item included “I think a lot about leaving this organization”. The response format was a five-point Likert Scale (1=totally disagree and 5=totally agree). The alpha-coefficient was 0.95.

4.3.4 Controls

Age, gender, family status, fired in previous job or not, origin, education, financial hardship, job search self-efficacy and reemployment efficacy were used as control variables, since they are regularly controlled for and/or have proven to significantly affect job search and underemployment variables in previous research (e.g. Kanfer et al., 2001; Saks, 2005; Sverko et al., 2008; Zikic & Klehe, 2006). Additionally, we took up person-job fit in the previous job as a control in the regressions on skill underutilization; wage in the previous job in the regressions on pay/hierarchical underemployment; and commuting time in the previous job in the regressions on commuting underemployment.

5. Results

5.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and correlations of the study variables. First, we found positive correlations between each dimension of flexible job search behavior and its corresponding dimension of underemployment. That is, there was a positive correlation between skill search flexibility and skill underutilization ($r=0.21$, $p<0.01$), between pay/hierarchical search flexibility and pay/hierarchical underemployment ($r=0.27$, $p<0.01$) and between commuting search flexibility and commuting underemployment ($r=0.30$, $p<0.01$). The three dimensions of underemployment were negatively related with needs-supply fit and affective organizational commitment, and positively with turnover intentions. No significant relationship was found however between commuting underemployment and needs-supply fit.

----- insert Table 1 about here -----

5.2 Path analyses

We used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses of this study since it allows testing multiple relationships simultaneously. We tested the moderation effect of unemployment duration by including three interaction terms in the model: the product of unemployment duration and skill underutilization, unemployment duration and pay/hierarchical underemployment, and unemployment duration and commuting underemployment. Variables were mean centered before computing the interaction terms. The analyses show a very good fit between the research model and the observed data: $\chi^2[24]=17.41$, $p=.83$; SRMR=0.01; RMSEA=0.00; CFI=1.00; NFI=0.99. Figure 2 shows standardized path estimates for the research model.

----- insert Figure 2 about here -----

In the first hypothesis, a positive relationship was expected between search flexibility and underemployment. This hypothesis is confirmed for all three types of search flexibility on their corresponding types of underemployment. That is, skill search flexibility is positively related to skill underutilization ($\beta=0.20$, $p<0.01$); pay/hierarchical search flexibility is positively related to pay/hierarchical underemployment ($\beta=0.27$, $p<0.01$) and commuting search flexibility is positively related to commuting underemployment ($\beta=0.26$, $p<0.01$).

Next, in line with hypothesis two, we find that underemployment leads to more negative job attitudes in terms of lower needs-supply fit, lower affective organizational commitment and higher turnover intentions. Skill underutilization is negatively related to needs-supply fit ($\beta=-0.18$, $p<0.01$) and positively related to turnover intentions ($\beta=0.09$, $p<0.10$). However, we cannot establish a significant impact of skill underutilization on organizational commitment. Furthermore, pay/hierarchical underemployment and commuting underemployment have a negative impact on needs-supply fit ($\beta_{\text{pay/hierarchy}}=-0.52$, $p<0.01$; $\beta_{\text{commuting}}=-0.11$, $p<0.05$) and organizational commitment ($\beta_{\text{pay/hierarchy}}=-0.39$, $p<0.01$; $\beta_{\text{commuting}}=-0.12$, $p<0.05$), and a positive impact on turnover intentions ($\beta_{\text{pay/hierarchy}}=0.41$, $p<0.01$; $\beta_{\text{commuting}}=0.15$, $p<0.01$).

Hypothesis three anticipated that unemployment duration negatively moderates the negative relationship between underemployment and job attitudes. We only find partial support for this thesis. As expected, we find that unemployment duration moderates the relationship between skill underutilization and needs-supply fit ($\beta=-0.08$, $p<0.10$); as well as the relationship between skill underutilization and organizational commitment ($\beta=-0.12$, $p<0.05$). The interaction plot (figure 3) confirms that the interaction was in the hypothesized direction. Thus, if respondents had a shorter unemployment duration, they experience a better job fit and have more organizational commitment if they end up in a job which underutilizes their acquired skills compared with respondents who had a longer unemployment duration. We did not find these moderation effects with respect to pay/hierarchical and commuting underemployment.

----- insert Figure 3 about here -----

6. Discussion

In this study, we investigated the relationship between an unemployed individual's job search behavior and three reemployment quality indicators, i.e. person-job fit, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. We focused on the qualitative job search behavior search flexibility, i.e. the extent to which a jobseeker also responds to job openings which characteristics differ from his previous job and/or studies, in terms of content, pay/job-level or commuting time. The analyses supported our proposed model and indicated that searching in a flexible way more often leads to underemployment, which in turn results in more negative job attitudes (i.e. lower reemployment quality). Having a poor quality job may induce individuals to leave their job and become unemployed again. In this way, a flexible job search could result in obtaining a less sustainable job and career path.

In addition, we examined whether unemployment duration moderated the 'underemployment – job attitudes' relationship. Our results indicated that this was only partly the case. Unemployment duration only moderated the relationship between skill underutilization on the one hand and needs-supply fit and affective organizational commitment on the other. The impact of skill underutilization on turnover intentions, however, was not moderated by unemployment duration. This finding suggests that employees who ended up in underemployment after a relatively short unemployment duration continue to look for a new job since they have similar turnover intentions as employees who became underemployed after a longer unemployment duration. This could indicate that they see their substandard job as a between step and therefore probably as a stepping stone towards a new and better job. Still, the lack of moderation could also imply that there are two effects at play which cancel each other out. On the one hand, we assumed that individuals who became underemployed after a relatively longer unemployment duration have a lower perceived employability. Consequently, they may have *lower* turnover intentions as they may to a lesser extent see real opportunities for themselves outside the organization. On the other hand, we also assumed that they, to a greater extent, might have ended up in underemployment due to pressure and necessity. As such, it is possible that they see their current job as a temporary step and are looking out for new opportunities. Hence, according to this reasoning, they may have *higher* turnover intentions. Adding both effects up then, may give a zero effect, which is exactly what we established.

Finally, we found no moderation effect on the relationships with pay/hierarchical and commuting underemployment. Thus, being underemployed on these dimensions is experienced equally negative by all individuals, independent of their unemployment duration. We assumed that relatively shorter unemployed may more often end up in underemployment as a well-considered choice, whereas longer unemployed may more often ended up there due to pressure (anxiety to find a job, financial strain,...). Perhaps individuals underestimate the negative effects of working for a lower pay or further from home brings about. For instance, a jobseeker may consciously choose for a job with a more extensive commuting time and before actually working in the job believe that the burden of his longer commuting will be bearable. However, once confronted with his actual work-home commuting, he may ascertain that he underestimated its associated stress and hectic, due to for instance unforeseen traffic jams, delays, etc.

6.1 Implications for theory

In this study, we used a multidisciplinary approach and combined insights from both job search and underemployment literature. As such, we made valuable theoretical contributions to these different research streams. So far, most studies found little explanatory power for models that measure the link between search behavior and reemployment quality (Koen et al., 2010; Saks, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2002). The lack of support is mainly due to the narrow approach of job search behavior thus far (Koen et al., 2010; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). Indeed, up to now, most job search research focused on search intensity as indicator of search behavior, whereas there is a need to also look at other indicators (Koen et al., 2010; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). Koen and colleagues (2010) were one of the first to broaden the measurement of job search, by focusing on the strategies unemployed individuals use in their search. As such, they looked at how *smart* people look for a job, instead of merely on how *hard* people search. In this study, we added yet another dimension of job search: how *broad* people search for a job. By focusing on this type of search behavior, we responded to the call to introduce more qualitative job search variables in job search research and demonstrated that it is an important predictor of reemployment quality.

Next, we used underemployment as a mediator in our model. As such, we found support for the relationship between search behavior and reemployment quality, which so far remained weak at best (Koen et al., 2010; Saks, 2005; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2002). Moreover, by linking underemployment and job search behavior, we also examined *how* people end up in substandard jobs, which so far has rarely been investigated (Feldman, 1996; Maynard, 2011). As such, we gained some important insights for underemployment research. Furthermore, we took up commuting underemployment as one of the dimensions of underemployment. Up to now, commuting underemployment has been neglected in underemployment research, even though commuting has proven to generate significant psychological costs for the individual (see e.g. Koslowsky et al. 1995; Koslowsky, 1998; Stutzer & Frey, 2008). We demonstrate that commuting underemployment is an important dimension of underemployment, as it has similar negative consequences on job attitudes as e.g. pay/hierarchical underemployment.

Lastly, by using unemployment duration as a moderator in the relationship between underemployment and job attitudes, we demonstrate that the conditions under which people end up in underemployment, matter for its consequences. Few research has examined the impact of unemployment duration on job search relationships, whereas from a policy perspective it often plays an important role. Indeed, the type of policy measures that are formulated towards the unemployed often depend on the unemployment duration. For instance, unemployed jobseekers are often not obliged to search flexibly in the beginning of their unemployment. It is only after a predefined unemployment period – which depends on the specific OECD country concerned – that individuals are expected to search in a flexible way (Venn, 2012). Our results show that it is important to have more attention for this. On the other hand, we also observed that the unemployment duration does not moderate every proposed relationship, but rather depends on the type of underemployment that is studied. This observation

indicates that it is important to distinguish the different dimensions of underemployment and thus not to define underemployment as a one-dimensional construct.

6.2 Implications for policy and practice

Policymakers take a positive stand towards the flexibility of unemployed individuals and expect that it will increase their chances to regain a new job (e.g. Ministry of Finance, 1998). We demonstrate that there are also downsides of searching flexibly during the job search process. However, even though we found these negative effects of flexible job search behavior, we cannot conclude that stimulating this type of behavior should be totally discouraged since we only studied one outcome. It is possible that there is a trade-off between the quality and probability of reemployment: on the one hand, individuals who search in a flexible way have a higher chance of ending up in a job of poor quality, but on the other hand, they may find a job faster and with a greater likelihood. It is also possible that the 'choice' for a job of poorer quality is temporary, so that this job should be seen a stepping stone towards a better and more sustainable job. Prolonged research is needed in order to see if it is indeed a stepping stone or rather a trap. Furthermore, in this study we focused on short-term unemployed, so that the respondents that searched in a flexible way mainly did this on a 'voluntary' ground, i.e. without much pressure from the Flemish public employment agency. As such, we do not know the exact effects of a flexible search if this would be induced or enforced by a public employment agency. On the one hand, one could expect that if unemployed individuals are pressurized to be flexible, its negative impact on reemployment quality will be *more* pronounced, since individuals are then enforced to accept jobs which they dislike. On the other hand, however, it is possible that the results of the current study are more negative on reemployment quality, since those who are now voluntarily flexible could be more often those individuals who have no other choice if they want to find a new job. If *everyone* is then expected to be flexible on penalty of one's unemployment benefits, this selection-effect may be erased, so that there may be a greater number of individuals who do find a high-quality job, making the negative link between flexible job search behavior and reemployment quality *less* pronounced.

On the basis of this study then, we cannot make an all-inclusive verdict of the impact of flexible job search behavior or whether this behavior should continue to be enforced by policymakers or not. However, we do can conclude that as long as we do not have a full understanding of the total impact of searching in a flexible way, policymakers should be cautious with promoting or obliging people to search flexibly and keep in mind that his type of search can have perverse effects on unemployed jobseekers' reemployment quality. Moreover, our results also indicate that additional measures are needed to make the promotion of flexible job search behavior more successful anyway. Firstly, an important task is set aside for employment services and its reemployment counselors. Counselors should pay special attention to flexible jobseekers and help them to choose a job and career path that meets their expectations and desires. In the same vein, counselors should advise flexible jobseekers not to burn energy on job opportunities they totally dislike and raise their awareness of the importance and future consequences of their job choice. Secondly, employers should be encouraged to offer as much as possible real career perspectives to their new employees, so that the latter less often feel that their job is a trap but more often are able to perceive it as a stepping stone to a job they like and feel enriched by.

This could for instance be done by paying more attention to possibilities of job enrichment as one's working experience grows, like increasing the number of responsibilities in one's job or expanding one's job content.

6.3 Limitations and future research

There are some limitations connected with this study, which should be addressed in future research. Firstly, as this study was conducted in Flanders, the northern region of Belgium, it is possible that some cultural factors influenced the results we found. For example, although Belgium is a rather small country, most Belgians do not wish to commute very long between home and work (OECD, 2011). It is therefore possible that commuting underemployment has stronger negative effects on job attitudes than what will be the case in countries with a stronger commuting culture. Future research could therefore examine the effect of different cultural influences on our model. Furthermore, in line with most research on commuting (e.g. Chapple, 2001; Clark et al., 2003; Gutiérrez-i-Puigarnau & van Ommeren, 2010; Rouwendal, 2004; van Ommeren et al., 1997 and 1999), we took up a one-item measure of commuting search flexibility and underemployment. Perhaps in countries with a larger surface, an additional item could be added that measures the degree to which people want to move or relocate (commuting search flexibility) or have to move or relocate in order to perform their new job (commuting underemployment).

Secondly, institutional factors could play an important role. For instance, in countries where the system of unemployment benefits is less generous (i.e. shorter duration and/or lower level of benefits), the pressure to accept just any kind of job may be bigger and hence the consequences may be more pronounced. The same story can apply if unemployed jobseekers experience more pressure from the government to search flexibly. It may therefore be interesting to go deeper into the influence of institutional systems on the impact of searching flexibly.

Thirdly, the time between the respondent's measured antecedents and outcomes is only 3 months. Using a longer time frame, could give better indications of the sustainability of the newly acquired job. It is possible that certain of the found effects on job attitudes erase with time or become even more prominent. Future research could look into this.

Fourthly, in this study we demonstrated that searching flexibly may have downsides in terms of the quality of the newly acquired job and argue that there may be a trade-off between the probability and quality of reemployment. Several authors expect that searching flexibly will increase the chances and speed of finding a job (e.g. Ministry of Finance, 1998). However, it remains to be investigated empirically if this is really the case. It may therefore be interesting for future research to explore the impact of searching flexibly on finding employment and to determine which types of flexibility are most decisive in this process (if any).

6.4 Conclusion

The present study aimed at combining insights from job search and underemployment research in order to improve the understanding of both research fields. Firstly, by examining a qualitative type of job search behavior, namely job search flexibility, we provided more insight into *how* people end up in substandard jobs. Our results show that people who search flexibly regarding their skills, pay/hierarchical level or commuting time are more likely to end up in a job which is underemployed on these dimensions. Secondly, we demonstrated that underemployment acts as a mediator between job search flexibility and reemployment quality: searching flexibly increases the chance of finding underemployment, which in turn results in more negative job attitudes. Hence, although flexibility is considered to be one of the key behaviors in the job search process by both policymakers and scholars (see e.g. Van den Broeck, 2010; Venn, 2012), there may be negative consequences of searching flexibly during the job search process in terms of job quality.

7. Appendix I: Nederlandse samenvatting

7.1 Abstract

In deze studie trachten we meer inzicht te verwerven in de link tussen flexibel zoekgedrag van werklozen en de kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling. Flexibel zoekgedrag wordt zowel door beleidsmakers als door academici veelal als iets positiefs gezien. Beiden vermoeden dat flexibel zoeken werklozen kan helpen om sneller een job te vinden. Wie flexibel zoekt, neemt immers meer jobs in overweging, waardoor de kans op het vinden van een job kan verhogen. Beleidsmakers gaan er bovendien van uit dat het stimuleren van flexibel zoekgedrag bij werklozen kan helpen om de toenemende kwalitatieve mismatch op de arbeidsmarkt te verminderen. Ondanks de positieve verwachtingen t.a.v. flexibel zoekgedrag, hebben studies nog amper de effecten ervan bestudeerd. Deze studie komt tegemoet aan deze gap. Meer specifiek bestuderen we een potentieel risico van flexibel zoekgedrag, namelijk de verhoogde kans op ondertewerkstelling en bijgevolg op mindere kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling.

7.2 Introductie en theoretisch kader

Onvrijwillige werkloosheid is één van de meest ingrijpende en stresserende gebeurtenissen die mensen kunnen meemaken in hun loopbaan. Mensen die met werkloosheid geconfronteerd worden, ervaren immers vaak negatieve gevolgen, zoals een lagere levensstandaard (door het inkomensverlies), een verlies aan status en erkenning, een slechtere mentale en/of fysieke gezondheid en een verlies aan identiteit. Sommige werklozen proberen daarom soms zo snel mogelijk aan deze situatie te ontsnappen door 'om het even welke job' te aanvaarden. Hierdoor dreigen ze in jobs van lagere kwaliteit terecht te komen, met minder kans op duurzame tewerkstelling. Duurzame, kwaliteitsvolle tewerkstelling wordt echter steeds vaker als een indicator van 'zoeksucces' beschouwd. Vandaar dat heel wat onderzoekers de laatste jaren bestudeerd hebben of verschillen in zoekgedrag verschillen in kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling kunnen verklaren. De modellen die tot nu toe bestudeerd werden, bleken echter

weinig verklarende kracht te hebben. Deze studie tracht meer inzicht te verwerven in de link tussen zoekgedrag en kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling door:

1. te focussen op hoe flexibel werklozen zoeken (nl. in welke mate ze ook ingaan op jobs die afwijken van hun vroegere jobs en/of opleiding) eerder dan op hoe intensief men zoekt,
2. een mediator te introduceren, namelijk ondertewerkstelling (i.e. een job hebben die, bv. qua loon, inhoud of geografische locatie, afwijkt van de vorige job en/of van de opleiding die men gevolgd heeft), en
3. te bestuderen of de relatie tussen zoekgedrag en kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling verschilt naargelang de werkloosheidsduur.

We hanteerden hierbij een multidimensionele invulling van het construct ‘flexibel zoekgedrag’ gebaseerd op de flexibiliteitseisen die beleidsmakers in OECD-landen veelal stellen aan werklozen. Meer specifiek maakten we een onderscheid tussen flexibiliteit op het vlak van inhoud, loon/hiërarchisch niveau en pendeltijd.

7.3 Data

We verzamelden data op drie meetmomenten bij recente werklozen die voordien gewerkt hadden. Dit gebeurde in samenwerking met de VDAB. Werklozen werden een eerste keer bevroegd na maximum 4 maanden werkloosheid. Een tweede bevraging volgde 3 maand later en een 3de bevraging opnieuw drie maand later. Van de 1474 respondenten op T1, 1159 namen deel aan de 2de wave en 965 aan de 3de wave. Voor deze studie maken we gebruik van de gegevens van de 304 respondenten die werk vonden tijdens de bestudeerde periode. Analyses gebeurden via structural equation modeling.

7.4 Bevindingen

In het algemeen werden onze hypothesen bevestigd. We vonden dat flexibel zoekgedrag leidt tot een lagere kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling omdat mensen die flexibel zoeken vaker terecht komen in ondertewerkstelling. Verder stelden we vast dat werkloosheidsduur in sommige gevallen de relatie tussen ondertewerkstelling en kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling modereert. Meer specifiek bleek de relatie sterker (i.e. meer negatief) naarmate mensen langer werkloos waren.

7.5 Conclusie en beleidsrelevantie

Deze studie toont aan dat er gevaren zijn aan flexibel zoeken. Hoewel meer inzicht in de effecten van flexibel zoekgedrag nodig zijn, wijst deze studie er toch op dat het aanmoedigen van werklozen om flexibel te zoeken best gepaard kan gaan met ondersteunende maatregelen om werklozen voor te bereiden op de mogelijke negatieve effecten, zoals lagere kwaliteit van hertewerkstelling, en/of om hen te helpen deze effecten te counteren.

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Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Study Variables (n=304)

Variable	Mean (sd)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
1. age	37.34 (9.81)																		
2. gender	.59 (.49)	-.08																	
3. partner	.76 (.43)	.09	.01																
4. origin	.06 (.23)	-.05	.03	.00															
5. education	.21 (.41)	.19**	-.10	.10	-.06														
6. unemployment duration	2.37 (1.89)	.06	-.04	.02	.08	-.12*													
7. financial hardship	2.85 (1.06)	-.01	-.11	-.13*	-.00	.10	.08												
8. job search self-efficacy	3.13 (.51)	.12*	.04	.01	-.02	-.07	.37**	.06											
9. reemployment efficacy	2.37 (.70)	-.11**	-.04	-.04	-.02	-.07	-.19**	-.27**	.02										
10. pay /hierarchical search flexibility	2.37 (.87)	.12*	-.12*	-.02	-.05	-.08	.25**	.09	.12*	-.19**									
11. skill search flexibility	3.11 (1.04)	-.11	-.06	-.07	.03	.04	.02	.14*	-.04	-.11	.35**								
12. commuting time search flexibility	2.45 (1.17)	-.07	-.16**	-.01	-.12*	.00	.07	.05	.09	-.05	.28**	.25**							
13. pay /hierarchical underemployment	2.33 (1.07)	.02	-.08	.02	.02	-.09	.10	.14**	-.05	-.16**	.27**	.14*	.03						
14. skill underutilization	2.90 (1.00)	.09	-.07	.11	.00	.07	-.01	.03	-.12*	-.08	.01	.21**	.01	.43**					
15. commuting time underemployment	2.52 (1.54)	-.07	.04	-.05	.00	-.01	.10	.06	.09	-.09	.03	.12*	.30**	-.03	-.01				
16. needs-supply fit	3.42 (1.03)	.07	.06	.03	-.03	.10	.00	-.09	.12*	.09	-.10	-.12*	-.05	-.57**	-.40**	-.09			
17. commitment	3.05 (.65)	.17**	-.04	.04	.10	.10	.02	.01	.11	.07	-.06	-.13*	-.11	-.40**	-.25**	-.13*	.65**		
18. turnover intentions	1.93 (1.18)	-.16**	-.10	-.05	-.07	-.07	.00	.02	-.11*	-.05	.07	.10	.14*	.42**	.26**	.17**	-.63**	-.59**	

Note: ** p<0.01; * p<0.05

Figure 1: Hypothesized model between flexible search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes

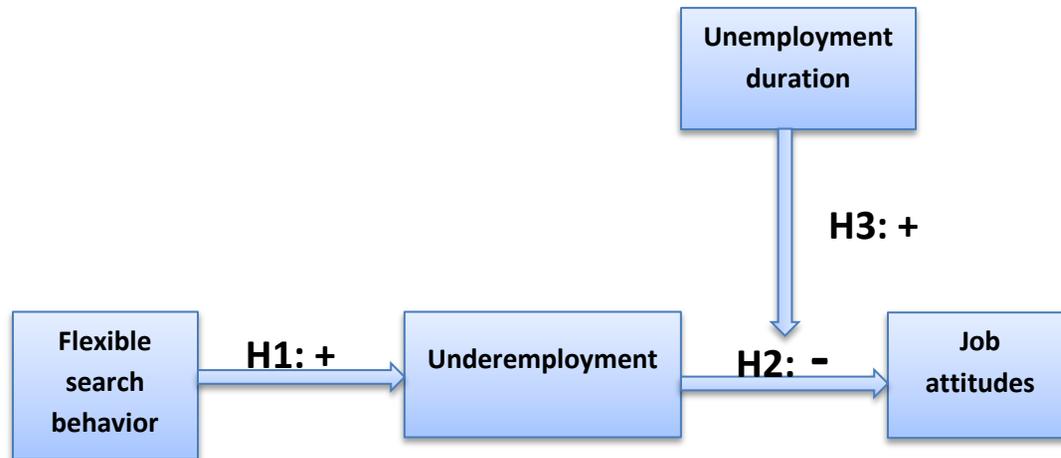
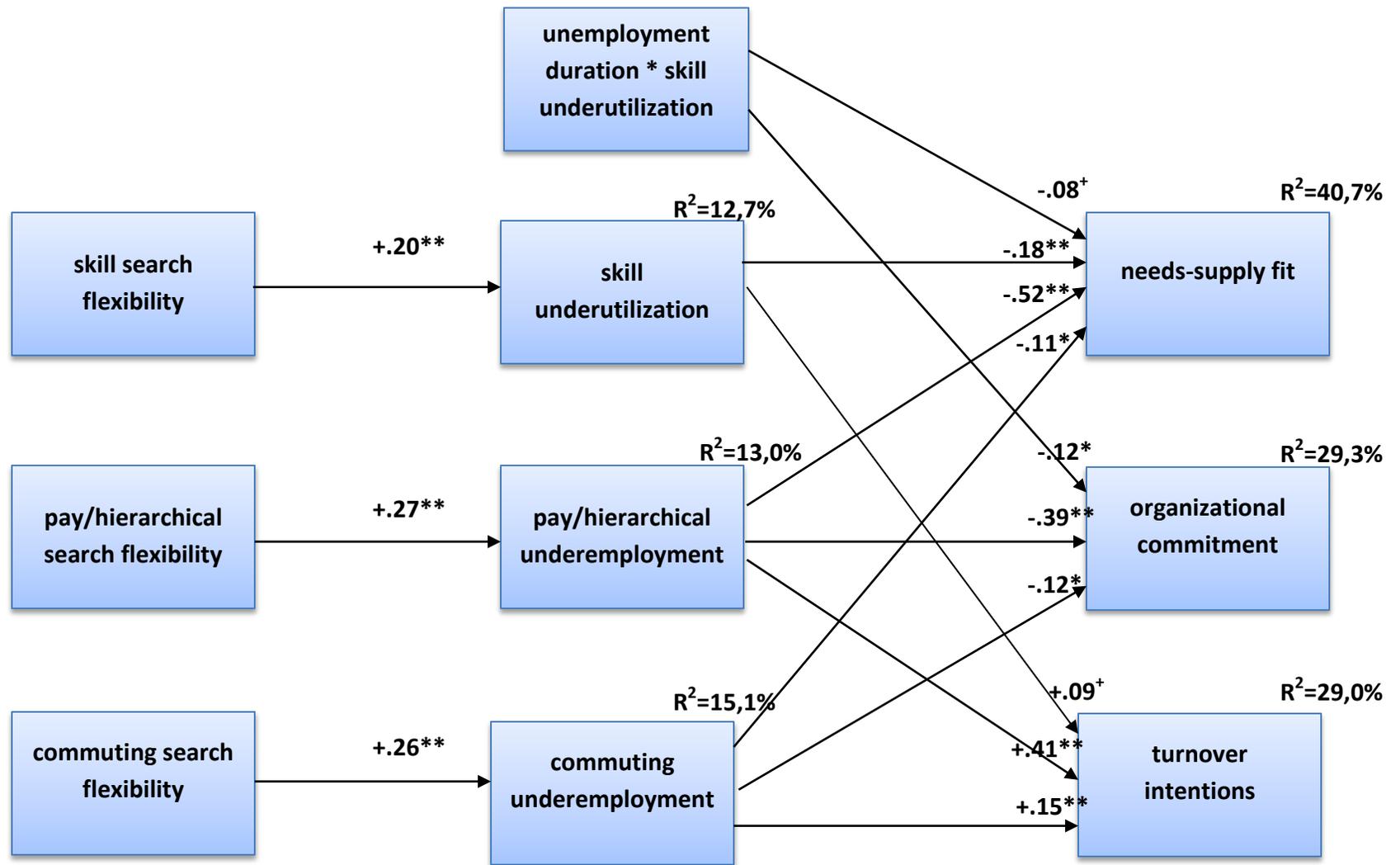
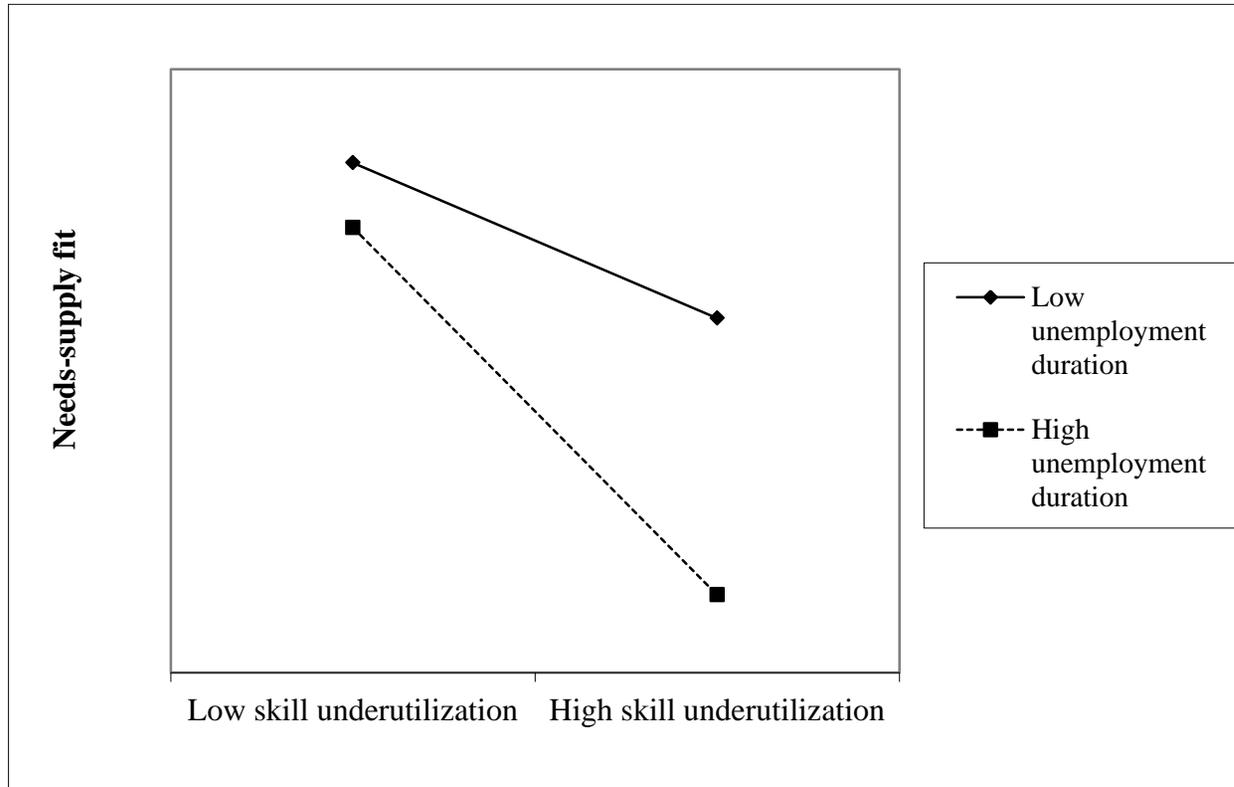


Figure 2: Standardized path coefficients of the relationship between flexible search behavior, underemployment and job attitudes

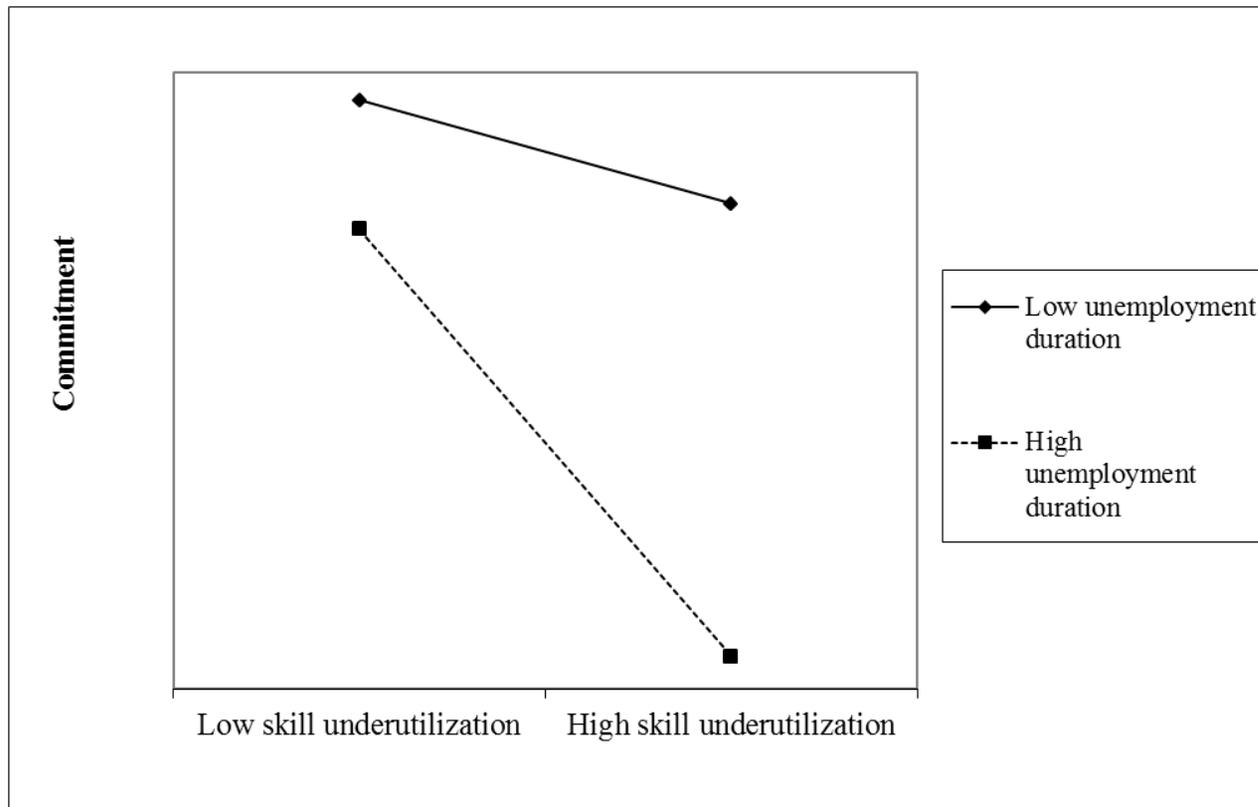


Note: $** p < 0.01$; $* p < 0.05$; $^+ p < 0.10$

Figure 3: Interaction of unemployment duration and skill underutilization predicting needs-supply fit and organizational commitment



Note: Low values: (mean - 1SD); high values: (mean + 1SD)



Note: Low values: (mean - 1SD); high values: (mean + 1SD)