



Elder employees during restructuring: stress and well-being

Matt Flynn

Middlesex University

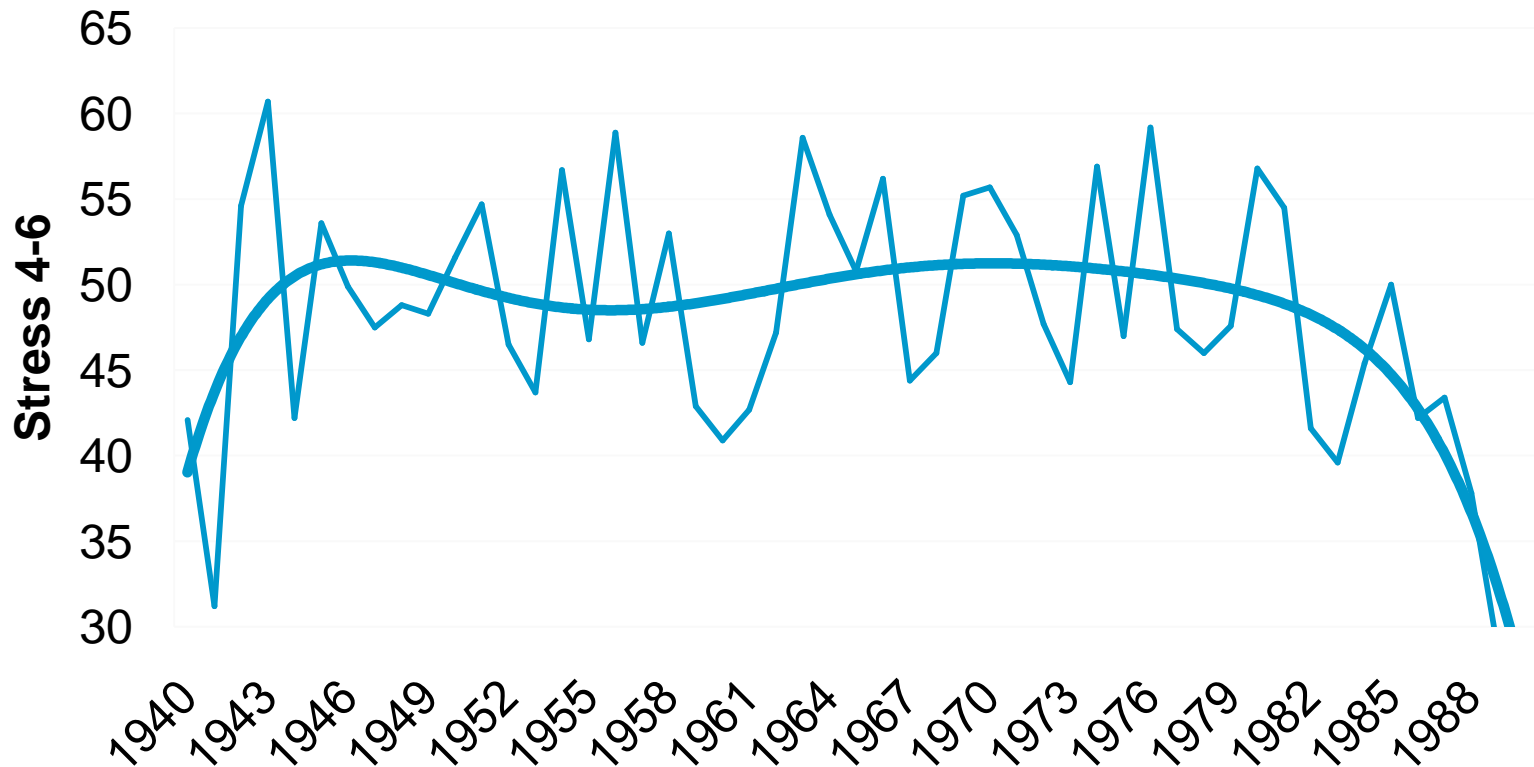


Key questions

- Is there a relationship between organisational restructuring and health?
- Does it affect older workers differently than younger ones?
- How can we understand the impact of job insecurity on older workers' health
- How can employers, unions, stakeholders help mitigate the impact of organisational restructuring on older workers' health?

Is there a relationship between age, insecurity and health?

Stress and job security



Age, insecurity and health



- Contingent workforce
- Proximity to retirement
- Preparation for retirement
- Willingness to retrain or prepare for job-loss
- Ability to become re-employed



What is the link between organisational restructuring and health/well-being



- Job-loss model
- Effort-reward balance
- Job control strain



Job loss model



- Unemployment
 - Psychological (Ferrie 2001; Frese and Mohr 1987) and physical impact
 - High blood pressure (Schnall et al 1998; Bosma et al 1997)
 - Blue collar and professionals (Sparks, Faragher, Cooper 2001)
 - Inactivity (Arber 1996)
 - Families (Beale and Nethercutt 1987)
 - Youngest and Oldest (Burchell et al 2001)
 - Cumulative effect (Dekker and Schaufeli 1995)

Job loss model continued



- Past experience with job loss (Mathers, Schofield 1998)
- Gender: Different definitions of “job loss” (Rosenblatt)
- Atypical workers (Viratnen et al 2001)
- Anticipation of job loss (Beale and Nethercutt 1987, Ferrie et al 1998; Gallo et al 2006)

Effort-reward balance model

- Buffers to job loss
 - Precarious employment and social networks (Hellgren and Sverke 2003)
- Musculoskeletal problems (Kivimaki et al 2001; Cole et al 2001; Carayon et al 1999)
- Cumulative effects (Sharma 1996)



Effort-reward balance model continued



- Sleep disorders (Illmarinen 1999)
- Safety/accidents (HSE 2009; Benavides 2005; Barling et al 2003)
- Alcohol/substance abuse (Green and Johnson 1990; Lee et al 2002; Steffy and Laker 1991; DeCuyper et al 2008)
- Long working hours (Griffiths 2009 ; Shields 2002; Costa and Sartori 2007)
- Coping mechanisms (Hannson et al 2001; Lazarus 1996)

Job control

- Decision-making (Karasek 1990)
- Maladaptive practices (Gershon, Lin & Li 2002)
- High strain, low functionality (Amick et al 1998)
- Job strain and insecurity associated with depression, anxiety and GP visits (D'Souza et al 2005)
- 1% change in job insecurity leading to 0.22% change in mental health (Adams and Flatau)



Link between organisational restructuring and change



- Fed up
- Nervous
- Emotionally exhausted
- Difficulty concentrating

NOT

- Physically exhausted
- Tired
- Energy



Link between job loss and health and well-being



People who had experienced at least one job loss over their career were more likely to feel:

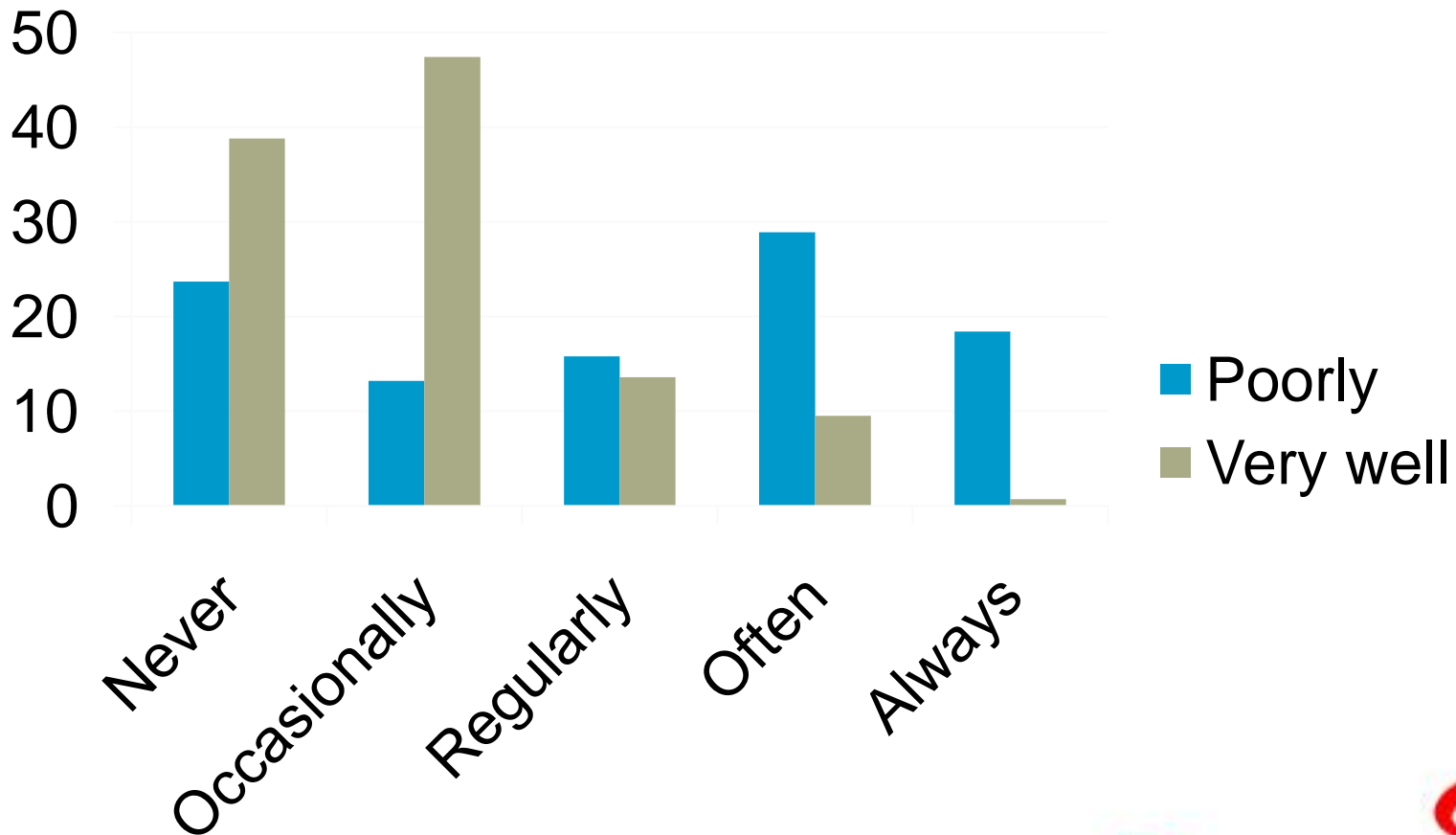
- Worried
- Irritable

NOT

- Physically exhausted
- Emotionally exhausted
- Burnt out



Link between effort and health and well-being- Being supported by colleagues/feeling burnt out



Link between job control and health and well-being- how confident can find another job



Almost no relationship between health and ability to find a new job

BUT

Strong relationship with

- Ability to stay in job

- Ability of my employer to replace me



Interventions



- Job loss
 - Community Union- Steelworkers re-employment
 - Tesco Cheatham Hill- inactivity
- Effort-Reward
 - Unison- Positively Public
 - British Telecom- Retirement options
- Job control
 - Union Learn



Conclusion

- Impact of organisational restructuring on older workers has yet to fully hit
 - Time for government, stakeholders to prepare
- Clear association between restructuring and health and well-being
 - All three models validated
- Emphasis on adaptability, life-long learning, communications, flexibility

