



The Effects of Job Insecurity on Job Performance among Banking Employees: The Mediating Role of Work Engagement

Iram Batool¹ and Sadaf Nawaz²

¹Associate Professor, Department of Applied Psychology Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan.

²M.Phil, Department of Applied Psychology Institute of Southren Punjab, Multan, Pakistan.

Corresponding Author: Iram Batool, Email: i.batool@bzu.edu.pk

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ABSTRACT

Based on the assumption that the construct of job insecurity should as a major influencing factor for workers' job performance in the evaluation model and its often given a consideration whenever the objective is determining factors that influence employee performance, including the role of work engagement of workers employees. Present study aimed to explore the effects of job insecurity on job performance. It was further aimed to find out the role of work engagement as a mediator among bank employees. To advance our line of theoretical reasoning, we elicit responses from a total of Four hundred 400 employees (Male= 331, Females=69) working in different banks aged between 22 to 44 years randomly selected bankers in 15 Public and private banks from two Pakistani cities. Job insecurity scale by Francis & Barling. (2005), Work engagement by Schaufeli et al. (2006) and Job performance scale by Bright (2007) were used to collect data. Findings indicated the significant negative impact of job insecurity on job performance and work engagement. Furthermore, mediation Analysis through hierarchical regression analysis revealed that work engagement shows significant mediating role with job performance and job insecurity. No significant difference was shown with demographic variables such as gender, age, and years of work experience. Different strategies for the prevention of job insecurity must be focused on to increase job performance.

KEYWORDS: Job insecurity, job performance, work engagement, bankers, banking employees

INTRODUCTION

Employment provides foundations for the sources of information, security, and personal satisfaction. Society's current state poses high unemployment level (Vujcic et al., 2015). In this context, 'uncertainty is perceived regarding the continuation of one's job, which is known as job insecurity (De Witte et al., 2015; Hui & Lee, 2000). Such perception is therefore caused by evaluation of the actual working environment. Typically, different employees perceive this situation differently (De Witte et al., 2016). Hellgren et al. (1999) suggested that security in the job has two aspects; one is quantitative, and the other is qualitative. Fear about losing a job itself is characterized quantitatively, whereas losing certain job aspects e.g., demotion and career opportunities, are characterized qualitatively (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002; Tariq et al., 2021). Jordan et al. (2002) reported that when secure jobs are not being provided by employers to employees, then employees feel stress and negative emotions which affect their effort at work. For instance, Cheng and Chan (2008) found job insecurity is negatively associated with job involvement, organizational commitment, and health and job satisfaction.

Insecurity in job has adverse effects which include decreased job performance (Gilboa et al., 2008; Cheng & Chan, 2008). According to Campbell, (1990) Job performance assess whether a person/employee carries out job well. According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993) Job performance is classified into two domains; first one is task and other one is contextual. Actions involved in organizations' core transformation such as delivering services, producing production, acquiring inventory, and selling goods are task performance. Whereas, contextual performance also known as extra role performance is related to the amount of energy a person exerts other than what is formally needed such as organizational citizenship behavior which lead to the social atmosphere that is quite positive and that facilitate effectiveness in organization (Wang et al., 2015; Ahmed et al., 2021). During the uncertainties in work environment, employers said to workers as originations are reliant on their performance, so they should become more productive. Furthermore, different research results indicated that job insecurity contributes to low job performance. Recently, two meta-analytical studies (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Gilboa et al., 2008) have reported that job security and contextual and task performance were negatively associated. In another study, a negative relation was also found but that was insignificant (Sverke et al., 2002).

In research that measures job insecurity and performance, stress theory is cited frequently in those literatures (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The performance of a worker is affected when job insecurity becomes job stressor and then it lead to poor performance that causes strain. Those workers who are experiencing job insecurity also experience strain because they have to invest their energy emotionally and physically to deal with dangerous expectations of loss of job, removing power as of objectives linked to performance (Reisel et al., 2010). In addition, since the uncertainty source is often beyond the control of an individual (e.g. organizational restructuring, economic conditions), employees can assess the insecure conditions as hard to control. Perceived control explanation is linked to stress theory. Low perceived control levels can cause behavioral and negative emotional reactions (Vander Elst et al., 2016). Decreased performance can be a way of dealing with situations that are uncontrollable such as job insecurity.

Psychological contract theory is another perspective that provides the description of negatively associated relation between performance and job insecurity. Previous research has shown that insecurity in job is like an obstacle in psychological contract, and due to this employees change their loyalty and commitment to jobs (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006). As a result, job insecurity will reduce workers' duties to show participation in organizational citizen behaviors because of perception of breach in exchange in relation with organization (Piccoli et al., 2017). Hence, we assume that there will have a significantly negative effect of job insecurity on job performance.

Work Engagement is identified as a positive, persistent and motivating fulfillment state (Maslach et al., 2001) that is categorized by dedication, absorption and vigor (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Firstly the dedication is defined as a worker is totally engages himself in his job has a feeling of enthusiasm, challenge, significance, pride and inspiration. Secondly the absorption is defined as a person is totally committed and happily absorbed in job. Absorption relates to being totally committed and happily absorbed in work. and vigor related to working energetically. Highly engaged workers find their job fascinating, energizing and important and there is a positive feeling such as happiness, enthusiasm, and joy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Consequently, it's possible to interpret work engagement as an active state whereby workers experience heightened motivation and positive job-related affect (Parker & Griffin, 2011; War & Inceoglu, 2012). Though, workers having insecurity with their job are unable to completely

engage in their job, as they are already worried for the future outcomes of the job. Therefore, workers show frustration, anger and anxiety (Kiefer, 2005) instead of showing positive effect (Wiesenfeld et al., 2001). A longitudinal study found the negative relation among insecurity in job and all other aspects of work engagement (Mauno et al., 2007). Workers who are highly engaged in their jobs are closely related to their and have a high motivation that contributes to their performance and personal resources (such as knowledge and skills) (Fredrickson, 2001; Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). A recent meta analytic study revealed that work engagement as a source of energy in personal resources and job-task performance has shown positive association with in role and extra performance (Christian et al., 2011). Thus, researcher assume that work engagement will mediate the job insecurity and job performance relationship.

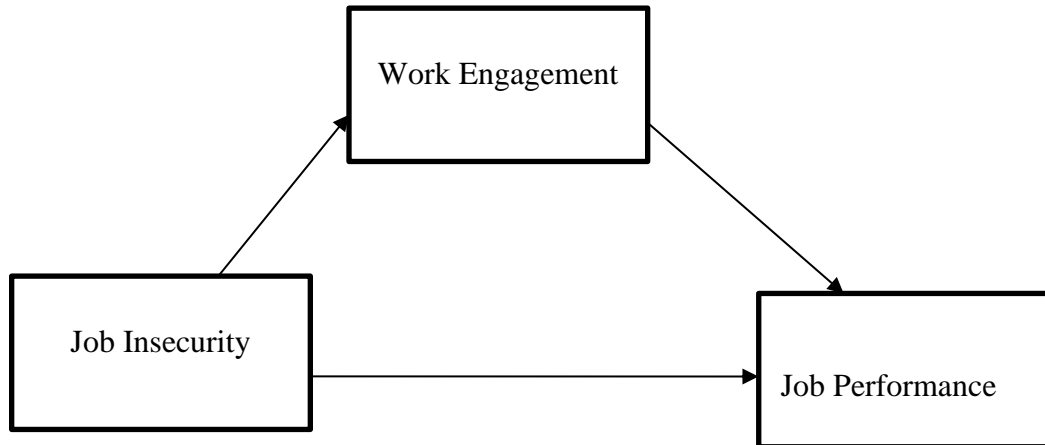


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the study

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Currently, the market of labor has been reformed intensively due to the global economy marked by mergers, restructuring and downsizing (Ward- Warmedinger & Macchiarelli, 2014). These conditions have influenced workers and started to feel insecure about their jobs (Callea et al., 2012). As economic recessions started in 1970', global competition, industrial reorganization, and technological advancements to some extent changed the worth and features of jobs immensely (Howard, 1995). Globalization, combined with the development of modern technology, has intensified the tough competition between international and national organizations. As a result, to compete in organizations practice privatizations, acquisition, in highly global market, mergers, downsizing, and ventures as a means of gaining a competitive

advantage among competitors (Farber, 2008) and reducing costs and growing profits (Sverke et al., 2006; Mishel et al., 2005). Therefore, organizations currently concentrate more in contracting out major functions and competencies (Burke & Cooper, 2000). Therefore, the long-term concept of job that was considered a standard in the past has been broken down (Millward & Brewerton, 2000). Most of the organizations are based or view jobs as temporary or are on project basis (Wikman, 2010). In the same way, many researches have been conducted on job insecurity (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke et al., 2002) however only few of these researches were related to job performance (De Witte et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2015). So, the present study focused on employees' job performance because of the unpredictable and current competitive environment and global competition wherein the primary focus of organizations is that they are dependent on their worker. Literature has confirmed that stressors are significant predictors of employee behavior, and one is job security (Wang et al., 2015; Cavanaugh et al., 2000).

Jelavic and Ogilvie (2010) said that culture of workplace behavior has been split into eastern and western cultures. In one of a study it was recommended to check the relation among work outcomes and stress. (Gilboa et al., 2008; Clarke, 2012; Lee et al., 2015). Furthermore, little focus was given to role of mediator between well-being of employee and job insecurity (Riulli et al., 2012; Vander Elst et al., 2012). In order to fulfil the recommendation, present research aimed to put in evidence from eastern country. Particularly, to check if job attitudes, job insecurity, and behaviors/actions there in western countries. And present research expand the existing researches related to job performance and job insecurity by examining work engagement as a mediator in relation with job insecurity and performance

Objectives of Study

1. To find out the relationship between job insecurity, work engagement, and job performance.
2. To find out the impact of job insecurity on the performance of job and work engagement
3. To find out the impact of work engagement on job performance.
4. To find out the role of work engagement as a mediator in the relationship between job insecurity and performance.

Hypothesis of Study

1. Job Insecurity will have a negative relationship with Job Performance and Work Engagement. And Work Engagement will show a significant positive relationship with job performance.
2. Job Insecurity will have a negative impact on Job Performance and Work Engagement.
3. Work engagement will have a significant positive effect on job performance.
4. Work engagement will negatively mediate the relationship between job insecurity and job performance.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Sample of following study include 400 participants, male (M=331) and female (M=69). The age range of participants was 22 to 44. The population of current study was private and public bank employees working in different branches of two cities i.e. Multan and Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan. Fifteen randomly selected public and private banks were included in this study.

Instruments

Three scales were used to measure study variables.

Job Insecurity Scale

In order to measure insecurity in job, 5 points Likert scale of job insecurity was used ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, having five items developed by Francis & Barling (2005). The internal consistency of the scale is 0.81.

Work Engagement Scale

In order to measure work engagement, a short version of this scale is used, consist of nine items of the Utrecht was used (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Every domain of work engagement (dedication, vigor and absorption) consisted of three items. Internal consistency of scale is 0.92.

Job Performance Scale

The dependent variable is a self-reported Job performance assessed by 4 items develop by Stevens et al. (1978) and Al-Gattan (1983). Internal consistency of this scale is 0.80.

Procedure

The study was conducted as per the ethical standards of APA. The study followed a correlational survey research design and the sample was approached personally through purposive sampling. Participants were approached by visiting different banks of Multan and Bahawalpur. Informed consent, confidentiality and privacy were assured to all the participants before administration of research questionnaires on the bank employees. Instruction to properly fill the questionnaire was also given to respondents and they were requested for genuine responses. Total 550 questionnaires were distributed; however, only 400 were included in the study as 150 were incomplete during data screening. Average time for completion of questionnaire was recorded to be 20 minutes. After data collection and screening, final data of 400 respondents was entered in SPSS-24 and analyzed for hypotheses testing by computing descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses.

RESULTS

Following chapter contains Statistical analysis which includes correlation to measure the relationship among variables, regression analysis to find out the impact of predictors and hierarchical regression analysis to check the role of mediator.

Table 1: *Reliability Analysis of measurement scales*

Variable	No of Items	Alpha
Job Insecurity	5	.805
Work Engagement	6	.876
Job Performance	4	.800

Table 1 shows Reliability Analysis of measurement scales which finds out the value of Cronbach's alpha of each scale including all items. Specifically, .805 for Job Insecurity, .876 for work engagement and .800 for the scale of Job Performance.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis of Job Insecurity, Work Engagement and Job Performance

	JI	WE	JP
JI	1	-.391**	-.325**
WE		1	.504**
JP			1

Note: JI= job insecurity, JP= job performance, WE= work engagement, **p<.01

Table 2 shows results of correlational analysis among study variables. Findings reveal that there is an in significant relation of job insecurity with job performance and work engagement where $p>0.01$. Although, work engagement have significant positive relationship job performance at $p<0.01$.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Job Insecurity on both work engagement and job performance. And work engagement on job performance.

Predictors	Beta	T	P	R ²	Adj. R ²	F change
JI→ JP	-.325	-6.850	.000***	.105	.103	1,398=46.9
JI→ WE	-.391	-8.481	.000***	.153	.151	1,398=71.9
WE→ JP	.504	11.650	.000***	.254	.252	1,398=135.7

Note: JI= job insecurity, JP= job performance, WE= work engagement, ***p<.001

Table 3 shows the result of regression Analysis. Results explained that there is a significant negative impact of job insecurity on job performance and on work engagement with 10% variance with the job performance at <0.001 with F change (1,398) = 46.9 and 15% variance with

work engagement at $p < 0.001$ with F change (1,398) =71.9. While, on the other hand the significant positive predictor of job performance is work engagement which share 25% variance at $p < 0.001$ with F change (1,398) =135.7.

Table 4: Hierarchical regression analysis for mediation effect of work engagement

<i>Mediation effect</i>						
	<i>Block 1</i>			<i>Block 2</i>		
Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>
Constant	4.439	.081		2.737	.192	
JI	-2.64	.039	-.325***	-.122	.038	-.151***
WE				.362	.038	.445***
R ²			.105			.273
ΔR^2			.103			.270
F change			46.92			74.72

Note: JI= job insecurity, JP= job performance, WE= work engagement, *** $p < .001$

Table 4 shows mediation analysis for work engagement. First model of hierarchical regression analysis shares 10% variance and second model shares 27% variance at $p < 0.001$ with F change= 46.92 and 74.72 respectively. Finally, the association among job performance and job insecurity becomes weaker in presence of work (Beta is reduced from 0.325 to 0.151) but remains significant, therefore, work engagement has partially mediating role in the relationship between job insecurity and job performance, there would be partial mediation.

DISCUSSION

Present research intended to find out the relation among job insecurity, work engagement and job performance. Furthermore, it was aimed to investigate the impact of job insecurity on work engagement and job performance. Moreover, to find out the effect of work engagement on job performance was another aim of the study. It was also aimed (Rashid, Bajwa, & Batool, 2016)ed to find out the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between job insecurity and performance. Results found mostly with the support of assumptions. Specifically, job performance is negatively associated with job insecurity. Attitudes and behavior of employees is negatively affected by job insecurity. Job Insecurity is hypothesized as career stressor that could be led to undesirable effects physical and psychological well-being (Rashid et al., 2016)(Quick & Tetrick, et al., 2003). Moreover, it carries about undesirable task-related outcomes. Many studies show that job insecurity is not simply another work attitude but a source of deep trauma, life-disruption, many detrimental personal, social, and organizational impacts (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 2010).

The first assumption of the present study was that job insecurity will be a negative relation with job. In order to test the hypothesis correlation analysis was used. Result supported the assumption. The present research results are similar to past research in which job insecurity negatively relates with job performance (Callea et al., 2016). It might possible when workers don't feel secure about their jobs, they observe negative emotions that's why it carries about undesirable task-related outcomes(Batool, Abid, & Bajwa, 2016).

Another assumption of the current study was that there be a negative relationship between work engagement and job insecurity. Results supported this hypothesis. Hayyat et al. (2019) shows in their findings when workers are emotionally unstable, they usually experience the negative emotions, less enjoyments less involved towards their tasks. It can be observed workers interested to effort in preserve their careers. Still, they concerned that their effort maybe useless because organization can fire them anytime, so their level of motivation reduced due to ambiguity(Bajwa, Batool, & Shahid, 2021).

It was assumed that work engagement will have positive relationship with job performance. Results supported this assumption. Similar findings have emerged from Shimazu et al. (2015),

showing the positive association with job performance and work engagement. It might possible, when workers extremely engaged in their task, they discover it as fascinating, expressive, stimulating and pleasurable that's why workers are interested to effort in preserve their careers.

It was assumed that there will be a negative impact of job insecurity on job performance. Regression analysis was applied in order to check the hypothesis. Result supported this assumption ($P=.000<0.05$). Hayyat et al. (2019a) found that when workers feel stress and instability have a direct relationship with burnout. It can be possible that attitudes and behaviors of employees are negatively affected by job insecurity, when employees are not having job securities then they observe emotional exchange.

It was hypothesized that job insecurity will negatively impact work engagement. Results supported this assumption ($P=.000<0.05$). Guarnaccia et al. (2018) indicates the similar results that job insecurity negatively relates with work engagement. It might possible when employees are not feeling secure about their jobs, they show no interest in involvement with low self-esteem, lack of organizational commitment, low career fulfilment, and encouragement has established negative attitudes towards job.

It was assumed from previous studies that work engagement will positively relates with job performance. Results supported this assumption ($P=.000<0.05$). Similar findings have emerged from the study of Shimazu et al. (2015) shows that there is a positive impact on job engagement. It can be possible when employees are being contented with their jobs, they show vigor behavior towards their task, and devoted their management, and focused to attaining own and professional ambition. Beyond pay, self-actualization and encouraging communications in workers can increase their performance.

In present study it was assumed that work engagement will have negative mediating role in the relationship between job insecurity and performance. Results founds in the support of hypotheses. Similar findings have emerged from study of Wang et al. (2015) in that research, works engagement played its role as negative mediator in relation with job insecurity and job performance. It might possible anxious workers will not be entirely involved towards task, because they are anxious about outcomes. Slightly, they have to qualify more stress, irritation and prevention with fewer inspiring encouragement.

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that job insecurity has a significant impact on employee's job performance. However, job insecurity negatively affect performance of employees. Negative relation between job insecurity and work engagement. Moreover, positive relation of work engagement with job. Additionally, negative mediating role of Work engagement in the relationship between job insecurity and performance. We can conclude from above literature supports the relationship among employee's performance and work engagement. Those who are enthusiast, strong and vital about their work, the end results revealed by them are financially good and satisfied customer and clients.

SUGGESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The current study focused on finding the impact of job insecurity on job performance. However, there is need to study the antecedents to understand the causes of job insecurity. The studies conducted in future find the causes and possible solution of job insecurity. Similarly, the present study considered job performance, which is generic term. The future studies should specifically operationalize the job performance such as job productivity, job efficiency, and job effectiveness. The current study focused on employees of banking sector. The future studies should focus on the employees of other sector such as telecom, manufacturing and another services sector. Similarly, the present study has taken work engagement as a mediator, future studies can consider work engagement as a moderator or independent variable. Moreover, the effect of other contextual variables such as organizational culture, supervisor support, emotional instability, need to be discussed in future studies.

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