



A Proposed Framework on Effects of Fear of Losing Job on Employee's Mental Health Amid Covid-19

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically transformed work environments, significantly impacting employee experiences and psychological well-being. This study investigates the effects of the pandemic on employees, particularly focusing on job insecurity arising from potential layoffs and pay cuts. It aims to assess how these factors influence mental health outcomes, such as stress, anxiety, and depression, while exploring the mediating role of job insecurity in this relationship. A comprehensive literature review highlights the negative consequences of job insecurity on psychological health, underscoring its association with increased distress and neuroticism. The proposed research framework, grounded in existing studies, illustrates the interconnectedness of COVID-19 experiences, job insecurity, and mental health outcomes. Findings suggest that addressing job insecurity through targeted organizational interventions can mitigate its detrimental effects on employee mental health. The study recommends further research, including extensive literature reviews and sector comparisons, to deepen understanding of these dynamics. By prioritizing employee well-being and implementing informed strategies, organizations can enhance resilience in the face of ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic, fostering healthier work environments and improving overall organizational performance.

Keywords: Job insecurity, mental health, COVID-19, employee well-being, stress management, workplace support

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally reshaped work environments, leading to significant alterations in employee experiences and expectations. As organizations navigate the challenges of remote work, restructuring, and economic instability, the psychological well-being of employees has emerged as a pressing concern. This study aims to investigate the multifaceted impact of the pandemic on employees, with a particular focus on job insecurity stemming from potential layoffs and pay cuts. Additionally, it seeks to explore the mediating role of job insecurity in the relationship between COVID-19 experiences and mental health outcomes, including stress, anxiety, and depression. By developing a research framework rooted in existing literature, this study emphasizes the necessity of addressing job insecurity through targeted organizational interventions, ultimately contributing to improved employee mental health and organizational resilience.

2. Aims/Objective

The current study aims to find out

- 1.How Covid19 pandemic situation is affecting employees?
- 2.Assessing employees are insecurity about the layoffs and pay cuts.,
- 3.To understand mediating role of job insecurity in between Covid19 pandemic experience and mental illness/ neuroticism.

3. Review of literature

It is speculated that with slowing down of economy various companies/organizations are considering for the layoff, the following literature review indicates how the sense of job insecurity is effecting the mental health of the employees

Sidney W.A. et al. (1995) conducted the longitudinal study to examine effects of job insecurity and the availability of coping resources on psychological health and withdrawal via self-report questionnaires. The study indicated that job insecurity has significant negative effect on psychological health (distress and burnout), job and organizational withdrawal. **Lam, C.C. et al. (2019)** examined relationship between job insecurity as a work stressor and psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety, and stress) among casino employees in Macao, China. The findings indicated that job insecurity has a significant positive relationship with psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress). The job insecurity is positively related with psychological distress indicators i.e. depression, anxiety, and stress (**De Witte, 1999; Domenighetti et al., 2000; Hellgren & Sverke, 2003; Rocha et al., 2006**). **Watson & Osberg (2018)** indicate that regardless of how it is measured, job insecurity for both males and females, is positively associated with psychological distress. Results suggested that, the threat of unemployment is associated with higher psychological distress than actual occurrence of job. **Ugwu, Fabian & Asogwa, (2017)**, examined perceived job insecurity, psychological well-being and moderating role of mindfulness. The study found that perception of high job insecurity significantly related to employees' psychological well-being among employees with low mindfulness. **Abildgaard, J. S. et al. (2017)** evaluated the participatory organizational-level as intervention between job insecurity, and restructuring. The intervention was conducted among postal service letter carriers in Denmark. The study found that that the intervention group had a significantly smaller increase in job insecurity in comparison to group without intervention. Almost all the studies revealed that job insecurity is positively associated with feeling of neuroticism i.e. stress, anxiety, frustration, irritation, feeling low and depressed etc.

4. Proposed Model

Based on review of the literature it is proposed framework (model) has been develop which assess the impact of the Covid19 on the job insecurity, i.e., layoffs, pay cut etc. and the impact of the Covid19 on the mental health of the employees, i.e., stress, anxiety, depression etc. further the model assess the mediating role of the job insecurity on the impact of the Covid19 on the mental health of the employees. The proposed research framework is as follow (Figure 1).

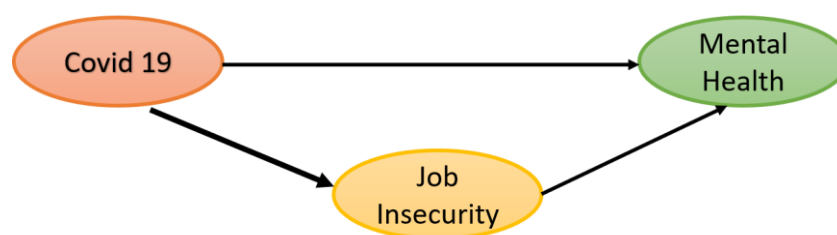


Figure 1. Proposed research framework

5. Results

Sidney W.A. et al. (1995) indicated that to combat the negative effects of job insecurity on psychological health and morale, job stressor itself has to be dealt with, instead of trying to providing more social support. **Abildgaard, J. S. et al. (2017)** indicated that the intervention group had a significantly smaller increase in job insecurity as compared to other group. Therefore, employees' of job insecurity, follows in the wake of restructuring, can be addressed through planned efforts at the workplace level. **Lam, C.C. et al. (2019)** suggested that, to propagating psychological health campaigns, job insecurity is imperative to consider in organizational policies and activities. Thus, it is found that negative psychological effect on employees having job insecurity can be combat with organizational intervention. Further a proposed research framework (Figure 1.) has been developed based on the review of the literature.

6. Recommendations

Based on the current study it is recommended that the future researcher can conduct further research on An extensive literature review has to be done, as it is one of its kind situations, thus there is a scarcity of literature review.

- The survey should be conducted on review and Covid-19 pandemic.
- The future on study focused on employees working in the both public and private sector must be conducted. Data would be collected from both the sectors employees. Collected data is then analyzed using varied statistical tools, statistical software.
- The further research can be conducted based on the proposed model developed (figure 1) based on the current study.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employees, particularly in relation to job insecurity and its consequential effects on mental health. The proposed research framework highlights the importance of directly addressing job insecurity, as it plays a crucial mediating role in linking pandemic experiences to psychological well-being. The findings indicate that effective organizational interventions can alleviate the negative effects of job insecurity, fostering healthier work environments. Future research should build on this foundation by conducting comprehensive literature reviews, exploring sector-specific dynamics, and employing rigorous statistical analyses to enhance our understanding of the pandemic's ongoing implications for the workforce. By prioritizing employee well-being and implementing informed strategies, organizations can cultivate resilience in an increasingly complex landscape.

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