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Examining Psychological empowerment as a moderator of the relationship between Job insecurity and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour among the Eastern Cape Department of Health employees

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of psychological empowerment as moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among the Eastern Cape Department of Health Employees. The study was motivated because no previous study has combined psychological empowerment, job insecurity and OCB in a single study, and in a Provincial government department. Three instruments were used in this study for data collection namely; Psychological Empowerment Scale developed by Spreitzer (1995), Job Insecurity scale developed by De Witte (2000) and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Check-list (OCB-C) developed by Fox and Spector (2009). Non-probability convenience sampling method was employed to select a sample of 281 employees, which includes 111 male and 170 female. The findings revealed that the employees' job insecurity level negatively correlates with their organizational citizenship behaviour. It indicated that the employees' psychological empowerment significantly and positively correlates with their OCB. It added that the psychological empowerment of the employees significantly moderates the relationship between their job insecurity and OCB. The study provided organizational leaders with the best empowerment approach to streamline their workers' attitude and commitment towards work. It encourages human resource practitioners and organizational managers to develop and implement training and other intervention programme aimed at promoting and sustaining the OCBs of their employees. The study contributed to the overall body of knowledge and adds valuable literature on psychological empowerment, job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviours within government departments' context.

Keywords: Job Insecurity, Employees, Psychological empowerment, Social exchange and Eastern Cape Department of Health.

Introduction

There has been a growing concern on how restructuring, mergers and downsizing may contribute to the various challenges faced by many 21st century organizations, including government departments (Wiezer, Nielsen, Pahkin, Widerszal-Bazyl, De Jong, Mattila-Holappa & Mockallo, 2011), which create an atmosphere of uncertainty and increased job insecurity that pose a threat to the psychological well-being of employees (Khan & Ghufuran, 2018). According to Jimenez, Milfelner and Dunkl (2017), job insecurity is a serious problem and stressor in the work environment with negative work-related outcomes such as feelings of stress, absenteeism, lower job satisfaction amongst others. Shoss (2017) considers job insecurity as a threat to the continuity and stability of employment in the workplace, which negatively influences employee commitment and trust in the workplace. Regretfully, the unabated focus of many organizations on competition and profitability has amplified the threats of “real or anticipated job loss” that produce feelings of insecurity for employees concerning their job and future work life.

However, Ebrahimi, Hosseinzadeh, Zaghari, Hosseinzadeh and Asghari (2013) posit that psychological empowerment transforms the work attitude of employees, and the preconception regarding several individual and organizational issues which leads to positive organizational outcomes. Khan, Tariq, Hamayoun and Bhutta (2014) describe psychological empowerment as an organizational practice widely employed to increase the threshold of motivation among employees, allowing them to take appropriate decisions when needed and to utilize their skills and knowledge to react to changing market situations. In other words, this organizational practice spurs employees to exhibit extra-role behaviours such as Organizational Citizenship Behaviours.

Koopman, Lanaj and Scott (2016) describe OCBs as those unrestricted behaviors manifested by employees in the organization which are not part and parcel of their official work roles, but contribute maximally to the organization’s performance. Agarwal (2016) posits that the sustainability of any organization lies heavily on the organizational citizenship behaviours of its employees. Nevertheless, psychological empowerment studies have been inconclusive. As many studies have revealed significant and positive relationships between empowerment and positive employee outcomes (e.g., Aryee & Chen, 2006; Avolio et al., 2004; Dewettinck & van Amejide, 2011), other studies have provided non-significant and negative relationship (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Hartline, Maxham & MacKee, 2000; Ahearne, Mathieu, & Rapp, 2005). There is therefore need for studies clarifying which boundary condition is present when psychological empowerment leads to desirable organizational outcomes. In a narrative review, Humborstad (2010) examined 25 empirical studies on the relationship between empowerment interventions and positive employee outcomes. Of these, 17 were found to be positive and significant while eight effects were non-significant.

A similar empirical inconsistency exists for the relationship between empowerment as felt by employees and positive employee outcomes. Out of the 15 studies conducted, 10 were found positive and significant relationship between psychological empowerment and positive organizational outcomes, whereas five studies found no relationship (Humborstad, 2010). For

example, Bhatnagar (2007) and Castro, Perinan and Bueno (2008) reported a positive association between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction, while Bartram and Casimir (2007) and Meyerson and Kline (2008) found no significant relationship between these constructs. We therefore propose that the inconsistency in the psychological empowerment literature and the fact that no previous studies have combined these variables in a single study justify the need to investigate the moderating influence of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and OCB among the Eastern Cape Department of Health employees. This is motivated by the notion that the concept of empowerment concerns the relationship between leaders and their subordinates (Lee & Koh, 2001).

Research Purpose

The purpose of the study is in three-folds. Firstly, the study seeks to examine the nature of the relationship between psychological empowerment and OCB. Secondly to examine the nature of the relationship between job insecurity and OCB, and to examine the moderating influence of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and OCB. By conducting this research, the study may potentially contribute empowerment and social exchange theories by shedding light on how psychological resources such psychological empowerment may be helpful in ameliorating the negative effects of job insecurity on organizational citizenship behaviours of organizational members.

Theoretical Perspective

Homans (1958) theory of social exchange is viewed as a theoretical explanation for organizational citizenship behaviour. Homans (1958) described social exchange as the exchange of activities, tangible or intangible, between two people or parties. Social exchange is also defined as individuals' voluntary actions that are motivated by the gains they expect to reap from others. This theory is similar to economic exchange, but unlike economic exchange, the specific nature of that return or gain is unidentified.

Holmes (1981) further argued that the process of social exchange does not take place on calculated basis, but on the basis of individuals trusting that the other party to the exchange will fairly fulfill their obligations. Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) opine that in social exchange, the exchange of resources can be impersonal (such as financial) or socio-emotional such as care, respect, autonomy and loyalty. Nevertheless, social exchange has been repeatedly found to be an important motivator for employees' OCBs among many factors that have been previously investigated (Cho & Johanson, 2008; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine & Bachrach, 2000). This theory explains how we feel about a relationship with another person based on our perceptions of the balance between what we put into the relationship and what we get out of it; the kind of relationship we deserve and the chances of having a better relationship with someone else.

However, organizations that employ social exchange approach seek long-term relationship with employees and show concern about employees' wellbeing and career development and expect the concern and commitment to be reciprocated. From social exchange perspective, if employees are treated with respect they would be more likely to engage in organizational

citizenship behaviours (Cho & Johanson, 2008). Several researchers have also found that organizational leaders and supervisors support can lead to employee citizenship behaviour because a social exchange relationship is developed between employees and their supervisors (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Similar results have also emerged in the context of co-worker's social exchange (Ilies, Nahrganag & Morgeson, 2007). In the context of this research, when employees begin to perceive or experience job security in their workplace, they are much likely to reciprocate with OCB, and if they perceive job insecurity, they are likely not to engage in OCB. Similarly, when employees are empowered psychologically they are likely to reciprocate with OCB, and if they are denied psychological empowerment, they are unlikely to engage in OCB.

Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment is the psychological state of perceiving and empowering behavior where employees possess strong perceived competence, control and the organizations' internalized goals (Lutsevitch, 2017). Jaiswal and Joge (2018) define psychological empowerment as the oil that lubricates the exercise of learning and gives employees' authority to make decisions about their work without supervisory approval. Sprietzer (1995) defines psychological empowerment as a motivational construct consisting of four cognitions that reveal an active rather than a lifeless orientation to work roles. These cognitions include meaning, which is referred as the subjective assessment of one's job performance; competence, which implies personal sense of efficacy to perform a job with skill; self-determination, which refers to the sense of control, autonomy and freedom of choice in initiating actions and Impact, which refers to one's ability to influence certain outcomes in the work environment. In sum, these cognitions reflect an employee's active orientation at work in which the employees wish to be and feel to shape the work role and context.

However, Numerous studies have confirmed the relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behaviour and other related behaviours such as pro-social behaviours, extra-role behaviours, proactive behaviours, voluntary behaviours, and claimed that employees who experience psychological empowerment are more likely to reciprocate by being extra committed to their organization and tend to express all those voluntary efforts (Koberg, Boss, Senjem & Goodman, 1999; Liden, Wayne & Sparrowe, 2000; Chan, Taylor, & Markham, 2008; Zhong, Lam & Chen, 2011). Substantial research evidence suggests that psychological empowerment of employees results in the experience of positive work-related cognitions, which could bring about increased employee satisfaction, loyalty, performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (Bartram, Karimi & Stanton, 2014; Raub & Robert, 2010; Van Dijke, De Cremer, Mayer & Van Quaquebeke, 2012). In their study, Kazlauskaite, Bucunieme and Turauskas (2012) found that psychological empowerment is positively related to positive organizational outcomes such as employee attitudes and behaviours which include job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour.

Job Insecurity

De Witte (2005) opines that job insecurity has been given different definitions by different scholars and researchers. However, all these definitions consider job insecurity as a subjective perception (De Witte, 2005). Greenhaigh and Rosenblatt (1984) define job insecurity as feelings of personal inefficiency and incapacity to maintain continuity in a situation where the actual job role is jeopardy. Ajani and Adisa (2013) define job insecurity as the absence of assurance or confidence that an employee possesses about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life which might stem from the terms of employment contracts, layoffs or the general economic conditions. Pienaar et al. (2013) define job insecurity as work-related stressor that is related to certain organizational outcomes such as decrease in job satisfaction, organization performance and commitment as well as increased ill-health and employee turnover intentions.

Quantitative and Qualitative Components of Job Insecurity

These facets of job insecurity conceptualization were conceived by Isaksson, Pettersson and Hellgren (1998) and their values added to the Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) conceptualization of job insecurity as an affective subjectivity. Issakson (1998) defines job insecurity as individual thoughts on quantitative and qualitative losses of job features. De Witte (2005) defines quantitative job insecurity as the perceived threats of losing one's job itself, while qualitative job insecurity refers to the threats and uncertainty about losing vital job features and values such as promotions, salary increases and future career development.

In addition, it is observed that for quantitative and qualitative job insecurity to take place, individual employees must attach importance to job features and must recognize the importance existing job features. Therefore, the components of insecurity in terms of quantitative and qualitative aspects include the importance of job features such as pay, status, and opportunity for promotion, access to resources, career opportunities and job positions within the organization; the existing job features which determines the degree to which crucial job features exist in the organization and the perceived threats of job features which refers to the estimated likelihood of losing vital features and the feelings that important job features are in jeopardy.

The other components include importance of the total job, which reveals how important the total job is to the individual employee as well as the feelings of powerfulness/powerlessness. The situation occurs during the process of transformation where individuals lack knowledge on how to protect themselves. This sense of powerlessness and inability of the individuals to secure the future of their job reinforce the insecurity that they experience.

Considering the empirical relationship between job insecurity and OCB, Selenko, Makikangas, Mauno and Kinnunen (2013) found that job insecurity creates stress and a reduction in vigour and motivation among employees to the extent that employees' OCB is dampened. They argued further that employees with extremely high levels of job insecurity may be more resilient and persistent in the face of such insecurity, as evidenced by their resolve to continue with the organization despite their high levels of job insecurity. Study by McInroe (2013) found that that job insecurity is expected to lead to decreased organizational citizenship behaviour by

way of a moderating process determined by how the employee views the controllability of the stressor. Staufenbiel and Konig's (2010) study conducted among employees in a medium-sized German Electronics wholesale enterprise revealed that hindrance stressors lead to decreased OCB whereas challenge stressors lead to the opposite outcome. Concerning this, they reiterated that it is inappropriate to conclude that the relationship between job insecurity and OCB is entirely negative or positive.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organ (1988) defines organizational citizenship behaviour as an individual behaviour that is voluntary, and not directly or explicitly recognized by the organizational reward system. Asha and Jyothi (2013) define OCB as those behaviours exhibited by individuals or employees which are neither coerced nor rewarded by the organization. Ozcelik and Findikli (2014) define organizational citizenship behaviour as those extra-role behaviours that exert influence on the intrinsic motivation of individuals in the organization. Yogamalar and Samuel (2016) define organizational citizenship behaviour as the intended attitude and unflinching involvement of employees in the organizations in which they contribute excessive efforts without the influence of organizational reward package.

In addition, Organ (1988) categorized Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) under five dimensions, and these include altruism; which is referred to as the behaviour in which individual dispositions provide benefits to another without expecting any form of reward from external sources; conscientiousness refers to those discretionary behaviours that help employees or workers to obey their rules and regulations; courtesy refers to those behaviours that help to prevent problems in advance other than helping someone who already has a problem; sportsmanship refers to the willingness to tolerate situations that are difficult, ambiguous, stressful or frustrating without registering any complaint or negative behaviours when things go wrong; and civic virtue which refers to those discretionary behaviours that involve supporting organizational functions through participation in social events and mainly accommodating the best interest of the organization.

Nevertheless, an extensive search of empirical evidence on the psychological empowerment's moderator relationship between job insecurity and OCB yielded no result of such a relationship. However in related studies, Aryee, Walumbwa, Seidu and Otaye (2012) and Liao et al. (2009) found the mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relationship between employees' perceived HPWS and service performance. Pieterse, Van Knippenberg, Schippers and Stam (2010) and Boudrias, Morin and Brodeur (2012) found that psychological empowerment protects burnout and moderates the relationship between burnout and job demands. Liden, Wayne and Sparrowe (2001) study on 337 lower level service company employees and found that psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between job characteristics and organizational outcomes such as work satisfaction, organizational commitment and job performance

Based on the foregoing discussions, it is evident that no previous study has attempted to combine these constructs in a single study or has tested the moderating influence of

psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Moreover, the paucity of studies in this area conducted in government departments or agencies confirmed the viability of the present study, as it would contribute tremendously to the theoretical and existing empirical literature in psychological empowerment, job insecurity and OCB as well as in the field of industrial and organizational psychology.

Conceptual Model

Based on previous studies, a conceptual model was developed indicating the hypothesized relationship between psychological empowerment, job insecurity and OCB as well as the moderating role of psychological empowerment. Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is depicted as the dependent variable, while job insecurity is the independent variable, whereas psychological empowerment is shown as the moderating variable. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the moderating influence of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and OCB. The conceptual model, illustrated in Figure 1, indicates the moderating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and OCB.

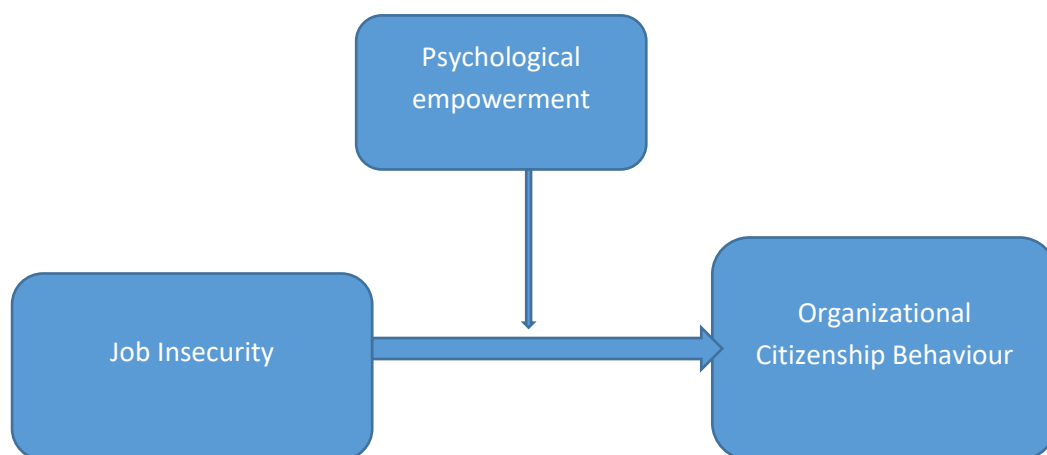


Figure 1: Psychological empowerment as a moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Statement of Hypotheses

- Psychological empowerment positively correlated with Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
- Job insecurity negatively correlated with Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
- Psychological empowerment of the employees significantly moderated the relationship between job insecurity and OCB.

Method

Research Design

Research Approach

The study adopted correlational research design. Correlational research designs involve the collection of quantitative data through the administration of quantitative data through the administration of a structured questionnaire to determine whether or not two variables are correlated (Water 2017).

Participants

A non-probability convenience sample of (N= 281) employees participated in this research. The participants were drawn from all levels of the Eastern Cape Department of Health, Bisho Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, ranging from semi-skilled to professional levels. The participants were predominantly black South Africans 80 percent, 60 percent were females and 43 percent of the participants had Diplomas as their highest educational qualification. It also showed that age group between 25-35 years had the highest number psychological empowerment role (39.5%) to moderate the relationship between job insecurity and organization citizenship behaviour among employees.

Measuring Instruments

The questionnaire for this research comprised four distinct sections. The first section of this research questionnaire focused on the general information of this research respondents; this includes the age of the respondents, gender, marital status, the race the respondents belong to, the highest level of education of the respondents and the occupation position of the respondents as well as years of service of the respondents.

❖ Psychological Empowerment

The second section of this research questionnaire comprises the Psychological Empowerment Scale developed by Spreitzer (1995). This instrument contains three items for each of the psychological empowerment dimensions of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. It is comprised of seven point Likert-type of scale which are **1=Very Strongly Disagree**, **2=Strongly Disagree**, **3=Disagree**, **4=Neutral**, **5=Agree**, **6=Strongly Agree** and **7= Very Strongly Agree**. The instrument has a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.92. This section of the questionnaire is very crucial because it is related to the primary objective of this research which seeks to investigate the role of psychological empowerment in moderating the relationship between job insecurity and OCB among employees in the selected Provincial government departments.

❖ Job Insecurity

The third section of this research questionnaire consists of Job Insecurity scale developed by De Witte (2000). This instrument combines both cognitive and affective dimensions of job

insecurity, with six items measuring cognitive job insecurity, and another five items measuring affective job insecurity. It is rated on seven point Likert-type of scale which is: **1=Very Strongly Disagree, 2=Strongly Disagree, 3=Disagree, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree, 6=Strongly Agree and 7= Very Strongly Agree**, with Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.92.

❖ Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

The fourth section of this research comprised the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Checklist (OCB-C) developed by Fox and Spector (2009). This 20 –item scale specifically designed to assess the frequency of organizational citizenship behaviours performed by the research participants. The instrument is rated on five point likert –type scale of **1= Never, 2=Once or Twice, 3= Once or Twice per month, 4= Once or Twice per week and 5= every day**, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.94.

Data Collection Procedure

The participants for this research were conveniently selected from the Eastern Cape Department of Health offices located in Bisho and King Williams Town, both in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The researcher obtained permission to commence data collection for this research from the University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Review Committee, and the required research ethical clearance certificate was issued. The researcher also obtained the necessary permission from Eastern Cape Department of Health Human resource management department to conduct the research within their Provincial offices, and the permission was granted. The participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Each questionnaire comprised a cover letter inviting respondents to participate voluntarily in the research and reassuring them that all responses would be treated as anonymous and confidential. The cover letter, further indicate that by completing the questionnaires and returning them, they as participants agree to use the results for research purposes only.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Fort Hare’s Research Ethics Committee (Certificate Ref: MJO101SNWO01), and the permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Human resources department of the Eastern Cape Department of Health. The participant’s voluntary participation in the study was sought through a letter of consent, signed by each of the participants. The participants were informed about the importance of the study as the findings of the study may positively influence the management policy in helping to improve their conditions of employment and service respectively. Moreover, assurance was given to the participants in respect of confidentiality of all information supplied. The researchers ensured that the study was conducted in a conducive environment, such that the participants would be exposed to any physical harm or psychological strain. With utmost sense of sincerity, information concerning the study and its outcomes was accurately submitted to the appropriate institutions.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 depicts the Cronbach alpha coefficient of this research questionnaire. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the 42 items is 0.846, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency among each of the items. Essentially, this means that the responses from each of the respondents were reliably consistent. Thus, knowing the score for one item would enable one to predict with some accuracy the possible scores for the other two scale items.

Table 1: Reliability test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Overall Questions	145.56	19.325	.846	42
Psychological Empowerment	50.99	12.355	.903	12
Job Insecurity	34.13	6.926	.815	10
OCB	60.55	11.505	.845	20

Results

Hypothesis One Tested Results

The results in Table 2 indicate the findings of the first hypothesis which states that there is no significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and OCB. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in employee organizational citizenship behaviour $\beta = .142$ will lead to a decrease in employee psychological empowerment. This implies that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Since the P-value probability of .000 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and concludes that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behaviour.

Table 2: Interactive Effect between Psychological empowerment and OCB (Model)

<i>Effect</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
Constant					
OCB	2.425	.141	17.176	0.000	2.147 2.703
PE	.142	.032	4.401	0.000	.079 .206

*St, Standard error; t-value; P-significance; LLCI, Lower level confidence interval; ULCI, Upper level confidence interval. Sample = 281, *significant level at 0.05, *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Hypothesis Two Tested results

The results in Table 3 indicate the findings of the tested hypothesis two which states that there is no significant negative correlation between job insecurity and OCB. The regression model results in Table 3 indicates that, $\beta = -.108$ a unit increase in employee organizational citizenship behaviour will lead to a decrease in employee job insecurity. This implies that there is a significant negative correlation between job insecurity and OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Since the P-value (probability) of .029 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and concludes that there is a negative correlation between organizational citizenship behaviour and job insecurity.

Table 3: Interactive Effect between Job Insecurity and OCB

	B	Mean	SD	95% C.I for B	Correlation	T	Sig.
Job insecurity	-.108	3.4118	.69148	3.059±3.735	-.130 [†]	19.793	.000
OCB		3.0289	.57433	-.205±.011	-.249*	-2.188	.029
Intercept	3.397						

Sample = 281, *significant level at 0.05, †. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis Three Tested Results

The results in Table 4 show the findings of the third hypothesis for this study which states that psychological empowerment has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between job insecurity and OCB. The coefficient results from the regression model in Table 4 indicate that a unit increase in psychological empowerment corresponds to -0.042 decrease in job insecurity and 0.450 significant increases in OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Since the P-value (probability) of 0.000 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This implies that psychological empowerment has significantly moderating effect on job insecurity in predicting OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health.

Table 4: Regression Model of Psych Emp. moderating influence on JI and OCB

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.027	.466		6.498	.000	2.110	3.944
1 Job	-.042	.087	-.028	-.477	.634	-.213	.130
OCB	.450	.105	.251	4.296	.000	.244	.657

a. Dependent Variable: PE

Discussions

The aim of this study was to investigate the moderating effect of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour. The results indicate a significant interactive effect between psychological empowerment and job insecurity in predicting organizational citizenship behaviours. Overall, psychological empowerment lowers the effect of job insecurity on OCB and at the same time increases OCB of employees. This research finding is buttressed by substantial research evidence which suggests that psychological empowerment of employees will result in the experience of positive work-related cognitions, that could bring about increased employee satisfaction, loyalty, performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (Bartram et al. 2014; Raub & Robert, 2010; VanDijke et al., 2012). The results corroborate previous studies that show moderating influence of psychological empowerment. For example, Nasim, et al. (2016) study on the mediating role of psychological empowerment and organizational justice in the relationship between servant leadership and job satisfaction, OCB and organizational commitment in Ahvaz City industrial community found that psychological empowerment and organizational justice mediates the relationship of servant leadership with job satisfaction, OCB and organizational commitment. Similarly, Singh and Sarkar's (2012) study on the mediating mechanism of psychological empowerment through dimensional analysis found the "meaning" dimension played a partial intermediary role, while the non-work domain control dimension plays a complete intermediary role.

Conclusion

The paper investigated the moderating effect of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Having tested the three hypotheses formulated in this paper, empirical findings were obtained as solutions to the problems identified in the paper. Drawing from Spreitzer's (1995) psychological empowerment and social exchange theories, the findings of the study offer new insights into how the management of Eastern Cape Department of Health and other government departments should make conscious efforts to demonstrate trust and confidence in their employees. This can be achieved by providing support and encouragement. The ultimate goal is to allow employees to have a sense that they are free to choose how to go about their job, rather than being micro-managers.

Practical Implications

This study investigated the moderating effect of psychological empowerment in the relationship between job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Hence the general aim of this study was achieved, and a conceptual model was developed. This conceptual model identified psychological empowerment as an organizational tool that can significantly influence job insecurity in predicting organizational citizenship behaviours among the employees of the Eastern Cape Department of Health. In line with the findings of the study, the management of Eastern Cape Department of Health, organizational managers and human resource management practitioners are advised on the need to adopt the principles of social exchange and demonstrate concern

about their employees' wellbeing and career development in order to secure long-term relationship with their employees, and reciprocal employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviours. In other words, if employees are treated with respect, they would be more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviours thereby eliminating the feelings of insecurity of their jobs.

Recommendations

The paper recommends that the Eastern Cape Department of Health should create an educational experience or innovative programme to build and increase the level of psychological empowerment experienced by employees. This programme should entail an in-depth personal evaluation and cognitive framing in order to allow individuals visualize themselves and their environment through different lens. This programme should focus on personal mastery, re-shaping mindsets, personal development and self-management geared to the outcome of personal transformation and a change in the individual cause map or schema. This will help their employees to start thinking about how they can refocus themselves in relation to their work and see themselves as partners in the department's business rather than cog in the wheel. Through this process employees will develop a sense of meaning and ownership regarding their organization and begins to understand how their work roles and behaviour affect its success. This will contribute to synergy between the goals, ideals and beliefs of individuals and what the department wants to achieve.

The paper recommends that human resource management practitioners and managers should ensure that the capacity for continuous learning exists in their organization, in terms of providing skills and abilities in which their workers need to feel competent. Through this process, the organization emerges as a learning organization continuously striving to identify and learn new skills for improving processes. It is also recommended that mentoring and coaching programmes, on the-job-training, special assignment and job rotation should be included in the process. This is crucial to ensure that employees are confident about their abilities to execute tasks given to them. Another takeaway for Provincial government departments and organizational managers could be that if job insecurity is a concern within the organization as a result of previous or upcoming layoffs or personnel reductions, it may be useful to examine the utility of developing employees' control-oriented coping skills. Interventions in the organization could be targeted at increasing the use of control-oriented coping techniques in order to buffer against the negative impact of job insecurity on OCB performance.

Limitations

The major limitation of this study was unavailability of funds for transportation and other logistics. Due to this problem of finance, the study was limited to the Eastern Cape Department of Health only. Convenience sampling technique was employed in this research as a result of the researcher's inability to gather all the respondents in one place at a given time.

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