

PERCEIVED JOB INSECURITY: ITS INDIVIDUAL, ORGANISATIONAL AND SOCIETAL EFFECTS

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Abstract

The concept of perceived job insecurity has been shown to be detrimental for various psychological and health-related outcomes including the effective functioning of business organizations. While most researches have examined the detrimental outcome of this workplace phenomenon from the standpoint of the individual employees and its associated organizational outcome, scanty knowledge exist on the multiplying effect of perceived job insecurity on the larger socio-economic environment and the society at large. This paper examines the overall effect of perceived job insecurity taking into consideration, its overall effects on the individual, organization, and the society. Making use of secondary data from the literature and relevant theories, it was discovered that the effect of perceived job insecurity if not properly addressed, goes beyond the enclave of employees health functioning and its associated organizational dysfunction but can also translate into various forms of adverse social and economic consequences for the society and countries at large. In view of this discovery, recommendations were made for organizations, relevant institutions and government bodies to design a framework that encompasses those institutional and organizational policies that can limit the incidence of perceived job insecurity within the workplace.

Keywords: Job Insecurity, Workplace, Individual, Organization, Society

Introduction

As a result of globalization, intense industry competition, deregulation, and rising cost of operation in addition to dwindling market share, companies have been forced into reconstructing their business activities as a strategic stance of staying relevant both financially and operationally. Economic slowdown has increased the need for organizational restructuring and cutback in order to save cost and survive. Thus, such

phenomena as merging, acquisition, downsizing and reorganization, which have resulted in mass layoff, have become an antidote for the realization of this feat. According to Chirumbolo (2005) these transformations have changed the nature of work and caused feelings of uncertainty, stress and anxiety for many workers about the existence and the features of their job. Hence job insecurity has been among the most investigated job stressors in recent times (Reitcher, 2001).

As posited by Kolawole, Ajani & Adisa (2013) job insecurity is the lack of assurance that an employee has about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life, which might arise from the terms of the contract of employment, layoffs, or the general economic conditions. Reichter (2013) noted that the negative effect of employees perceived job insecurity can be observed under two perspectives: From an individual perspective, when the health and well-being of employees may be negatively affected, and from an organizational perspective, in which work behaviors and attitudes may be affected negatively. Regardless of either of the perspectives, Chirumbolo (2005) pointed that perceived job insecurity among employees can be detrimental both to the individual and the organization as a whole.

While most previous studies have concentrated on the consequence of perceived job insecurity from the individual and organizational perspective, little efforts have been made to extend this concentration to the well being of the overall social environment despite the submission by Reitcher (2013) which indicated that the effect of job insecurity is not restricted to work settings alone but can also be detrimental on the behavior of the employees out of work settings which might likely have an effect on the larger society. Put in another way, despite the considerable theoretical and empirical progress that have been made regarding the health and organizational consequences of this phenomenon, its social and economic consequences on the larger society remains largely unexplored. Hence understanding the detrimental effect of perceived job insecurity in a broader perspective that encompasses the societal, individual and managerial settings would be an interesting area of study. This is to imply that the severity of this occupational stressor can be better understood by examining its effect on the overall well being of the society. An objective, which this paper is set out to explore. To this end, the paper aim to uncover findings which might aid policy makers, administrators, managers, in becoming aware of the magnitude of threat, being posed by this workplace syndrome, the urgent need for appropriate intervention and the relevant intervention strategies that can be employed. The subsequent sections of the paper include a review of relevant literature regarding the issues under focus, the discussion of findings, conclusions and managerial implications of findings.

Literature Review

Perceived Job Insecurity

With the advent of globalization, coupled with the emergence of modern day technological breakthrough, companies have been subjected to stiff operational rivalry both nationally and internationally, like never before. These global changes have called for alterations in organizations and organizational practices in order for companies to be able to survive as a result of this new context with increased competitiveness (Reitcher, 2013). According to Farber (2008) one attempt to adapt to this new phenomenon is the frequent use of privatization, mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, and downsizing as means to compete with other organizations. Thus, businesses have become leaner and meaner by focusing on core competencies and outsourcing more peripheral functions (Burke & Cooper, 2000). In order to guarantee organizational flexibility and limit the financial and operational impact of unanticipated external changes, non-standard types of employment is used more frequently. This is to imply that there has been a departure from the use of long-term employment which was the standard previously (Millward & Brewerton, 2000). This view was complemented by Wikman (2010) who argued that the use of project and agency work as well as temporary employment is common practice among organizations today. The implication of this, as posited by Jacobson (1991) is a fundamental and involuntary change in employees sets of beliefs about the organization and their place in it.

Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt's (1984) give a definition of perceived job insecurity as perceived powerlessness to maintain desired continuity in a threatened job situation while Davy, Kinicki & Scheck (1997) gave their own definition as an individual's expectation about continuity in a job situation. According to Heaney, Israel & House (1994) job insecurity is a perception of a potential threat to continuity in one's current job. One general conclusion from these definitions is that job insecurity is perceptual in nature and it's determined by individual differences across different organizational settings. This subjective nature of job insecurity was further highlighted by Hellgren, Sverke and Isaksson (1999) who distinguished between two different forms of job insecurity: quantitative job insecurity, classifies as worrying about losing the job itself, and a qualitative job insecurity, which has to do with worrying about losing important features of the job, including job stability, positive performance appraisals and promotions (Greenhalgh and Ojedokun 2008; Jacobson 1991). In their opinion, the later refers to feelings of potential loss in the quality of organizational position, such as worsening of working conditions, lack of career opportunities and decreasing salary development. Conclusively, it is reasonable to concur that perceived job insecurity is subjective in nature and

can be influenced by situations such as organizational downsizing, restructuring and dismissals. The effect of which differs across individual as a result of personality factors.

Realizing the enormous effect that perceived job insecurity can have on individual health and the general functioning of the organizations, researches on the concept has proliferated in the past two decades. However, most findings have focused on the organizational outcome of this phenomenon without giving a proper attention to its outcome in the larger human society. Hence in this study, I investigate the overall effect of employees perceived job insecurity both at the organizational level and the societal level.

Consequences of Perceived Job Insecurity on the Individual

Since an employee's perceived job insecurity can be likened to a situation that arises when there is a discrepancy between a worker's expectations regarding his job, and the actual situation regarding the job itself, it can thus be reasonably deduced that perceived job insecurity is a form of occupational stress. As confirmed by Ashford, Lee & Bobko (1989) higher feelings of job insecurity were found to correlate with poorer mental and physical health, psychological distress and burn out (Probst, 2002), worse psychological moods (Burke, 1998), lower self esteem (Kinnunen, Feldt & Mauno, 2003), life dissatisfaction (Lim, 1996), spoiled marital and family relations (Hughes & Galinsky, 1994; Westman, Etzion & Danon, 2001). Similarly, Stoner & Perrew (2006) identified the symptoms of anxiety and depression as major outcome of this phenomenon. As highlighted by Jones, Kinman, & Payne (2006) perceived job insecurity can lead to self destructive social vices as aggression, alcoholism and substance abuse.

The various health related problems that is associated with perceived job insecurity, are cardiovascular and coronary heart disease (Lee, Colditz, Berkman, & Kawachi, 2004). Atherosclerosis (Hintsanen, 2006), dryness of throat, and overproduction acid gastric (Safaria, Outhman & Wahab (2010), body mass index, excessive sleep (Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfeld, & Smith, 1998), and psychological morbidity among white collar workers Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Stansfeld, Davey, 1998). Other symptoms are decrease natural cell activity (Morikawa et al., 2005), internal fatigue (Friesen et al., 2008), arrhythmogenesis (Qureshi, 2001), and short menstrual cycle with women (Fenster et al, 1999). It has also been discovered that it significantly correlates with somatization, anxiety, anger/hostility, depression, and inter-personal sensitivity (Kuhnert & Palmer, 1989).

As being noted by Reitcher (2013) perceived job insecurity can lead to increased strain and decreased well-being for an individual. This was

complemented by (De Witte et al., 2010) who submitted that both the two facets of job insecurity (both quantitative and qualitative) can lead to serious negative outcomes which can include increased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, psychological distress, psychosomatic complaints, and decreased personal accomplishment. Also, the submission by Cooper & Melhuish (1980) confirmed this by pointing that it can result in psychosomatic problems such as headache, fatigue and insomnia, feeling of anxiety and depression while Gazzaniga & Heatherton (2003) also posited that workers' responses to the stress of perceived job insecurity in the shorter term could be emotional (anxiety, tension, life dissatisfaction), physiological (elevated heart rate, increased catecholamine secretion) and behavioral (drug use, absenteeism, lack of concentration), while in the longer term, they admitted that the accumulation of these responses could result in more permanent and manifest adverse consequences for mental and physical health. Similarly, Cremer, & Siegel, (1990) argued that a direct link exists between perceived job insecurity and the increased occurrence of ischemic heart disease

Empirically, the longitudinal study by Sarah, Burgard, Jennie, Brand, James, & House (2009) among two nationally-representative samples of the United States population, designed to examine episodic and persistent perceived job insecurity over periods of about three years to almost a decade shows that even after adjusting for socio-demographic and job characteristics, health prior to baseline, neuroticism, hypertension, smoking status, and objective employment insecurity before baseline or over follow-up, perceived job insecurity remains a significant predictor of subsequent health with the association largely concentrated among individuals who reported persistent perceived job insecurity as compared to those who never perceived that their jobs were at risk.

Consequences of Perceived Job Insecurity on the Organization

The consequences of perceived job insecurity on the individual employees have been found to exercise a multiplier effect on the both organizational performance, in addition to its profitability. For instance McCarthy (1993) reported that declining job security level show a significant relationship between organizational change and workers performance. According to Chirumbolo & Hellgren, (2003); De Witte, & Näswall (2003) a significant and negative relationship exists between higher feelings of job insecurity, and job related attitude such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It can also result in the intention to quit the organization (Chirumbolo & Hellgren, 2003). And work withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, tardiness and task avoidance (Probst, 2002a).

In the same vein, Probst (2004) reported that it can lead to workplace injury and accident, the consequential financial cost of treatment, which can contribute heavily to the overhead cost of the organization. In another attempt to relate these two concepts together, Cheng & Chan (2008) pointed that two meta-analyses on job insecurity found relations between job insecurity and the aspects of decreased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, performance, job involvement, mental and physical health, which fosters absenteeism and increased turnover intention. For Chirumbolo (2005) it was empirically discovered that the perceived job insecurity of Italian workers is negatively related to their job performance however, such relationship is moderated by their degree of satisfaction with the job, and level of organizational commitment. More precisely, job insecurity exhibited its negative influence on performance only in conditions of lesser job satisfaction and lesser organizational commitment. On the contrary, when job satisfaction and organizational commitment were sufficient high, the influence of job insecurity on performance vanished. That is to say, regardless of job insecurity there is no difference in job performance rated by employees if job satisfaction and organizational commitment are high.

According to Brockner, Tyler, and Schneider (1992) and De Witte and Naswall (2003) an insecure workforce can pose problems for firms since insecurity may well cause employees to identify less with corporate objectives and may impact adversely on motivation and willingness to innovate and hence on their individual productivity. As pointed by Ashford et al. (1989) perception of job insecurity has a direct link with employee's pronounced turnover intention most especially when many viable opportunities exists outside the firm. Further, Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) admitted that such situation of increased intent to quit results in a situation, whereby the most productive employee ends up being the first to quit because of their high employability which, in addition to reduced motivation, can also jeopardize a company's productivity and competitiveness (Sutton, 1983).

Though, Sverke and Hellgren (2001) maintains that a increasing perceived job insecurity will spur the least productive employees to make greater efforts, Brockner (1990) however, concurred that it is likely that, even among such groups, the higher output achieved as a result of the increased internal pressure will be only temporary. This is to indicate that after a sharp increase in productivity, such productivity is likely to drop sharply as a result of efforts related stress according to the law of diminishing returns. In addition, Cameron, Whetten & Myung (1987) posited that the impact of perceived job insecurity extends beyond the potential redundant employee in that due to its associated withdrawal syndrome,

demoralization, resistant to change, anxiety, employee turnover, and can contribute immensely to organizational dysfunction as well. In response to this, Sydney, Dekker, & Wilmar (1995) suggested that organizations should try to reduce the incidence of perceived job insecurity or reduce its harmful effect on employees. These submissions are closely related by the argument by Rosenblatt & Ruvio (1996) who insisted that job insecurity has been found to have a direct link with increased resistance to change among employees. According to them, employees who experienced greater uncertainty about their job did not understand why the current organizational changes were needed and indicates this by low affective commitment to change. Empirically, the research by Størseth (2007) uncovered that job insecurity was associated with increased risk taking and rule breaking behavior on the job. They found that such association is being mediated by lower job satisfaction and decreased job motivation implying that a higher perceived job insecurity will lead to lower job motivation and decreased satisfaction with the job, which will consequently lead to various form organizational rebellious behavior.

Consequences of Perceived Job Insecurity on the Society

According to Erlinghagen (2007) self-perceived job insecurity can in principle give rise to a number of negative consequences in various areas of social life which not only has negative consequences for individuals themselves and their families but can also give rise ultimately to high costs for society as a whole. Similarly, Benito (2006) pointed that an excessively high level of employment uncertainty can also lead to a slump in consumer spending, with its well-known negative consequences for economic development which can be in form of low national output, loss of jobs, chronic poverty and all sorts of social unrest. Economically, Pfeffer (1997) insisted that job insecurity can have effects on a larger societal level in that its associated negative health consequences on the individual employees may have to be compensated for by the welfare and healthcare systems thereby increasing the national budget and expenditure. Similarly, (Matteson & Ivancevich (1987) and Benito (2006) have related job insecurity with increased health care costs for the government, and reduced household consumption respectively. in order words, it will be reasonable to concur that when workers have the perception that their job is being characterized by insecurity, there is high tendency for them to also feel financially in-secured which might consequently translate into a reduction in their rate of public spending.

Within the family settings, Barling & Mendelson (1999) insisted that evidence from research have shown that that children's grades were negatively affected by their parents' job insecurity, as the parents' negative

moods and sense of injustice in the world were found to have influenced the children's outlooks, and their general functioning in the society. According to Barling & MacEwen (1992) perceived job insecurity is also associated with impaired marital functioning which might lead to domestic violence and consequently, family separation which can pose as an impediment to the proper upbringing of the children, and a greater negative consequences for the society at large.

In a multilevel study of Denmark, Osler et al. (2003) found that local levels of insecure employment are directly associated with national mortality rates. In addition, another study by Kravdal (2004) in Norway is negatively associated with fertility: birth rates in the areas where the rate of perceived unemployment among women is highest. Finally, Anderson and Gascon (2008) report that competition from foreign labor and the collective sense of insecurity is associated with a situation that resulted in United States workers having increased demands for social insurance and a subsequent increased cost for the government. Also, Billie, Meuleman and De Witte (2014) used the group conflict theory (Blalock 1967; Olzak 1992) to explain that perceived economic insecurity including that of insecure job induces ethnic competition for scarce material goods, which results in negative attitudes toward immigration most especially among individuals in vulnerable socio-economic positions: those with lower educational status and income, the unemployed, and low-skilled workers (Lancee and Pardos- Prado 2013; Kunovich 2002; Fetzer, 2012). And in countries with poor economic performance (Quillian 1995; Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky 2006). From this submission, one can safely deduce that perceived job insecurity can indirectly affect the inflow of talented and creative workers who can add creative value to national economy through the mediating power of negative attitudinal dispositions towards immigration among native group members.

According to Billie, Meuleman and De Witte (2014) the general premise upon which group conflict theory lies is that hostile attitudes toward immigration can be regarded as a defensive reaction to perceived intergroup competition for scarce goods. Since those ethnic group members who are threatened in this regard, as a result of stiff competition from immigrant are likely to develop negative attitude, which can transform into aggressive and violence behavior, one can thus extend this concept to the recent xenophobia attack in South Africa where a significant number of foreigners were attacked as a result of inter-group competition for scarce economic opportunities which later generated into a public image for the country as a whole.

Also, the Guardian online (2015) has reported that the concept of employment safety causes 45,000 suicides a year in sixty three selected countries worldwide. It went on further to report that between the year 2000

and 2011, one in five of an estimated 233,000 annual suicides was linked to perception of job related problems. In addition, the research by Laanani, Ghosn, Jouglu, & Rey (2015) among the European Union countries uncovered that a significant 0.3% overall increase in suicide rate for a 10% increase in unemployment rate exists among these countries. Though, the subject of focus in this study was actual unemployment it can however be theoretically argued that a high unemployment rate will be associated with high perception of economic and job insecurity among those that are gainfully employed. Here, I propose that high perceived job insecurity will result in negative social and economic consequences.

Causes of Perceived Job Insecurity

According to Erlinghagen (2007) the drivers of perceived job insecurity can be classified under two categories: micro or individual factors (education, income, age, gender, family role expectation, size of firm, type of industry), macro factors (legislation, standards, economic environment etc.)

Individual/ Micro Factors

As posited by Erlinghagen (2007) individual resources, which have a positive or negative influence on his/her marketability should influence their perception of their own job insecurity to a considerable degree. This is to indicate that the relevant skills, experience and knowledge about the job as perceived by employees can act as a determinant of feelings of job uncertainty. For instance a highly resourceful employee with relevant skills and experience might likely feel less insecure on the job as a result of the beliefs that his is highly employable and has various other alternative employment opportunities. Thus, having inadequate skill set has been identified as a precursor of job uncertainty feelings. By corroborating this submission, Nickel and Bell (1995) says that the relatively bad employment situation of older people and unskilled workers should mean that job insecurity among these groups is also greater.

Regarding gender, Gronau (1977) argued that gender effects arising out of still existing role differences, gender-based specialization and the associated statistical discrimination against women on the job might make female to be more vulnerable and therefore have a higher feelings of not being secure on the job. The role of individual within the family has also been identified as a relevant driver of perceived job insecurity. In the opinion of Erlinghagen (2007) this can be divided into the degree of individual financial contribution to the family and the availability or non availability of children. For instance, it can be assumed that increases in the financial commitment of an individual to the family will likely have a corresponding positive impact on his/her perceived job insecurity. This assumption can

also be extended to the presence or absence of children responsibility by concluding that couples with children responsibility are likely to have more financial commitment and thus, react more to a potential job loss situation of threatening job conditions.

Another micro factor that could have a link to perceived job insecurity by Erlinghagen (2007) is individual employee's tenure on the job. He reasoned that the longer individuals remain with the same employer, the safer they should be from dismissal, and the less perception of job insecurity they are likely to experience vice versa. Some of the reasons that can be attributed to this are trust developed from a long term relationship (Rosen, 1985). And special legal regulations protecting employees with many years' tenure (OECD 2005). However, he admitted that such situation depends on the peculiarity of the employee by saying that employees who have changed employer frequently and therefore have shorter job tenures do not necessarily feel any more insecure as a result of their extensive experience in the external labor market which has led them to perceive frequent changes of job as a normal situation that simply has to be managed rather than a threat. From this, we can infer that the relationship between feeling of insecurity on the job and employment tenure seems to be moderated by the job stability of individual. However, Contrary to the submission by Erlinghagen (2007), Belot and Ermisch (2006) posited that perceived job insecurity might likely increase with a higher years of experience on the job. This, he attributed to the fact that since long serving employees are normally entitled to higher pay and entitlement, the thought of losing out on such privilege might have a pronounced effect on them than it is for newly recruited employees who have less entitlement.

In addition to the job tenure of employees, another factor that has been identified is size of firm and sector or industry type. Here, it is argued that firms with large size would tend to have enormous material and financial resources which might enable them to withstand any form of environmental pressure such as economic, political and technological shocks and thus, ensure operationally stability over time, which will in turn reduce the rate at which employees will tend to think of potential organizational dysfunction and future job loss as a possibility. Similarly, those employees whose firm's operational activities are seasonal in nature are more likely to have a higher feeling of insecurity on the job (Erlinghagen, 2007).

Macro Environmental Factors

At the macro level, Erlinghagen (2007) identified two major factors which are the pattern of employment legislation and the scope of the state social protection system. He reasoned that within the labor markets that are characterized by stringent regulations against the retrenchment of workers,

such society will tend to have a lower rate of objective job insecurity and hence a lower feeling of future job loss among employees. Similarly, a society that is characterized by high social security and support for citizens is likely to have a lower level of perceived job insecurity in the sense that since the unemployed are usually provided for in such society, hence the fear of losing a present job, and its associated economic benefits might not be so evident on the employees. Thus, a loose labor law which does not ensure that the right of employees are adequately protected, and poor administration of social benefits might likely result in a higher perceived job insecurity among employees.

Strategies for Intervention

Appropriate strategies that may serve as an intervention in the management of the negative outcome of perceived job insecurity can be broadly divided into two: personality trait differences and external factors. The personality traits can include self care (Mak & Mueller, 2000), self-esteem and optimism (Makikangas & Kinnunen, 2003), emotional intelligence (Jordan, Ashkanasy & Hartel, 2002), locus of control and need for security (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Drawing inference from the identified factors, one can reasonably deduce that a higher level of self care which can be in the form of devoting much attention to oneself and ensuring that all necessary physiological needs that is essential to bodily well being is adequately provided for, can reduce the incidence of perceived job insecurity, or counter its damaging effects. Such needs can be in the form of good diet, adequate exercise, and periodic medical check. Regarding self esteem and optimism, since the concept of unemployment is associated with low social status and low self worth, hence the belief of a potential job loss can induce an individual to have a negative self concept, lower self esteem, and a pessimistic attitude towards life. However, an individual who have a high self esteem and is highly positive regarding future endeavors will likely feel less threatened by the belief of future job loss and thus, react less to the negative consequences that is associated with it.

Jordan, Ashkanasy, & Hartel (2002) gave a definition of emotional intelligence (EQ) as the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict. Studies have shown that people with emotional intelligence have greater self awareness, self management, social awareness and relationship management. In addition, they tend to possess greater mental health, exemplary job performance, and more potent leadership skills. Hence a higher level of emotional intelligence can serve as a coping strategy and can help an individual to identify and limit the negative consequences associated with

job insecurity. For instance such outcomes as anxiety, depression negative self concepts which are associated with perceived job insecurity can be easily taken care of by the possession of emotional intelligence by an individual. Similarly, the higher the need for security in an individual, the more likely he is to react to the negative consequences of perceived job insecurity. Thus, if the belief of such individual is that he is properly secured both socially and materially, he is likely to react less to threatening job position or job conditions.

The external factors as identified by the literature are social support (Lim, 1996), perceptions of process and work control (Barling & Kelloway, 1996), participations in decision processes (Parker, Chmiel & Wall, 1997), fairness of treatment and organizational justice were shown to affect work attitudes (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). According to Buunk (1990) social support is regarded as a strong moderating variable that buffers the negative outcome of job insecurity. This view was further complemented by Vuuren (1990) who identified three major social supports: support by colleague, confidence in management, and protection by trade union. As argued by Moscovici (1984) social support from colleagues enhances the development of a system of shared beliefs or social representation which might help in reducing the negative outcome of perceived job insecurity. Regarding confidence in management, Sydney, Dekker, & Wilmar (1995) reasoned that if there is a little assurance from top management on organizational or departmental survival, the development of psychological symptoms or withdrawal behavior associated with perceived job insecurity may increase. They further admitted that if no help is offered by the union in protecting jobs or payout guarantee, the more difficult it will be to avoid the consequences of perceived job insecurity.

Overall, Hofall (1989) pointed that these three components of social support provide a viable mean by which employees can at least have the illusion that they have the control over the stressor of job insecurity. However, Buunk (1990) later refuted the above opinions by reporting a substantial number of studies which in which there is no buffering effect of social support on the perceived job insecurity stressor. The view was complemented by the empirical results uncovered by Sydney, Dekker, & Wilmar (1995) where it was discovered that no significant relationship exists between the three components of social support and job insecurity related stress among the employees of a public transport company in Australia. Their conclusion was that if social support is deficient, it can lead to such stress rather than alleviate it. Similarly, many researchers including Sydney et al. (1990) have indicated that instead of employing the use of social support as a buffering strategy, perceived job insecurity itself must be dealt

with directly for instance by appropriate human resource planning, caution recruitment, training, career counseling and career planning.

Discussion/Conclusions

The objective of this paper was to identify the effect of perceived job insecurity on the overall functioning of the individual, organizational and societal functioning. From the review of relevant literature on this workplace phenomenon, it was identified that it does not only act as a precursor to both the individual worker's physiological impairment and the overall organizational dysfunction, but can also have a multiplier effect on the larger social and economic environment. Specifically, it was discovered that feelings or perception of job uncertainty is associated with various forms of physiological and psychological health related problems. It was further discovered that these adverse health conditions can either result in various life threatening situations, or overall emotional and psychological functioning of the individual. At the organizational level, perceived job insecurity is likely to result into lower job satisfaction, lower organizational commitment/citizenship, higher turnover-intention, and overall organizational productivity/profitability. Also, the social and economic implication of perceived job insecurity can range from increased national expenditure, low economic performance indicators, lower life expectancy, loss of innovative migrant and a higher suicide rate. Furthermore, the causes of perceived job insecurity can either be as a result of micro factors (individual personality, demographic factors, organizational structure, size and industry type) or macro factors (government regulations, employment law etc). Hence, the formulation and implementation of any intervention program must be carried out by giving full attention to these two critical factors.

Implications, Limitations and future Research Opportunities

The findings in this study have potential implications for policy and intervention. First, any potential intervention program must be broadly divided into two: organizational based intervention, and institutional based intervention. By the former, I mean those organizational related policies which can be designed to cushion the negative effects of perceived job insecurity. Here, efforts should be made to by management in organizations to give employees the assurance that their job is secured and that the long term survival of the organization is ensured. It is thus anticipated that this will lead to the beliefs on the part of the employees that their job is not in any way, under threat, which will consequently transform into a higher self confidence and self efficacy. Similarly, a periodic training session that focuses on equipping employees with skills on emotional intelligence should

be initiated by the management of organizations. For instance if employees are in possession of a considerable level of emotional intelligence, they will be more positioned to handle any job threatening situation or its related negative outcomes. Furthermore, management of organizations must focus on improving the level of social support for employees in the workplace. Such social support might include the principle of strict adherence to organizational justice, involvement of employees in decision making, and giving the right to membership of labor union who will be in a position to advance the cause of the employees. It is assumed that the psychological feelings that this union is set out to advance such cause will go a long way in buffering the effect of this workplace stress. However, it must equally be noted that even though, these organizational based interventions can limit the negative outcome of perceived job insecurity; they are not capable of changing the actual insecure employment situation. Thus, on the overall, it is suggested that the human resources policies of the organizations should be based on careful forecasting, planning, auditing and implementing. By doing this, it assumed that the actual number of required staff, within the limit of resources of the organization will be employed by the organization at different points in times thereby eliminating or reducing the incidence of arbitrary layoff.

Furthermore, Institutional policies such as labor law that legislate against undue dismissal of employees and a social security system that emphasizes benefit packages for unemployed individuals should be employed in reducing or eliminating the incidence of this workplace phenomenon. For instance if an employees that perceives his job as being threatened equally have the belief that his economy situation is likely to be cushioned by a social security package in the case that he loses his job, the negative outcome of perceived insecurity on the job is likely to be significantly reduced. In addition to financial incentives the formulation of relevant labor laws that increases perception of job certainty for employees seems to equally be an option. For instance if employees believes that there are labor laws which that guarantee their continuity on the job, with the legal capacity to use the law court as a means of addressing any wrong doing on the part of the management, they are likely to feel more secured on the job even in adverse economic situations.

The present study has limitation in that it fails to provide sufficient empirical evidence to address the overall economic and social implication of perceived job insecurity on the society. For instance there is lack of adequate empirical data to support the argument that perceived job insecurity indeed lead to increase in unnecessary government spending, suicide rate, poverty indicators and national development. Hence, further research is needed to clarify this position on a cross country basis.

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