

A Study of the Relationship Between Job Insecurity and Obedience to Authority, The Moderating Role of Psychological Capital

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ABSTRACT

Under the background of the epidemic of COVID-19 and people's increasing anxiety about unemployment, this paper assumes the degree of people's obedience to authority under the current COVID-19, and uses questionnaires, psychological scales and other methods to make a psychological capital intervention to improve people's anxiety about unemployment. This paper only describes the intervention method, because of the time factor did not really implement and analyze the data. But there are four conclusions that can be drawn from the assumptions.

Keywords: job insecurity, psychological capital, COVID-19

1. INTRODUCTION

With the novel Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, people's movements have been greatly restricted. Meanwhile, the world economy is in relative stagnation. According to the World Bank survey (2020), over 95% countries experienced recession because of the significantly influence of Covid-19. These economic failures not only limited the development economic growth, but also caused a surge of global unemployment rate. As a result of the Novel Coronavirus effect on employment worldwide, there has been a sudden reduction in jobs, a sudden increase in turnover, and a gradual increase in the pressure on employees to stay employed. In the past decades, people have conducted frequent investigations and studies on job insecurity, such as the relationship between employee psychological state and employee participation [1], the influence of work and social support on employees [2], A study on employee job satisfaction in the context of COVID-19 [3]. The above studies have measured various psychological states and influences of employees from multiple perspectives. However, although the above studies cover the relationship between many employees' work status and other factors, there are few studies on the relationship between employees' unemployment anxiety and their obedience to authoritative management. In response, our team raised questions and designed an experiment on the relationship between job insecurity and obedience to authority.

Also, in the context of COVID-19, employees have experienced a range of work situations that did not occur before, such as working from home, downsizing, etc. They returned to work after working from home for long periods of time, and their attitude to work changed. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate that psychological capital can to some extent buffer the effects of job insecurity on authority obedience, and that employees with high PsyCap levels can better regulate their perception of current job insecurity. Also, subordinates in China may find it difficult to refuse requests from superiors [4]. On this basis, the group hope to apply this research results to today's enterprise management, in order to create a more harmonious work environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review mainly explains the definitions of some terms in experimental design and the validation of the methods used in the study, as well as some summaries of previous studies on similar topics.

2.1 Job Insecurity

Job insecurity in this paper is defined as the subjectively perceived and undesired possibility to lose the present job in the future [5] in previous studies. Also, in this paper, the main risk factor of employees experiencing job insecurity is the COVID-19.

2.2 Psychological Capital

In this experimental design, Psychological Capital is mainly used as the main adjustment method affecting the psychological state of employees. This method has been proved effective in previous years. For example, in previous experiments, PsyCap can regulate the affective well-being (AWB) [6] and the role of influencing students' academic achievement [7]. The PsyCap questionnaire has also been shown to reflect people's psychological states. For example, the PsyCap has been applied to analyze the self-perception of higher education program coordinators working on private and community higher education Institutions in Southern Brazil [8]. PsyCap questionnaire (PCQ24) can reflect people's Optimism, self-efficacy, Hope and Resilience [9], therefore, PsyCap will be adopted in the experiment to influence and evaluate employees' employment pressure.

2.3 Recent studies

From the study of Civil patient satisfaction to nurses' job satisfaction, job security, and obedience OCBs [10], the results indicate that job security positively influences both job satisfaction and obedience OCBs. Both job satisfaction and obedience OCBs fully mediate the relationship between job security and patient satisfaction. Obedience OCBs partially mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and patient satisfaction. Based on this experiment, the group have hypothesis one--- Job insecurity will be positively related to obedience to authority. From Personnel psychology by Luthans, employees with high PsyCap are more confident in their ability to achieve their goals, and these employees are hopeful and therefore able to create different solutions and adjustments to cope with the problems caused by job insecurity. From this, the work has hypothesis two--- Psychological Capital will buffer the positive relationship between job insecurity and obedience to authority.

3. METHOD

3.1 Participants

The participants of this experiment are mainly currently employed employees with high unemployment anxiety. The work will randomly distribute about 300 JIM-15 questionnaires in a large enterprise [11], and recruit 100 employees with the highest scores to participate in the experiment after data collection. These 100 employees will soon be randomly divided into experimental group and control group, each group will have 50 samples.

3.2 Research instrument

3.2.1 JIM-15

In the experiment, the main questionnaire the work will use is the 15-item JIM retained by EFA and CFA. JLI was measured with five items, and JCI was measured with four items. OSI and MI were both measured with three items and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with items on 7-point scale ranging. From number 1 to 7, smaller the number, less accurate the result. For example, 1 represents very inaccurate and 7 represents very accurate.

3.2.2 PCQ-24

Psychological capital Questionnaire (PCQ-24) proposed by Luthans (2007) [12] was adopted in our experiment, including four dimensions of self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism. Among them, questions 1-6 measured the dimension of self-efficacy, 7-12 measured the dimension of hope, 13-18 measured the dimension of resilience, and 19-24 measured the dimension of optimism. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with items on 7-point scale ranging from 1 (very inaccurate) to 7 (very accurate).

3.2.3 Solution-focused Group Therapy

Solution-focused Group Therapy (SFGT) refers to the application of SFBT concepts and technologies inside the group to fully stimulate and utilize the energy of the group and the potential and superior resources of members, so as to gradually solve problems or promote the growth of members. It is a process of achieving individual and group goals. SFGT will form a positive group motivation, and use this motivation to influence everyone in the group, actively catalyze the interaction between members, stimulate them to think about solving problems, and help them better solve problems.

3.2.4 Employee obedience scenario

Compliance situations are graded, ranging from tasks that are easy to complete to tasks that are more than the employee should comply with. Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed with the project on a seven-point scale, from 1 (very inaccurate) to 7 (very accurate).

3.3 Measures

The results of the first measurement of PCQ-24 were recorded in 20 subjects before the psychological capital improvement intervention. The experimental group was treated with SFGT for 1 month (twice a week, two hours each time, a total of 16 hours), while the control group was followed up by telephone regularly, asking about

their work stress, life events, family relationships, self-feelings, etc., and paying attention to their emotional state and psychological changes.

This step attempts to reduce employees' job insecurity through psychological capital intervention by designing group counseling projects based on SFBT technology. Combined with the four dimensions of psychological capital and Luthans' intervention model, we integrated the measures used in previous studies and achieved good results. Based on the hypothesis of this study, we specially designed a group counseling program. The

specific content is shown in Table 1.

After one month of treatment, patients in both groups were measured with PCQ-24 again to verify whether SFGT can effectively improve the psychological capital of employees. The JIM-15 was used to measure job insecurity in both groups again to ensure the validity of the experimental results.

After confirming the effectiveness of the psychological capital intervention, both groups were measured simultaneously in the compliance situation. The specific design is shown in Table 2.

Table 1 Specific content of group counseling activity plan

TIME	THEME	CONTENT	SFBT THEORY	INTERVENTION DIMENSION
1	Nice to meet you	Each person gives himself a nickname instead of his or her real name, which helps members know each other, and sets goals and plans for the group.	Goal orientation Future orientation	Hope
2	Think differently and be good at discovering your strengths	Ask members to talk about their work accomplishments or praise from their bosses, colleagues, or clients.	Everyone is an expert in his own life	Self-efficacy Hope
3		Encourage them to discover their strengths, and help them discover the strengths they don't expect to see in their work and life to build their confidence.		
4		On the basis of exploring their own shining points, guide members to recall their own shortcomings or failure experience, help each other to find appropriate solutions, put aside regrets and regrets, and move towards the future with a positive and optimistic attitude.		
5	The way others understand me	Guide members to share interpersonal problems encountered in the work environment, help each other to analyze the causes and find solutions to create a more harmonious work environment	Everyone is an expert in his own life Future orientation	Self-efficacy Resilience Optimism
6	Get rid of interpersonal difficulties		Goal orientation Accumulation of change Courage in the face of inadequacy	Optimism, Resilience
7				

8	Our bright future	Ease the parting mood, encourage everyone to start to look at themselves and work positively, face difficulties bravely, not afraid of challenges, and have the courage to show their ability	Future orientation	Hope, Optimism
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Table 2 Specific content of employee obedience scenarios

THEME	CONTENT
Ability and promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a busy day, the work assigned to me is beyond my ability, I will still try my best to complete it. 2. As long as the assignment of the work is good for my promotion or raise, I will do it no matter what
Compliance with regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Today I am asked to deal with a job without due process, but I will finish it. 2. Although I don't think the task I have been assigned fits the purpose of the company, I'll do it anyway. 3. I have been given a very uncertain job today, so I may have to adjust my work according to the situation which annoys me a lot. I will try my best to finish it.
Transformational leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My boss arranges for me to pick up his children during my working hours. I am very helpless, I will do what he says. 2. After work, my leader asked me to pick up his children. I really want to go home immediately, but I will still fulfill his requirements first. 3. My boss distrusts me and gives work that is way too simple. But I still try to finish it cautiously. 4. I disagree with my boss on this decision, but I will do as he says anyway.
Colleague relationship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know finishing this job will cause resentment and jealousy among my colleagues, but I will finish it anyway. 2. I feel like I have a heavier workload than other colleagues and I am being treated unfairly. But I will still get my assignment done.
Social security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The leader asks me to work overtime today and promises to give me overtime pay. I will obey his request. 2. The leader forces me to work overtime without any compensation. I will obey his request. 3. I hate my job, but I know it will be difficult for me to find another good job, so I won't resign.
The most intense situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company asks me to do a work that goes against my moral values, but I will do it due to the intense employment environment. 2. The company asks me to do something illegal and my supervisor promises to protect me. I would do it even if I am aware of the consequence.

3.4 Data Analysis

SPSS26.0 software will be used for statistical analysis of the experimental data by partial correlation and paired sample T-test. The moderating effect model of psychological capital will be verified by SPSS 26.0 PROCESS

4. RESULTS (Expected)

Result 1: Under COVID-19, the questionnaire shows that employees have the tendency of not following what authority says. After PsyCap's impact, employee questionnaire results showed a significant improvement in unemployment anxiety.

Result 2: Under COVID-19, the questionnaire shows that employees have the tendency of more following what

authority says. After PsyCap's impact, employee questionnaire results showed a significant improvement in unemployment anxiety.

Result 3: Under COVID-19, the questionnaire shows that employees have the tendency of not following what authority says. After PsyCap's impact, employee questionnaire results do not have a significant change in unemployment anxiety.

Result 4: Under COVID-19, the questionnaire shows that employees have the tendency of more following what authority says. After PsyCap's impact, employee questionnaire results do not have a significant change in unemployment anxiety.

There are four expected conclusions from expected results above.

Conclusion 1: Under COVID-19, job insecurity has a positive impact on Chinese subjects' compliance behavior. The intervention of enhancing psychological capital can effectively buffer employees' job insecurity.

Conclusion 2: Under COVID-19, job insecurity has a positive impact on Chinese subjects' compliance behavior. Intervention to improve psychological capital cannot effectively buffer employees' job insecurity.

Conclusion 3: Under COVID-19, job insecurity has a negative impact on compliance behavior of Chinese subjects. The intervention to improve psychological capital can effectively buffer employees' job insecurity.

Conclusion 4: Under COVID-19, job insecurity has a negative impact on compliance behavior of Chinese subjects. Intervention to improve psychological capital cannot effectively buffer employees' job insecurity.

5. CONCLUSION

This study will consider the relationship between job insecurity and authority obedience in the context of COVID-19 in China, as well as the moderating role of psychological capital. It is hoped that the results of this study will help companies and employees think about the relationship between superiors and subordinates in Asian cultures and create a more comfortable and productive work environment.

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