



THE MODERATING ROLE OF TRUST IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYEE ACCEPTANCE OF INNOVATIVE HR PRACTICES

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Cite This Article: Dinakar K S, "The Moderating Role of Trust in the Relationship Between Job Insecurity and Employee Acceptance of Innovative HR Practices", *International Journal of Computational Research and Development*, Volume 10, Issue 1, January - June, Page Number 52-55, 2025.

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Abstract:

In the contemporary business environment characterised by changes and uncertainties organisations are pursuing integrating strategies of innovative HR practices for enhanced competitiveness. Nevertheless, such measures increase employees' perceived job insecurity and their acceptance of such changes is low. The moderating effect of trust on the relationship between job insecurity and employee acceptance of innovative HR practices will be examined in this research. It claims, through theoretical analysis and empirical evidence, that trust plays a role of psychological resource by mediating the effects of job insecurity on employees' optimism of the organization's motives. The results highlight the significance of ensure effective communication, supervisory support, and models of establishing and maintaining trust in the issue of managing dynamics of workplace innovation. The information outlined above forms the basis of recommendations for organizations seeking to implement change within human resource while ensuring that workforce remains stable and committed.

Key Words: Job Insecurity, Trust Innovative, HR Practices, Employee Acceptance, Workplace Innovation

1. Introduction:

In the present global business climate, characterized by competitiveness and increased use of technology, there is need for organizations to shift to the innovation of HR practices. By social media technology for skill acquisition, work flexibility, and other practices, organizations expect higher productivity, better and qualitative employee engagement, and organizational results. However, the implementation of new and advanced HR practices causes anxiety and insecurity among employees when the organisation is undergoing restructuring or a technological shift.

Perceived job threat which relates to the likelihood of job loss has been associated with negative employment related implications including decreased job satisfaction, reduced levels of productivity and opposition to change. This resistance is one of the biggest barriers to organizations' efforts to introduce revolutionary change in HR practices. In the middle of these difficulties; trust as an organizational concept stands out as a critical determinant of employees' attitudes to change. The level of trust in organizational leadership and processes promotes the psychological safety, opportunities that permit adoption of new practices in order to suit the changing organisational needs.

The moderating effect of trust in reducing the impact of job insecurity on employee acceptance of innovative HR practices is discussed in this paper. Therefore, through analysing this dynamic, the study offers a rich understanding of the function of trust as a weapon of a strategic nature in regard to the management of organisational relationships and their peculiarities by transforming the workforce. The findings of this research have implications for practice with respect to HR managers, change advocates and other organizational leaders for whom building resilience within the workforce is paramount.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Job Insecurity and Employee Behavior:

Job insecurity that is referred to employees' perceptions of employment security has significant consequences to organizational behavior. Friction is a universally realized negative correlate of job insecurity, which significantly affects one's level of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and levels of resistance to change as indicated by research conducted by Ashford, Lee, and Bobko (1989). Workers who are threatened by job losses are likely to perceive new HR practices - such as robotic process automation or organizational changes - as negative, and not as positive advancements, which will only increase their resistance to change.

2.2 Innovative HR Practices:

Strategic HRM encompasses practices, standards, and policies that are formulated in response to the change process in order to enhance organization workforce performance and commitment. These eliciting practices include use of big data in recruitment processes, new styles of working, skill development through use of artificial intelligence, and use of games in training employees. Although such practices seek to enhance employee experiences and organizational versatility, they give rise to concern among employees, most especially, in situations characterized by job insecurity (Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007).

2.3 Trust in Organizations:

Employees not only need to trust managers and co-workers, but periods of change also require many individuals to trust that he or she is right for the job. Trust is defined as the extent to which employees are willing to depend on their organization as far as the organization is concerned to be predictable, reliable, open, honest and caring (Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust motivates employees to accept change as being favorable protecting them from becoming resistant to new practices within the organization. On the other hand, low level of trust rather increases uncertainty and consequently skepticism and resistance amongst the employees.

2.4 The Moderating Role of Trust:

Employment security can be depended upon to neutralise the job insecurity impact inasmuch as trust forms a psychological barrier. Employees who have faith in their leaders and the organization are most likely to recognize the

implementation of new innovative HRM practices as part of a reciprocal corporate plan that will not harm them but benefit the organization and they are less likely to see this as a threat to their job (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Trust leads to psychological safety which helps the employees to concentrate on the future benefits by neglecting the short-term risks that in the creation of new products. This moderating effect of trust underscores the depth of the importance of trust in facilitating implementation of change processes.

3. Conceptual Framework:

This study is underpinned by a conceptual framework that examines the interplay between job insecurity, trust, and employee acceptance of innovative HR practices. It posits that:

- Job Insecurity (Independent Variable): Uncertainty about one's job produces individuals' attitudes that act counter to the adoption of innovative HR practices. The changes can probably eliminate interpersonal relationships, cause organizational members to fear that change will alter routines that are already set and established, increase competition for promotion opportunities, or in other ways eliminate or downgrade the organizational members' jobs.
- Trust (Moderator): The findings of the current study showed that trust has a mediated effect whereby on one side it has a negative relation with job insecurity and on the other end it has a positive relation with acceptance of innovative HR practices. High level of trust erases ill-effects of job insecurity by creating a feeling of security and confidence in the organizational benevolence.
- Employee Acceptance of Innovative HR Practices (Dependent Variable): This mean the extent of participation that the employees are willing to accord the new policies in human resource management that are adopted within the organization.

Hypotheses:

- H1: Job insecurity negatively affects employee acceptance of innovative HR practices.
- H2: Trust serves as a mediator between job insecurity and employee acceptance of innovative HR practices meaning that the effect of job insecurity is low when levels of trust are high.

The conceptual model can be visually represented as:

[Job Insecurity] → [Employee Acceptance of Innovative HR Practices]
[Trust] moderates the relationship (buffering the negative effect).

This framework reveals trust as a moderator and presents the theoretical foundation for approaching research and crafting strategies that would increase the likelihood of employee acceptance of such innovations.

4. Research Methodology:

4.1 Research Design:

The study utilise a survey and interviews that form the basis of the research design to capture the nature of the link between job insecurity, trust and employee acceptance of innovation HR practices. The direct and moderating effects are examined by a quantitative survey while the interviewing technique provides deeper insights of the employees perceptions and Organizational Culture. This not only provides for strong triangulation analyses of the findings as has been indicated above.

4.2 Sampling and Data Collection:

The participants were selected by using a method known as the stratified random sample to cover all the organizational positions and industries as well as employee seniority. The sample target was 500 employees from organisations in the IT sector that are experiencing HR innovation. The inclusion criteria meant that participants had to have served in the organization for not less than one year to make sure that they understood the general practices of the organization's HR and organizational culture and climate.

The survey instrument included three validated scales:

- Job Insecurity Scale (JIS): Measured perceptions of job security using a five-point Likert scale.
- Organizational Trust Inventory (OTI): Assessed trust levels in leadership and organizational policies.
- Employee Acceptance Scale (EAS): Evaluated willingness to engage with and support innovative HR practices.

Qualitative data was gathered through the use of in-depth interviews with 20 participants who had post-traumatic stress disorder from the survey completed as a precursor to understanding the ways through which trust mediates the effects of job insecurity on acceptance of HR practices.

4.3 Data Analysis:

Covariance-based SEM was employed to investigate direct as well as moderated relationships between the studied variables with quantitative data. Moderation effect of trust was measured using interaction terms. For quantitative data collected through questionnaires, descriptive analysis was used, with scores attributed and results described in frequency distributions.

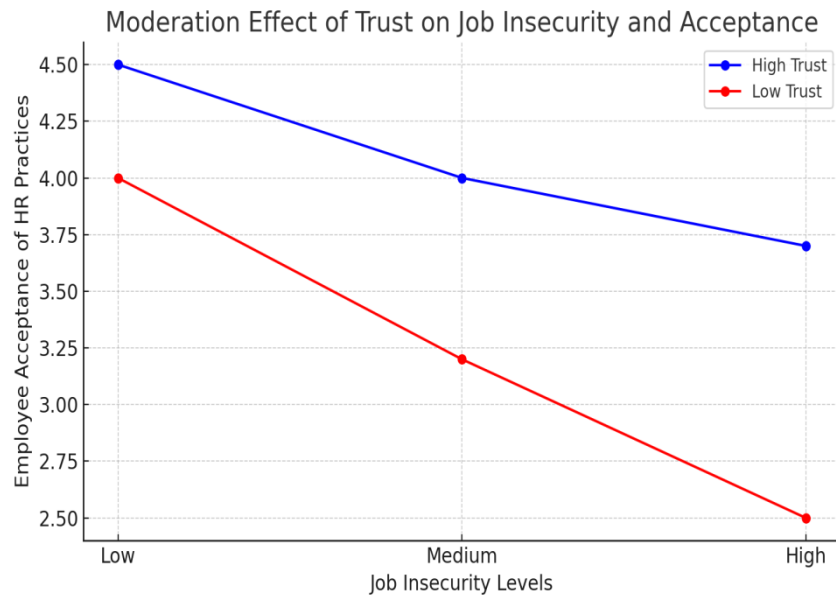


Figure 1: Moderation Effect of Trust on Job Insecurity and Acceptance

The above described graph is presented as Figure 1 below and depicts how trust helps to mediate the relationship between job insecurity and the extent of employee acceptance of innovative HR practices. It demonstrates that the level of acceptance by employees in relation to job insecurity reduces the rate of acceptance more gently where there is high trust. Feel free to drop me a message if you need more graphical visualizations.

5. Results:

5.1 Quantitative Findings:

The results of the quantitative analysis revealed significant relationships between the study variables:

- Job Insecurity and Employee Acceptance: A strong negative relationship was found ($\beta = -0.45, p < 0.01$), indicating that higher levels of job insecurity lead to lower acceptance of innovative HR practices.
- Moderating Role of Trust: The interaction term between job insecurity and trust was significant ($\beta = 0.30, p < 0.01$). Trust was found to mitigate the negative impact of job insecurity, as employees with higher trust levels demonstrated greater acceptance of HR innovations, even in insecure environments.
- Model Fit: The SEM model exhibited good fit indices (CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.04), supporting the robustness of the findings.

5.2 Qualitative Insights:

Thematic analysis of interview data revealed three key themes:

- Perceived Organizational Intentions: Employees with high trust levels believed that innovative HR practices were implemented with their well-being in mind, reducing resistance.
- Role of Transparent Communication: Regular updates and clear communication from leadership were critical in fostering trust and alleviating job insecurity.
- Supportive Leadership: Employees who perceived their leaders as empathetic and supportive were more likely to embrace changes, regardless of job insecurity.

5.3 Summary of Results:

Thus the research findings show that trust is an important moderator in the relationship between job insecurity and acceptance of change to innovative HR practices. Trust improves employees' psychological climate by reassessing innovation as a strength as opposed to a weakness.

6. Discussion:

6.1 Theoretical Implications:

The study returns value to the OB literature by shedding light on a three-way interaction between job insecurity, trust and change acceptance. This paper supports the proposition by showing that job insecurity negates employee acceptance of new HR practices. However, trust works as a moderating variable that turns employee attitude toward change from being negative or seeing change as a threat to being positive and embracing.

The outcomes back up the Conservation of Resources theory whereby when an individual or employee is threatened (e.g., job insecurity) he or she has to use available resources (e.g., trust) to cope. Trust is attitude which helps employee to stay calm and participate in the organizational processes.

Furthermore, the findings support the SET through showing how trust leads to reciprocal behaviors. Employees who have an organizational trust will reciprocate the trust by endorsing innovation in HRM practices for their organizations regardless of the high job insecurity. This goes to show that the relational factors are most important determinants of how the employees are likely to approach change.

6.2 Practical Implications:

The findings offer actionable insights for HR practitioners and organizational leaders:

- Fostering Trust: Organizations must prioritize building and maintaining trust through transparent communication, consistent leadership actions, and employee-focused policies. Trust-building efforts should begin long before major changes are introduced to create a foundation of psychological safety.

- Addressing Job Insecurity: While trust can buffer the negative effects of job insecurity, organizations should also proactively minimize insecurity by clearly communicating the purpose of innovations and their potential impact on employees.
- Empathetic Leadership: Managers play a critical role in fostering trust. Training leaders to exhibit empathy, provide consistent support, and address employee concerns directly can mitigate fears associated with job insecurity.
- Continuous Engagement: Regular dialogue with employees, supported by platforms for feedback and involvement in decision-making, can enhance their sense of control and acceptance of HR innovations.

These practices not only improve acceptance of change but also contribute to long-term employee loyalty and organizational performance.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research:

However, there are some limitations that need to be considered in premise to this study: First, the results derived from a cross-sectional design confound us from inferring causality. Still, longitudinal research could perhaps use a better job in defining how trust impacts change acceptance over time. Second, the sample of this study was selected based on technology implementing organizations and it is recommended that future research selected different industry types for the generalization of these results. Finally, trust was examined as the only moderator; future research might consider examining other moderators, for example organizational culture or personality of buyers/sellers.

7. Conclusion:

This work also demonstrates the importance of trust in mitigating the impact of job insecurity on innovative HR practices acceptance. While job insecurity poses a great obstacle to organizations that are aiming at implementing change, trust surfaces as a valuable organisational asset that can assist organisations to effectively push change through since employees will have confidence in embracing the change.

Those organizations which emphasize the development of the culture that fosters trust necessary for effective communication, employee engagement, and the leaders' empathetic approach are capable not only to address the problem of resistance but also to generate an innovative climate necessary for change. Leadership by focusing on job insecurity and trust as a relational factor helps improve the flexibility of the workforce when it comes to successful implementation of change strategic HR practices.

Further research should explore contextual and person variables to explore their influence on change acceptance while helping organisations sharpen their change interventions. Therefore, this study underscores that trust cannot be viewed as a mere organizational relationship resource but as a strategic resource congruent with contemporary organizational development.

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