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Does Perceived Job Insecurity Affect Mental Health? Evidence from the 2021 Chinese General Social Survey

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Introduction

With rising global competition, industrial shifts, and economic recessions, an increasing number of employees face concerns about layoffs. The instability and unpredictability of labor markets impose significant psychological burdens on workers, often resulting in adverse health outcomes linked to job insecurity. Understanding the relationship between job insecurity and health is crucial for informing interventions aimed at improving workers' well-being. Previous research has established a connection between perceived job insecurity and poor health outcomes. After accounting for demographic, socioeconomic, and job characteristics, as well as prior health conditions, perceived job insecurity was found associated with deteriorating health among U.S. workers (Burgard et al. 2009). Similarly, McDonough (2000), using a national sample of Canadian adults, reported that high levels of job insecurity lead to lower self-rated health, increased psychological distress, and increased use of medication for symptom relief.

This study investigates the impact of perceived job insecurity on self-rated mental health using data from the 2021 Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), a nationally representative sample. Employing structural equation modeling, we examine the relationship between the latent construct of perceived job insecurity and various measures of mental well-being. We hypothesize that perceived job insecurity will be negatively associated with these mental well-being indicators, suggesting potential detrimental effects of perceived job insecurity on psychological health measures.

H1: Perceived job insecurity will be negatively associated with self-rated mental health.

H2: Perceived job insecurity will be negatively associated with self-rated mental health among different

H3: Perceived job insecurity will be negatively associated with self-rated mental health among different

Data and Methods

Data

CGSS

Measures

job insecurity: how to measure, 5;

mental health: how to measure, 3;

control variables: which variables, 2;

Analytical approach

model; estimator: “WLSMV”, why?; which parameter (coefficient); MGA: how to do, which statistics?

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1: Weighted descriptive statistics (N = 993)

Variable	Mean (SD) / Percent
Weekly work hours	49.92 (16.15)
Type of work contract	
Infinite Term	26.0%
Fixed Term	40.5%
No Contract	33.5%
Work autonomy	
Completely Controlled By Self	13.2%
Mainly Controlled By Self	51.0%
Mainly Controlled By Others	22.5%
Completely Controlled By Others	13.2%
Job satisfaction	
Very Satisfied	12.1%
Satisfied	50.0%
Neutral	30.7%
Dissatisfied	5.2%
Very Dissatisfied	2.0%
Work stress	
Rarely	41.0%
Sometimes	32.9%
Often	17.7%
Always	8.3%
Feel depressed	
Always	0.8%
Often	3.7%

Sometimes	20.5%
Rarely	28.6%
Never	46.4%
Feel happy	
Never	0.7%
Rarely	3.1%
Sometimes	13.1%
Often	61.2%
Always	21.8%
Health affects work/daily life	
Always	0.2%
Often	1.8%
Sometimes	9.9%
Rarely	24.7%
Never	63.4%
Sex	
Female	45.4%
Male	54.6%
Party membership	
Non-CCP	86.9%
CCP	13.1%

Job insecurity and mental health

job insecurity and mental health among different sex categories

job insecurity and mental health among different party memberships

References

- Burgard, S. A., Brand, J. E., and House, J. S. (2009), “Perceived job insecurity and worker health in the United States,” *Social Science & Medicine*, 69, 777–785. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.06.029>.
- McDonough, P. (2000), “Job Insecurity and Health,” *International Journal of Health Services*, 30, 453–476. <https://doi.org/10.2190/BPFG-X3ME-LHTA-6RPV>.