



Ankara Science University Graduate Education Institute
Business Administration

**THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED JOB INSECURITY ON UNETHICAL PRO-
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY**

SALAHEDDIN SULIMAN ALAHWEL

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2025

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APPROVAL OF THE GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE

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DEDICATION

Reaching the top of this work, I would like to share my greatest dedication with those people whose unequalled support and encouragement have gotten me through my entire phase of academia so far.

I'm forever grateful for my beloved Father and Mother and their endless encouragement. Blessed are you for the support, sacrifices, and belief throughout your life in me. Your ceaseless loving words have always driven me most.

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In the end, I dedicate my thesis to all who supported me, giving a valuable advice, a simple kind word that leave a print in this work. I would like to thank all individuals for even quiet encouragement. You contributed to my ascent in this important milestone, however minor it may have been.

My great thanks for you all

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ÖZET

Alahwel, Salaheddin Suliman. *Algılanan İş Güvencesizliğinin Örgüt Yararına Etik Olmayan Davranışlar Üzerindeki Etkisi: Öz-Yeterliliğin Düzenleyici Rolü*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2025.

Son yıllarda çalışanların, örgütlerinin yararına olduğunu düşündükleri etik dışı davranışlara yönelmeleri anlamına gelen örgüt yararına etik olmayan davranışlar (ÖYEOD) kavramı, karmaşık doğası nedeniyle araştırmacıların artan ilgisini çekmektedir. Ancak, bu davranışların altında yatan psikolojik faktörler, özellikle de algılanan iş güvencesizliğinin (İG) ÖYEOD üzerindeki etkisini ele alan çalışmalar hala sınırlıdır; bu durum özellikle istikrarsız ve Batı dışındaki bağlamlar için geçerlidir. Ayrıca, öz-yeterliliğin (ÖY) söz konusu ilişki üzerindeki düzenleyici rolü neredeyse hiç araştırılmamıştır. Bu çalışma, bu boşluğu doldurmak amacıyla, Libya'daki kamu çalışanları arasında algılanan İG ile ÖYEOD arasındaki ilişkiyi ve bu ilişkide ÖY'nin düzenleyici rolünü incelemektedir. Nicel bir araştırma yaklaşımı benimsenmiş ve Misurata bölgesinde çevrimiçi anketler aracılığıyla veri toplanmıştır. Kaynakların Korunması Kuramı (KKK) çerçevesinde yürütülen analizler, İG'nin ÖYEOD'yi anlamlı şekilde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Daha da önemlisi, ÖY'nin bu ilişkide düzenleyici bir rol oynadığı bulunmuştur; ÖY'si yüksek bireyler, İG durumunda etik dışı davranışlara yönelmeye daha az meyilli olmuştur. Bununla birlikte, bulgular, ÖY'si yüksek bireylerin dahi, algılanan tehditlere karşı pozisyonlarını korumak veya örgütlerinin hayatta kalmasına katkı sağlamak adına bazı etik dışı davranışları rasyonelleştirebildiklerini göstermektedir. Çalışma, istikrarsız ortamlarda faaliyet gösteren örgütlerin, çalışanlarda algılanan İG'yi azaltmak için açık iletişim ve etik liderlik uygulamalarına önem vermeleri gerektiğini önermektedir. Ayrıca, özellikle ÖY gibi psikolojik kaynakların güçlendirilmesi, İG'nin olumsuz davranışsal sonuçlarını hafifletmede ve etik davranışın desteklenmesinde önemli bir rol oynayabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Algılanan İş Güvencesizliği, Örgüt Yararına Etik Olmayan Davranışlar, Öz-Yeterlilik.

ABSTRACT

Alahwel, Salaheddin Suliman. *The Effect of Perceived Job Insecurity on Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2025.

In the past decades, Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior has received increasing scrutiny by researchers due to its complex nature: employees engage in unethical acts for the proposed benefit of their organizations. However, research is still limited regarding how psychological factors, such as Job Insecurity, influence Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior, especially given volatile and non-Western contexts. Further, the role of Self-Efficacy as a moderating psychological resource in the said relationship remains almost unexplored. This study fills this gap by assessing the relationship between perceived JI and UPB, as well as the moderating role of SE among public sector employees in Libya. The study adopted a quantitative approach, with online questionnaires administered in Misurata. Guided by the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the findings revealed that JI significantly predicts UPB. More importantly, SE moderated this relationship, such that higher SE individuals were less likely to resort to unethical acts because of JI. The results also show that even people with high SE may rationalize some unethical behaviors as an active way to save their positions or help their organizations survive in response to perceived threats. The study recommends that organizations operating in unstable environments should focus on reducing perceived JI through clear communication and ethical leadership. Furthermore, building employees' psychological resources, particularly SE, can help buffer the negative behavioral consequences of JI and support ethical organizational conduct.

Keywords

Perceived Job Insecurity, Self-Efficacy, Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior.

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INTRODUCTION

In an emerging, volatile, and uncertain global labor market, employees increasingly view JI as one of their most pressing concerns. This uncertainty is exacerbated by technological advances, changing market demands, outsourcing, and the increasing reliance on temporary and contract labor (Sverke et al., 2019; World Bank, 2015). While organizations undertake these changes primarily for efficiency and competitiveness, they inadvertently create profound psychological implications for employees, such as increased stress, anxiety, and ethical dilemmas in the workplace. According to Al-Salami (2019), it is crucial to distinguish between objective JI—defined as the actual threat of job loss—and subjective JI, which refers to the internalized perception and fear of job loss or reduced benefits. This perspective emphasizes the psychological depth of perceived JI, illustrating that these fears can persist even where formal job security mechanisms exist.

In uncertain environments, employees frequently experience psychological strain, manifesting as weakened organizational morale, diminished productivity, and compromised ethical standards (Rashwan, 2021). Such stressful conditions prompt employees to consider negative coping mechanisms, including engagement in UPB, which are unethical actions carried out to benefit or protect the organization, despite conflicting with broader societal norms or ethical standards (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Employees may rationalize these behaviors as necessary compromises to safeguard their employment status or demonstrate organizational loyalty (Chang et al., 2021; Ghosh, 2017).

Recent research emphasizes that JI not only induces stress but also impairs ethical judgment and self-control, encouraging ethically questionable behaviors that employees believe demonstrate their loyalty or commitment, particularly in unstable or transitional economies (Chang et al., 2021; Ghosh, 2017). For instance, in Libya, labor market disruptions following the 2011 revolution have significantly increased JI, especially within the private sector (World Bank, 2015).

Given this context, examining psychological responses to JI and the subsequent ethical implications becomes critically important.

To provide deeper insights into why some individuals cope more effectively with JI-induced stress than others, recent studies have focused on individual differences, particularly Self-Efficacy (SE). SE, conceptualized as one's belief in the ability to execute actions necessary to handle challenging situations (Bandura, 1997), may serve as a critical moderating factor in the relationship between JI and unethical behaviors. Generally, higher SE promotes adaptive coping mechanisms, resilience, and ethical behavior, effectively buffering employees against stress-induced moral transgressions (Chen & Chen, 2021). Employees with high SE typically emphasize their competencies and engage in effective self-regulation rather than succumbing to unethical shortcuts as defensive coping mechanisms against job-related threats.

Indeed, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989; 2001) offers a meaningful framework that reveals how SE manifests itself as a psychological resource. With COR, people are driven to get, keep, and safeguard internal (including SE, resilience) and external (social support and status) resources that would allow them to weather stress and continue to have well-being. SE plays an important internally resourceful aspect of this scenario, since individuals can feel competent and in control amid challenges. Those with high SE are more likely to find proactive ways to cope, follow the path of goals while under pressure, and persevere through adversity without boosting their psychological reserves (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Also, SE can act as a resource caravan passageway condition to add and sustain other desired resources (Hobfoll, 2011). In high-pressure circumstances, people who possess strong SE are the ones most capable of regulating their emotions, making ethical choices, and keeping their motivation strong because they have less chance of falling into resource loss spirals and better prospects for recovery and resilience.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to JI and UPB, existing studies rarely explore the moderating role of SE, particularly within unstable, non-Western labor market contexts like Libya. This gap in the literature warrants further investigation, given the unique economic and socio-political dynamics that shape employee behaviors in such environments. Therefore, this research aims to address this critical gap by examining how perceived JI influences UPB, specifically exploring the moderating effect of SI among private sector employees in Libya.

By providing empirical evidence from a non-Western context characterized by instability and labor market uncertainty, this study contributes significantly to both theoretical understanding and practical application. It expands the existing literature on organizational behavior, JI, and ethical decision-making, offering valuable insights into psychological resources that organizations and managers can leverage to build ethical resilience among employees facing job-related uncertainties.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. JOB INSECURITY

JI refers to employment where workers lack the assurance that their jobs will remain stable from day to day, week to week, or year to year (Comcare eNews, 2024). Popularly known to be a subjective stressor to employee well-being, motivation, and organizational commitment. There is an increasingly evident divide in the literature as to what constitutes the two core dimensions of job insecurity: quantitative versus qualitative job insecurity (De Witte, 1999; Hellgren et al., 1999).

Quantitative JI refers to the perceived threats of losing one's job and has to do with being laid off or losing a specific position. It is generally related to employment continuity and is commonly linked to general downturns in the economy, restructuring in organizations, and/or automation (De Witte, 2005).

JI refers to multiple dimensions concerning individuals that incorporate subjective assessment-types of threats to one's employment stability. Job insecurity is employment-continuity: uncertainty and fears related to employment that stem from various organizational, economic and personal factors (Sverke et al., 2002; De Witte, 2005; Shoss, 2017). Academic literature has thus noticed it increasingly due to its association with continuing labor market changes and changes such as corporate restructuring, downsizing, and, most recently, stiff competition in the global market. These changes have made it increasingly difficult for organizations to assure job continuity, thereby fueling personal concern among employees about their current jobs and future prospects (Sverke et al., 2002).

In one basic dichotomy in the literature, quantitative and qualitative JI are distinguished (Hellgren, Sverke, & Isaksson, 1999). Quantitative JI refers to the perception of threat for getting one's job terminated: an employee should lose the

entire position. Qualitative matters, on the other hand, involve the view of job valued aspects, which differ from essential factors like working conditions, prospects for career development, income stability, and the job content itself. An individual has no worry for continuity in his or her job and yet may feel unsecured on account of these qualitative factors, where the insecurity is most pronounced in dynamic working environments where roles and responsibilities shift frequently, although formal positions may remain intact (Hellgren et al., 1999).

The two dimensions can have different and interrelated consequences. Quantitative insecurity tends to accompany threats to existence, as well as financial and psychological stress; on the contrary, qualitative insecurity would undermine intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and trust in organizations (Cheng & Chan, 2008). Lasting exposure means either kind of insecurity, which can lead to resource depletion as already outlined under the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2001), in which individuals' coping resources would drain on continued presence of threats on the diminishment of internal efficacy and engagement.

In fact, the perceived JI could also probably fall into job demands, which are defined as all aspects of having a job that require continuing effort and are costly psychologically or physiologically (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). These job demands, fear of losing a job, are important drivers for the development of stress responses and form the rule of orientation in the view of whether employees are disengaged or burned out, depending on the availability of job resources (Bakker et al., 2023). Negative consequences of such insufficient recovery from job demands may include emotional exhaustion and reduced performance (Van Wyk & Pienaar, 2008).

Studies indicate that there are different ways by which different employees cope with JI (Shoss, 2017). Negative reactions would probably include heightened worry, deterioration in performance, and burnout (De Witte, 2005; Van Wyk & Pienaar, 2008). Others may opt to adopt proactive nip-in-the-bud coping

mechanisms like networking, seeking jobs, or they put on job-preservation behaviors such as having increased presence in the organization, presenteeism, more hours worked, taking lower pay, and engaging in impression management (Shoss & Probst, 2012). Some might even disguise their behavior behind facades of conformity when managing an impression in order to protect themselves and their positions, that is because they don't really feel aligned with organizational expectations (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014).

Jl, as has been previously indicated, is not simply a yes-or-no matter; it is a qualitative experience and involves nuanced evaluations and emotional responses to the work situation. Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012) delineated several major dimensions that shape the experience:

- Importance of Job Features: The importance is ascribed to aspects such as pay, social recognition, advancement opportunities, resources, and long-term career potential.
- Actual Availability of Job Features: Those elements that are valued are present within one's current role or organization.
- Perceived Risk to Job Features: Specific valued job characteristics believed to be at risk of being lost.
- Value Placed on the Whole Job: The extent to which the job as a whole stands for the person's identity and livelihood.
- Perceived Risk to Job as a Whole: Losing an entire job, not just certain features.
- Feeling Powerless: Feelings of helplessness and inability to exert control, particularly in times of organizational change, can amplify a sense of subjective experience of insecurity.

A growing base of empirical evidence indicates how damaging job insecurity is, psychologically and behaviorally. Jl has found its connections to fewer availabilities for job satisfaction, low commitment to organization, and poor subjective well-being (Sverke et al., 2002; Berntson et al., 2010; Green, 2011).

Further associations will include burnout, work-life imbalance, and life satisfaction (Richter et al., 2010). Those consequences would confirm JI as a chronic workplace stressor because it could mean significant detriments to individual outcomes and the organizational outcome (Sverke et al., 2006; Shoss, 2017).

To sum up, JI is the unitary, multidimensional, and contextually variable phenomenon that can vary from a simple fear to perceived threats against the entire broader quality of work and its meaning. It operates as a stressor through objective threats to jobs and through subjective appraisals of such threats, with implications for performance, motivation, mental well-being, and organizational behavior. Ensured increasing instability of labor markets worldwide demands that JI research keep its position upon organizational research and practice.

1.2. JOB INSECURITY IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

According to work and organizational psychology, JI is the subjective appraisal of the individual in relation to his or her entire social ecology (Reisel, 2003; De Witte, 2005). Its ramifications extend much beyond the workplace. It can also have societal-wide influences on attitudes or behaviors, which can be translated then into changes in society and politics. Therefore, JI can be both an outcome and a source of broader contextual forces. The next portion of this discussion deals with the reciprocal effects of personal experiences of JI and the surrounding meso- and macro-environment. In order to locate the traces of social and political contexts on JI, comparative cross-national studies are often conducted by researchers. The studies are meant to verify if JI would occur in the same way or differently across countries and to show if similar or diverging causes and effects are found in such dissimilarities. This comparative research thus serves two basic intentions. The first is to determine whether or not JI differs with respect to national levels, either at the country or meso-level such as industry type, regional economic conditions, or organizational practices, as possible sources of these differences. Second, it examines whether the relationships between JI and its

predictors, as well as its consequences, are consistent across different national contexts. This involves assessing the extent to which findings can be generalized. If notable variations exist, it becomes essential to identify potential moderating factors that influence these relationships (Reisel, 2003; De Witte, 2005).

1.2.1. Variations in Job Insecurity Across Countries and Contributing Factors

Notable and sometimes significant differences in how JI is perceived have been observed across different countries (Böckerman, 2004; Dixon et al., 2013; Erlinghagen, 2008; Lübke & Erlinghagen, 2014). These insights are often derived from large-scale international datasets, such as the European Social Survey (ESS) or Eurobarometer, which examine multiple countries—primarily in Europe—through multilevel statistical methods. When discrepancies in JI levels emerge across national borders, the key question becomes whether these differences are driven by individual characteristics (micro-level), organizational or regional factors (meso-level), or national structural and cultural conditions (macro-level). Understanding these distinctions helps researchers determine how subjective feelings of insecurity align with measurable labor market indicators (Böckerman, 2004; Dixon et al., 2013; Erlinghagen, 2008; Lübke & Erlinghagen, 2014).

Accounting for the demographic profile of study samples is essential when analyzing national differences (Ellonen & Nätti, 2015; Erlinghagen, 2008; van Oorschot & Chung, 2015). Differences in JI perceptions may, in part, stem from variations in the populations studied. This demonstrates that individual characteristics at the micro-level can aggregate to produce country-level effects. Studies that adjust for demographic differences frequently report that certain groups—such as individuals in temporary roles, blue-collar workers, people with limited education, those who have previously experienced unemployment, or belong to minority ethnic backgrounds—are more likely to feel insecure about their jobs (Anderson & Pontusson, 2007; Berglund, 2015; Erlinghagen, 2008; van

Oorschot & Chung, 2015). Conversely, public sector workers and trade union members often report lower levels of JI. These findings are supported by broader meta-analytic research (Jiang et al., 2021; Keim et al., 2014).

JI, which is a complex, multi-level phenomenon, is formed by structural dynamics of the labor market and institutional protections as well as cultural attitudes toward work and employment. Not only does it happen due to individual behavioral aspects or organizational context, but also by the interdependency of micro, meso, and macro levels and needs contextualization around job insecurity that goes beyond subjective perceptions and objective labor markets. Eventually, comparative research uncovers how national employment policies, social welfare systems, and labor protection influence the experience of job insecurity in particular populations. Recognizing these multiple influences is critical for targeted intervention design as well as guiding policies that would address JI at different socioeconomic settings.

1.3. THE EFFECT OF JOB INSECURITY ON EMPLOYEES

Characterizing how people register experience with insecurity on the job as well as the effects on their psychological well-being and job performance, has become one of the most critical areas of study. Earlier research primarily focused on the impact of JI on mental health outcomes (László et al., 2010; Griep et al., 2021), as well as work-related attitudes, such as job satisfaction (Di Stefano et al., 2020), counterproductive work behaviors (Van den Broeck et al., 2014), and job performance (Stynen et al., 2015). Recently, however, researchers have intensified investigations into how JI has negative consequences on one's health and behavior, emphasizing intermediaries linking this process (De Witte et al., 2016a). This pivot now seeks to uncover those specific contexts under which JI makes performance converge to reduced values (Di Stefano et al., 2020).

JI has frequently been characterized as a stressful condition contributing to negative mental health outcomes. In their meta-analysis, Jiang and Lavaysse

(2018) indicated that JI critically damages physical and mental health. Based on these findings, several studies have sought to establish an association between JI and job performance while utilizing individual well-being as a lens. For example, Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) investigated the relationship of JI with subjective well-being and job performance in the hospitality industry. They found that the subjective well-being functioned as a mediator, enabling JI to determine employees' job performance through the indirect effect of decreasing well-being.

Additionally, employees with robust psychological capital might be in a better position to cope with JI. Parent-Lamarche et al. (2021) studied the mediating role of employee well-being in the relationship between organizational conditions and job performance. The research study indicated that JI was related to decreased professional efficacy and job performance mediated by adverse effects in an employee's well-being; this conclusion emphasizes the strengthening of working conditions in the face of the harmful repercussions that JI may have.

Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014) points out that JI, if alone and extended, becomes a type of job stressor leading to emotional exhaustion, the effects of which result in diverse individual and job-related outcomes with time, but not restricted to job performance. Based on the health-impairment model in particular, the continuous exposure to the experience of JI might provoke some kind of chronic emotional exhaustion, such as burnout, and may thus lead to negative repercussions at the person level and convert further worsened effects upon job performance.

Investigations into the consequences of JI on the individual have often extended to include fallout in one's private life. Job loss-related anxiety and fear, along with its economic costs exact significant negative costs in both work and family domains. Work-family conflict (WFC), sometimes referred to as work-family interference, arises when demands from work and family life are perceived as incompatible (Byron, 2005). The studies linking JI to poor subjective well-being partly through raising WFC (Hu et al., 2018). JI is known to influence the spillover

of work-and-family life. Rocha et al. (2006) discussed the long-term concern of perceived JI, whereby not only was it detrimental to the mental health of workers but also affected the well-being of family members, who would experience stress due to the employee's unsteady job future. Similarly, Richter et al. (2010) found that JI was associated with greater WFC in workers, especially among males. A recent review by Mauno et al. (2017) considered the possible outcomes of JI on the family and proposed various theoretical mechanisms explaining both aspects of this relationship. In this paradigm, one may consider the impact of JI on work-family conflict as either direct or indirect spillover effects. The other way in which increase of work demands, fueled by fear of job loss, can spillover into personal life and accrue into work-family conflict will be through difficulties in family life, in terms of childcare or even marriage relations. to significant time-related strife between work responsibilities and home obligations (Fisher et al., 2020; Rudolph et al., 2020). In this scenario, one can argue that work-family balance has never been more critical for ensuring employee well-being and job performance.

In summary, notwithstanding huge evidence linking JI and work-family conflict to mental health outcomes (De Witte et al., 2016a; Jiang and Lavaysse, 2018; Griep et al., 2021), their implications on work outcomes-in this case, on performance-have not been fully explored. This study hypothesizes, based on existing theories and findings, that the subjective experience of JI and the perceived realities of the working environment lead to varied responses of similarly vulnerable employees (De Witte et al., 2015). According to a recent study by Piccoli et al. (2021), individuals facing uncertainty are able to respond in two ways, either through passive means, negatively affecting both their health and performance, or through active means, seeking new energy and strategies to steer their work outcomes in a positive direction. JI was more associated with passive coping mechanisms that led to negative consequences for job performance, according to their findings.

The evidence reviewed here strengthens the widely accepted notion that work-family conflict arises as a usual result of high JI (Richter et al., 2010; Mauno et

al., 2017). Employees that perceive job threats tend to act either by attempting to protect their current positions or seeking alternative employment. If not managed carefully, these coping strategies will consume personal resources and add strain toward the work-family imbalance. The two problems, JI and work-family conflict, are harmful to mental health (Mutambudzi et al., 2017; Griep et al., 2021). Therefore, they need careful attention to halt further deterioration of employees' well-being and job performance.

Parallely, it emerges that the new realities of the labor force have shaken the concept of job security increasingly: from the 21st century onward, there have been many changes in the labor economy as influenced by technology, economy, society, and politics (Yeves et al., 2019). For example, more people will operate outside the traditional realm of work, and such conditions have increased flexibility regarding work hours, which adds more difficulty to the boundaries of the work and private life (Gerstel & Clawson, 2018).

New assumptions about work-life balance are created with more flexible working hours, yielding conditions that induce insecurity in the workplace (Benach et al., 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this situation by raising significantly new concerns about job security and financial stability (Wilson et al., 2020). The pandemic raised the level of distress to which employees are subjected, which include concerns about the future of their work and the economy (Menéndez-Espina et al., 2019). The economic damage wrought by the pandemic and ever-increasing unemployment (Blustein et al., 2020; McKibbin & Fernando, 2020) has given more pressure on organizations to keep competitive without losing sight of employees' well-being and performance (Wilson et al., 2020; Rasdi et al., 2021). The changing dynamics present an important area where employees' responses to change can be understood and the outcomes on their psychological and physical health, as well as performance at work, are documented (De Angelis et al., 2021).

Much of the emphasis on JI has been linked to the idea of its detrimental influence upon the mental health and wellness of employees and on the overall organizational performance (Sverke et al., 2006; Shoss, 2017). For example, JI tends to produce very low levels of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and general well-being (Sverke et al., 2002; Berntson et al., 2010; Green, 2011), thus highlighting the stressor style of JI. In addition, JI produces adverse consequences, such as symptoms of burnout, role conflicts between personal and work aspects, and a clearly reduced life satisfaction (Richter et al., 2010).

In the perspective of work-related stress, JI is recognized as an important stressor in the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014, 2017; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The pressure that work-related has is reduced by the available resources, which prevents any employee from suffering from deteriorating psychological health and energy levels (Mauno et al., 2007). JI can cause adverse effects on the well-being of employees, attitudes toward their jobs, and behaviors in the workplace. However, surprisingly, not much of the literature focused on how JI influences behavior, particularly employee performance (De Angelis et al., 2021).

Meta-analytic tests showed an adverse effect of JI on the performance of tasks completed (Sverke et al., 2002; Cheng & Chan, 2008; Gilboa et al., 2008). Regardless, diversifying with the evidence available in the literature is presented, for example, Lee et al. (2018), Debus et al. (2019), Pilipiec (2020), and Shin and Hur (2020), which indicates the necessity of further investigation concerning this issue. For instance, Stankevičiūtė et al. (2021) indicated that JI had a negative impact on both task performance and positive behaviors directed to the organization. Similarly, Piccoli et al. (2021) studied the effect of JI on job performance and proposed a two-dimensional stressor framework incorporating hindrance and challenge stressor effects.

The existing literature tends to highlight the adverse effects of JI on certain facets of individual health, work attitudes, and work outcomes. The exact relationship

between JI and job performance remains a little murky (Stankevičiūtė et al., 2021). Therefore, a great deal of research ought to be done with regard to the acceptance of intermediate factors that mediate the relation between JI and health as well as work outcomes, which is a given issue that needs to be addressed (De Witte et al., 2016).

In the context of their developing understanding of the relationship between JI and job performance, organizational administrators would benefit from focusing on this area; having such insight will assist them in designing organizational processes to alleviate stress responses and bolster performance across individual and organizational levels (Piccoli et al., 2021).

Outcomes of JI might be discussed in many ways, but most of the theoretical accounts were not sufficiently developed. This is still often a basis for criticism regarding research into JI that lacks a solidly underlying theory (De Witte et al., 2016b). Today, JI is typically interpreted via different work and organizational psychological frames like strain theories, social identity theory, or threat rigidity models. These theoretical applications, however, are inconsistent and differ across studies over such focuses on threat (i.e., threats to psychological resources or coping abilities) and over various facets of overall threat experiences (like strain, social exchange violations, or identity undermining). These have fragmented the field. Same results (e.g., health, job performance, and work attitudes) are interpreted through diverse mechanisms and theoretical models, making it more complex to generate unified conclusions (De Witte et al., 2016b).

Most studies of work and organizational psychology on the adverse influence of JI revolve around these two most critical things—the perception of threat and the uncertainty and unpredictability concomitant with this threat (Klug et al., 2024). Traditionally, psychological consequences of JI were related to models of work where such features as income, social connectedness, meaning, and status appear as the key roles of work (Warr, 1994).

JI, like larger threats to these resources, has grave psychological effects since paid work is responsible not only for material security but also for all those functions which it casually performs- for self-control, skills development, and career advancement (Jahoda, 1982; Warr, 1994). When present, the threat to these resources may increase damage by JI (Selenko & Batinic, 2011; Vander Elst et al., 2016).

Psychologically, the uncertain and threatening aspect of JI is evoked for negative feelings and heavy cognitive processing (Lerner, 2003; Slovic & Peters, 2006). These emotional reactions are supposed to be affecting cognitive processes, such as decision-making and judgment. Thus, most job-insecurity models have examined these affective and cognitive routes. The focus of studies on affectivity is mostly those classical stress models. JI is treated, for instance, as a source of stress inducing harmful appraisal processes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), depriving important resources (Conservation of Resources theory; Hobfoll, 1989), or imbalance between effort and reward (Effort-Reward Imbalance model; Siegrist, 1996). Besides, JI has been associated with deprivation, like latent deprivation (Jahoda, 1982) or relative deprivation (Merton, 1957), which makes negative results worse. Besides the emotional reaction, JI tends also to provoke cognitive processes like sense-making and re-evaluation of the current situation (Lerner, 2015). JI will cause employees to re-evaluate their exchange relationships with the organization, with perceived breaches in the psychological contract beliefs that the employer has failed to fulfill their obligations-being a key predictor in coping behaviors, exhaustion (Piccoli & De Witte, 2015), and informal learning (Van Hootegem & De Witte, 2019a). Moreover, perceptions of justice perceptions, that is, whether one feels treated fairly by his or her organization, were shown to explain various outcomes, including attitudes toward the organization, organizational consequences, but also the very important exhaustion-depressive symptoms (Bernhard-Oettel et al., 2020), and even external attitudes such as political cynicism (Van Hootegem et al., 2022).

1.4. SELF-EFFICACY

SE reflects an individual's belief in their ability to influence outcomes and bring about meaningful change. When people trust in their capacity to affect their environment, they are more likely to experience positive emotions and take initiative. In contrast, those who see themselves as powerless often experience diminished motivation and lower overall well-being (Flammer, 2001).

SE is one of the deepest psychological concepts because it determines the attitude, grading, or approach such as the extent he could be able to succeed. It modifies one's self-perception, resolution, and endurance toward the obstacles one faces. If a person believes that he can achieve his dream, the person will give in, will work on the effort, and still be committed to the work. Foundational therein is Albert Bandura's theory of social cognitive theory in which he describes observational learning, social interaction, and interaction among personal factors, behavior, and the environment to shape the development of man (Cherry, 2024).

SE was further defined by Khan et al. (2015) as the individual's belief in himself or herself to organize and perform the actions requisite to reach particular performance goals. According to Erozkan et al. (2016), self-efficacious individuals are even more confident of their capacity to successfully complete tasks in different situations. Compared with those with low SE, high SE people set more challenging goals for themselves, exert greater effort, are more persistent in the face of challenges, and better manage setbacks. Basically, this would enable people to be creative and resourceful for purposes of doing this in being efficient at it, making it probably the most critical generative capability as referred to by Bandura (2000), as it helps people to play an active role in forming their own actions and outcomes.

According to Bandura (1986), the level of SE in a person affected how they undertook the job: whether their activities were initiated, how hard one worked, and how long they maintained that work effort despite setbacks. Those individuals

who are set up with a high belief in their ability to do it will be more likely to hang on, even against contrary evidence, to true perseverance and determination in hard situations.

In developing his account of learning under social influence, Bandura placed additional emphasis on his claims about SE beliefs, elucidating the channeled effects of SE beliefs on behavior through goal setting, outcome expectations, emotional responses, and perceptions of obstacles and opportunities in the social environment. SE operates as a prime mechanism that helps individuals interpret their experiences, translating these interpretations into a cognitive orientation concerning their experience. A high level of SE is likely to promote an optimistic, self-enhancing attitude, with resilience and active engagement. The opposite occurs with low SE, which encourages a pessimistic, self-limiting view on oneself that saps motivation and cognitive functioning (Bandura, 2008). In so doing, these beliefs will affect the actions they adopt, the level of commitment they give to them, the amount of effort they expend, and endurance when they come across challenges (Lorente Prieto, 2009). Therefore, SE is an important factor in influencing behavior, effort, and endurance, all of which are fundamental in achieving success in threshold or uncertain situations.

Sources of SE and its role in motivation and behavior are as follows:

- The greatest impact of emotional intelligence arises from experiences of mastery, experiences of directly overcoming challenges (Bandura, 2010). Successfully completing difficult tasks, if met with much opposition, not only strengthens a person's belief in their competence but also contributes to resilience (Yeh et al., 2019). These experiences are validating evidence of one's efficacy and will serve as a sound footing for asserting similar sets of confidence in the future.
- Observing others, especially those perceived as similar to oneself, completing difficult tasks enhances SE vicariously. Successes of others create perceptions of possibility, building belief in achieving comparable

results. In contrast, witnessing failures could diminish this belief, especially among observers who identify closely with the unfortunate individual. Success and failure are, therefore, reinforced by the perceived similarity of the observer and the model (Bandura, 2010).

- Other people's encouragement is one of the ways to cultivate SE. Such encouragement will be effective when the person being persuaded feels that he or she has the capabilities to succeed in accomplishing the goal. Otherwise, he or she would be difficult to convince to sustain the effort and bounce back from setbacks. Such persuasion must go together with an opportunity that is realistic for the person to succeed. The earlier that people are exposed without support to challenging agents, the more likely those agents would sabotage their SE (Bandura, 2010).
- In addition to their emotional and physical condition, another factor affecting the perception of the subject regarding SE is the stress, fatigue, or anxiety attributed to the incapacity felt for a rather strenuous physical or mental task. Nevertheless, the experience of calmness and control can provide encouragement to believe that success can be attained. Put simply, the interpretation of internal states may either enhance one's confidence or become an impediment to it (Artino, 2012). It was conceived by Bandura (1977, 1997) that SE plays a vital role in the choice of behavior, the amount of effort given by the individuals, and their persistence in overcoming obstacles. Those who consider themselves able are more likely to take on challenging tasks and stay with them, whereas those who would rate themselves low in SE may even completely avoid such situations. This perseverance is necessary as people pursue long-term goals or dreams, making low SE a condition that could be self-limiting unless acted upon.

In the social cognitive conception of motivation, SE constitutes an important factor. People with higher SE present greater resolution, work harder, and persist longer (especially during times of frustration) than those with lower perceived capability (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). They will also adopt learning strategies

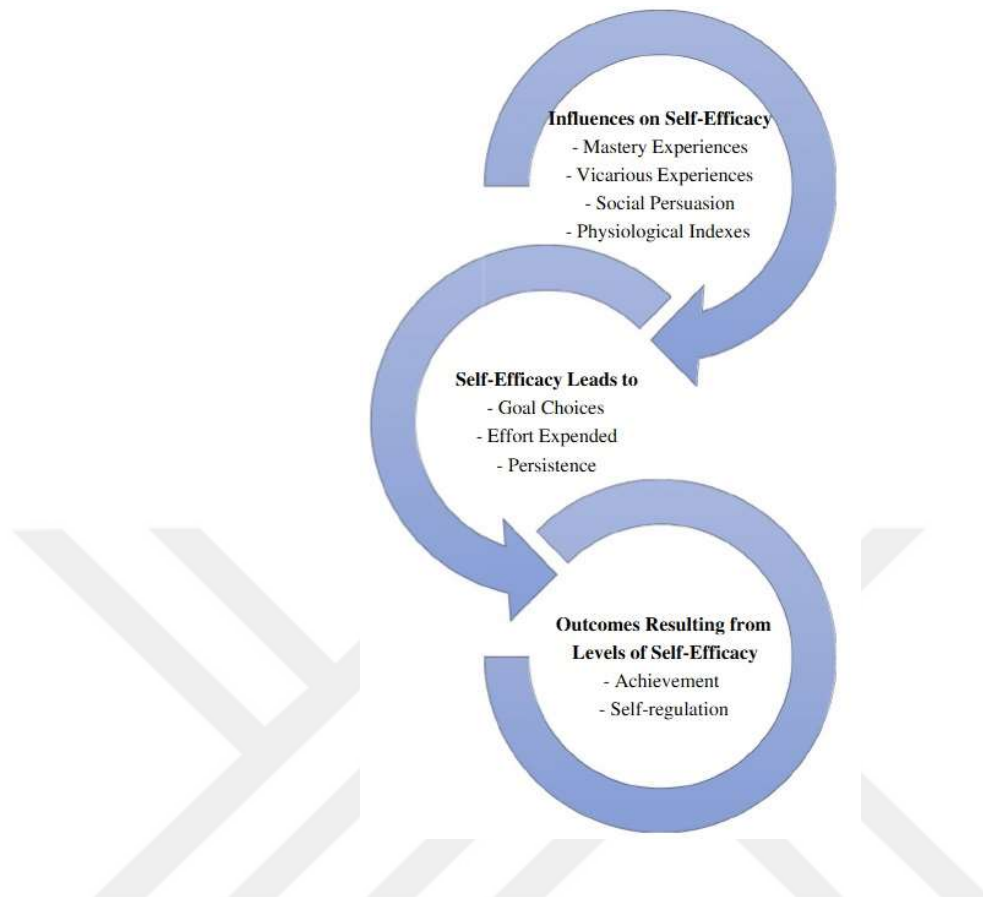
that encourage self-regulated learning and success if they have confidence in their learning skills.

It would be extremely rare for a self-efficacy to be perceived in isolation from the larger motivational system: after all, self-efficacy, in addition to its formative sources of mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological states, has a great deal to do with goal-setting and self-evaluation, which are key players in that motivational system. Specific, proximal, and challenging goals anchor self-regulation by directing attention (effort), sustaining effort toward some pre-established goal, and facilitating self-monitoring. People with high self-efficacy tend to set high goals and maintain the effort toward them, especially when they perceive that they are making meaningful progress (Schunk, 2012).

By this self-referential feedback loop, their motivation and sense of competence are strengthened. Closely related to this are attributional styles: how people interpret their experiences of success and failure. If success is attributed to the internal, controllable factors of effort or strategy, motivation and self-efficacy are maintained or even enhanced; conversely, if failure is attributed to external, uncontrollable factors (for instance, task difficulty, or luck), then motivation and self-efficacy may be diminished (Weiner, 2010; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

It is crucial to understand that self-efficacy is not an isolated motivational force in constant interplay with other personal and contextual influences. Factors such as task value, outcome expectations, or goal congruence all modulate motivational intensity. For instance, people with very high self-efficacy might still disengage from an activity when they think that the outcome is irrelevant or does not fit with their values (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Thus, self-efficacy functions as part of an array of cognitive and affective processes that together drive goal-directed behavior and adaptive learning as Figure 1

Figure 1: Influences on SE and outcomes (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).



Bandura has identified four factors that significantly influence an individual's SE, which generally determines how confident a person is in undertaking a particular goal or requirement (Bandura, 1997; Psynso, 2018):

- **Mastery Experience (Enactive Attainment):** The most powerful experience shaping SE is that of experiencing personal successes or failures. Completing a task successfully increases a person's belief in their skills, and failing diminishes it. Mastery experiences are evidence of one's own capabilities directly and provide much firm ground for future confidence (Bandura, 1997).
- **Vicarious Experience (Modeling):** Watching other people accomplish a task can also affect SE. If they see someone like themselves successfully performing a task, they are more likely to believe that they can do it too. On the contrary, seeing someone fail causes their SE to decrease. This effect is strongest when one can identify with the observer.

- Persuasions in Society: It includes verbal or nonverbal words of others that would have great importance in developing SE. Reassuring words paired with commendation will instill confidence compared to a negative remark. A powerful means of social persuasion, it is, however, much easier to reduce a person's SE through discouragement than to raise it with encouragement.
- Physiological and Emotional States: The way self-perceived interpretations of physical and emotional reactions may affect SE. Certain signs such as anxiety, stress, or physical discomfort (like trembling or nauseous) may be interpreted differently depending on SE in the pressure situation. While a person with low SE might tend to read these signs as messages of failure, someone with high SE is likely to see them more as physiological responses that are normal and do not affect one's real abilities. Therefore, how one interprets physiological signals either accelerates or decelerates SE.
- The four factors then psych together to bolster an individual in self-belief in the abilities to succeed, and thus change how one approaches different challenges in different areas of life

1.5 .UNETHICAL PRO-ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

UPB, refers to actions intended to be performed in favor of an organization or its member, usually must be leadership, but violate ethical standards, social norms, or legal regulations. Examples of UPB entailed activities like falsifying financial reports to increase stock prices or hiding flaws in a product to boost sales. Essentially, it is contradictory since pro-organizational intent is fused with unethical action (Umphress et al., 2010). Seldom does UPB produce short-term benefits for the recipients, but in the long run, its unethical nature will result in adverse consequences for the sustainability of the company itself and the interests of stakeholders (Lee et al., 2019). With the adverse effects posed by UPBs, many scholars have delved into the inquiry of the UPB antecedents, one of which argues that UPB, hence, may serve as an organizational stress copings mechanism by employees (Thau et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2018; Chen & Chen, 2021; Guo & Chen, 2021).

JI is a well-known job-related stressor that embraces quantitative and qualitative dimensions (Hellgren et al., 1999). Such forms of insecurity are threats to employees' health, mood, well-being, and job performance (Ferrie et al., 2001; De Witte et al., 2010, 2016). Although the two types of insecurity are accepted as major stressors, earlier research indicated that they exert their impact on employees differently. Hence, quantitative insecurity is about the loss of the continuity of jobs, while qualitative insecurity relates to valued features in jobs, such as autonomy or opportunities for promotion (Xiao et al., 2018; Tu et al., 2019). However, little comparative research has been conducted into how these types of insecurity influence outcomes such as job involvement and symptoms of stress (Long et al., 2022). This paper tries to bridge this gap by mapping the influence of quantitative and qualitative JI on employees' engagement in UPB.

The conservation of resources (COR) theory is commonly applied in regards to understanding behavior in stressful personal circumstances. Individuals pursue and attempt obtaining, protecting, and conserving resources that have meaning to them personally, including objects, conditions, personal traits, and some kind of energies (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Continuous (quantitative JI) and high-quality (qualitative JI) pleasant employment relationships are the relevant resources employees try to protect (Vásquez et al., 2020). JI as a stressor threatens these resources, so employees would be perceiving possible threats like organizational downsizing or changes (Låstad et al., 2015). This constant vigilance psychologically drains energy, thus worsening JI (Sverke et al., 2002; Charkhabi, 2019). According to COR theory, however, once employees' resources are threatened, they will not only protect and conserve their resources but may also try to acquire new resources to replace what they have lost (Hobfoll, 2001). In general, as the specter of job loss becomes real or some important aspect of the job is eroded, employees may resort to UPB behavior in a bid to highlight their worth to the organization and save their job status (Otto et al., 2011; Hewlin et al., 2016; Shoss, 2017).

Both encompass the potential loss of resources; however, employees might interpret the threat differently. Job loss, in particular, is a comprehensive loss of all resources: compensation, promotion opportunities, training, and interpersonal relationships (De Witte et al., 2010; Callea et al., 2019). Therefore, it can be inferred that employees experiencing quantitative job loss feel a greater threat to their resources than those who have experienced qualitative job loss (Hellgren et al., 1999).

1.6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, PREVIOUS STUDIES, AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

1.6.1. Relationship Between Job Insecurity and Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior

JI is an ever-growing concern within modern organizational environments and is recognized as a cause of unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). UPB refers to actions, which at face value are positively construed as having short-term benefits to the organization in actual reality, deviate from ethical standards for organizational goals. In recent research that is empirical and has digging nuance, JP is implicated in a misplaced understanding of these two things as well as the issues under conditions where the effects may be heightened or diminished (Wang et al., 2022).

Wang et al., (2022) refer to the individual differences that develop or moderate the connection between JI and UPB. In their analysis of Chinese employees, moral identity is portrayed as a buffer that diminishes the relationship of JI with unethical behaviors. Proactive personality, in contrast, enhances such a relationship with the lowered moral identity. The findings prove that proactive employees with low moral identity tend to commit acts of UPB under conditions of JI, but people with strong moral identity would not succumb to unethical temptations due to personality characteristics even when they are proactive.

By the same logic, Xu et al., (2022) look into the psychological mechanisms that might propel UPB in insecure workplaces. Their theoretical study has differential grounding on quantitative JI, which refers to threats to continuous employment, and qualitative JI, referring to threats to job quality. The finding is that quantitative JI tends to increase UPB directly, while qualitative JI has indirect effects through impression management motivation. Also, organizational identification serves as the most critical moderator: the higher the identification of individuals with their organizations, the more they would translate impression management motives into unethical behavior for an organization. Thus, it can be understood that what the autarky facilitates to do would be an ironic development since organizational loyalty in insecurity brings fusion toward unethical action meant to preserve one's image and role within the company (Xu et al., 2022).

Adding to the mix, Ghosh (2017) analyzed the interaction between JI and job embeddedness, or the extent to which employees feel connected to their roles and organizations. He finds that employees who feel insecure and highly embedded in the organization are likely to engage in unethical acts for the benefit of the organization. Thus, paradoxically, the very investment into the organization might increase one's chances to turn to unethical ways to protect one's position-especially when the job is perceived to be on the line.

Stretching the discussion beyond UPB, Hong et al., (2023) excavates the impact of JI on workplace safety, which is another dimension of organizational well-being. JI hence reduces safety behavior while this works through perceived meaning at work. Of great importance is that ethical leadership would serve as a buffer, causing the individuals to perceive their roles to be more meaningful, thus reducing the adverse influence of JI on safety practices. Their study is echoed by ethical leadership, which preserves the positive behavior in the workplace in response to uncertainty.

Furthermore, Shaw et al. (2022) found that quantitative JI (fear of job loss) directly motivates JI, while qualitative JI (fear of job decline) does so indirectly through

impression management motives. These motives can also be viewed as attempts to preserve reputational resources in uncertain environments. Furthermore, embedded employees who have a lot to lose may engage in unethical behaviors under conditions of JI as a means of protecting their invested resources in the organization (Warr, 2023; Ghosh, 2017). Based on the above arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: JI is positively associated with UPB.

1.6.2. Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy

Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), as propounded by Hobfoll (2001) It is claimed that the individual's motivation is to accumulate, maintain, and provide the resources necessary for his survival and well-being. These resources constitute status at work, occupational skills, financial security, self-esteem, and ultimately job and work-related benefits such as promotions and job security viewed as essential in the work context. Stress is induced in an individual by the absence or perceived threat of impending loss of these resources; and such stress effectively limits the person's ability to cope with further stressors. All these points towards either adverse emotional responses from individuals or reduced ability in the current time, resulting in a receding ability of meeting job demands.

Where JI is concerned, Charkhabi (2017) argued that when employees perceive that there is a significant threat to their job security, they may appraise that situation as a hindrance. This heightened stress response would lead to the depletion of valuable personal resources, such as SE. As noted by Wuepper and Lybbert (2017), SE is the point of view possessed by an individual when concerned with succeeding in specific domains. Those characterized by high SE are more likely to set challenging goals, invest a huge amount of effort, and persist for long periods despite setbacks. Thus, the moments when JI threatens an individual's domain-based SE are likely to lead to a decline in performance related to that domain.

Jakobsen et al. (2017) also emphasized that reshock demoralization and helplessness as the two common emotional outcomes of impending layoffs. Further, these emotions could lead to lower levels of SE, especially regarding job-relevant tasks, due to the strong correlation between SE and emotional well-being (de Figueiredo, 2013). However, research by Jordan et al. (2002) points out emotional intelligence as one of the moderators of an individual's response to stressful conditions at work. In the case of JI, people with a higher level of emotional intelligence may have a better chance of retaining a positive effect, which could further preserve SE by minimizing the effects of adverse emotions (Linda et al., 2020). This illustrates the phenomenon by which positive emotions feel energized toward restoring psychological resources and heightening one's ability to face adversity (Gloria et al., 2013).

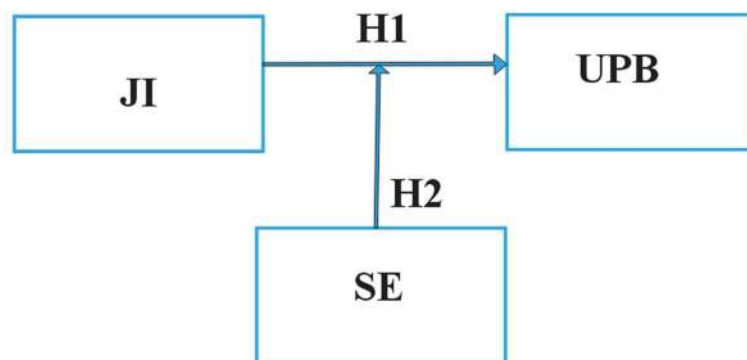
Buonomo et al. (2019), in accordance with COR theory, showed that persons having more positive emotions tend to amplify their self-worth and SE. Longitudinal studies have also shown this relationship over time, with those having more positive affect showing higher SE (Linda et al., 2020). Lim and Loo (2003) were among those who employed this spillover theory, studying by that token the association between parental JI and attitude toward work. Findings showed that parental JI would encompass authoritarian parenting behavior, which, in turn, would be likely to affect SE and work attitudes of children. Worth noting is to stress that link regarding threats against perceived economic stability and self-confidence, more so, in domains of task performance. Several other studies, including Carter et al. (2018), De Clercq et al. (2018), Horcajo et al. (2022), Khalil et al. (2021), and Smith (2013), have shown the importance of focusing on performance and its results in order to improve efficiency.

SE plays a crucial role in moderating the relationship between JI and UPB. Social cognitive theory posits that people with high SE can better withstand stressors and are more likely to engage in constructive coping strategies when faced with uncertainty (Bandura, 2001). However, low SE can generate feelings of threat regarding job continuity and inhibit or prevent any productive response to it.

Individuals feel that the only way to ensure their job security and satisfaction with their boss is through unethical behavior, including deception or rule-breaking (Greenbaum et al., 2012). Thus, unconditional SE positively relates to JI; it tends to maintain a very weak relationship with high SE. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: SE moderates the relationship between JI and UPB, such that the positive relationship is weaker when SE is high.

Figure 2: The model of the research.



CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

The data on this study were collected through the questionnaire method. For this study, Ethics Committee Approval No. 2025/5 dated 21.03.2025 was obtained from Ankara Bilim University Ethics Committee. Data for this study were collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections. The first section sought demographic information from the participants. The second section covered JI for the participants, the third section covered UPB for the participants, and the final section assessed SE. This study investigates the influence of perceived JI on UPB and the moderating role of SE in this relationship; thus, quantitative methods fit well to study causal or correlational relationships between variables, preferably through statistical analysis (Babbie, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

These measurements of quantitative data focus on objectively measuring the concepts of perceived job insecurity, unfulfilled work motivation, and self-efficacy by means of validated scales. This objectivity is an added advantage in enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the results (Bryman, 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2012).

2.1. SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

This study targeted the Misurata Free Zone Company Public sector. The Misurata Free Zone serves as a critical node in Libya's economic diversification strategy, functioning as an international hub for trade, industry, and logistics. It offers a wide range of strategic incentives aimed at attracting foreign direct investment, including comprehensive tax exemptions, exemption from customs duties, and protection from governmental levies or forced contributions. These regulatory advantages have positioned the Misurata free zone as a highly favorable environment for international business operations. Consequently, the zone has

successfully drawn investment from several prominent multinational corporations, such as Toyota, Nissan, and Al-Naseem, reflecting its growing regional and global significance. It was selected because it is one of the largest companies in Misurata and offers a diverse and integrated community of employees and managers, making it an ideal setting for studying UPB, including the moderating role of SE. The company was also selected because it is a major employer in the region, allowing for an understanding of how JI influences unethical behavior in the public sector in a country experiencing a tense social and political environment. The company and its workforce provide a good model for understanding the dynamics of JI in the Libyan context. The relationship between feelings of JI and UPB was also examined, with SE considered a moderating factor. The aim was to determine whether employees experiencing JI are more likely to engage in UPB, and whether professional SE mitigates this effect. This study focused on the free zone company as a sector characterized by economic instability, workforce reductions, and restructuring. These conditions make the selected organizations suitable for studying the effects of JI on workplace behavior (Elganas & Sheppard, 2019). Data were collected through a structured online survey, ensuring anonymity, efficiency, and broad accessibility.

To collect data, 200 questionnaires were distributed to the company's employees. This survey achieved a high response rate, with 198 completed questionnaires returned, representing a 99% response rate. This high level of engagement confirms the relevance of the research topic and the company's employees' willingness to address issues related to JI and its effectiveness in preventing unethical behaviour. All participants completed the questionnaire. All questionnaire items were translated into Arabic using the back-translation method (Brislin, 1970). Participants were also selected using a convenience sampling method, targeting professionals from the Misurata Free Zone Company via social media platforms, professional networks, and human resources departments. This method allows for the inclusion of employees from diverse organizational backgrounds, increasing the study's generalizability.

The sample was selected using a non-probability sampling technique from a total of 410 employees in the Misurata Free Zone company, using simple random sampling, a probability-based randomization method.

Based on a theoretical value of 1.96, a 95% confidence interval, and a sampling error of 0.05, the sample size was determined accordingly at $p = 0.5$, $q = 0.5$, and $d = 0.05$, assuming $\alpha = 0.05$, according to the following equation (Robbins, 2009).

$$n = \frac{Nt^2 pq}{d^2(N-1) + t^2 pq}$$

According to the results of the calculation,

N: Universe

n: Frequency of application

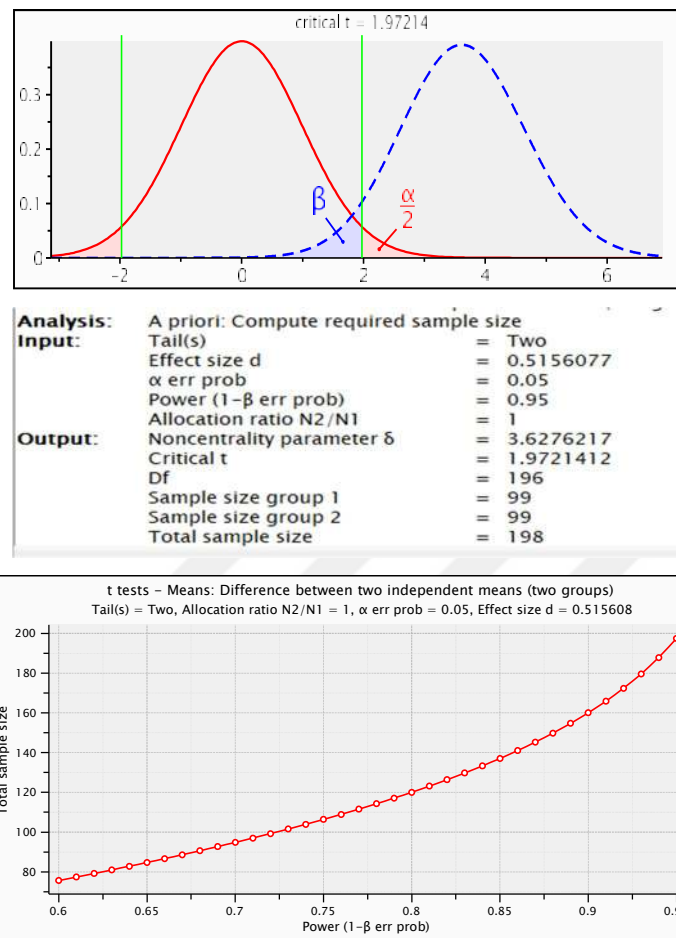
p: Frequency of the event under investigation

q: Frequency of non-occurrence of the investigated event

t: Theoretical value found from the table t at a certain degree of freedom and detected error level

d: The desired $\pm$ deviation according to the incidence of the event.

A G-Power analysis was conducted to determine the sample size. It was found that at least 198 samples were needed to represent a cohort of 410 employees in the Misurata Free Zone, as shown in the figure below. Customers aged 20 years or older, employed by the company under study, and holding a high school diploma or higher were included as inclusion criteria. Refusal to participate in the study and having less than a high school education were considered exclusion criteria.

Figure 3: G-Power Analysis.

The minimum sample size required for this study was determined using an a priori power analysis conducted in G-Power 3.1, which ensures sufficient statistical power to detect any effects that exist, lowering the risk of Type II errors, or false negatives. Tail(s): Two-tailed test - indicates that the hypothesis test considers both directions of the effect. Effect size (d): 0.5156 - According to Cohen's (1988) criteria, this is a medium effect size. It reflects the expected standardized difference between the means of the two groups. Probability of error α : 0.05. Given power analysis, the minimum sample size to be included in this study would be 198 in total (99 in each group) to robustly detect a medium effect size. This computation will provide a very strong statistical base for the adopted sampling strategy in the research.

2.2. MEASURES

Perceived JI scale: The questionnaire consists of nine items to measure perceived quantitative JI (concerns about job loss), based on items developed by Ashford et al. (1989), Hellgren et al. (1999), and de Wit (2000). Qualitative JI (concerns about declining job quality and benefits) is comprised of nine items based on a scale developed by Isaacson et al. (1998) (Özyaman Boya et al., 2008).

UBP Scale: The scale developed by Umphress et al. (2010), which uses six items to measure employees' willingness to engage in unethical behaviours that may benefit their organizations, was used explicitly to measure JI behaviours in the research.

SE: The SE Scale (Short Version), developed by Schenz and von Colani (2002) and refined by Rigotti et al. (2008), will be used. In other words, the scale consists of six items designed to measure individuals' confidence in their ability to effectively handle work challenges (Umphress et al., 2010). The scale uses a five-point Likert scale: "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5).

Demographic data includes participants' gender, age, education level, sector of employment, length of employment, and type of employment (full-time, part-time, contractual). These demographic factors will provide insights into potential differences in perceptions of JI and UPB attitudes across different employee categories.

H1: JI is positively associated with UPB.

H2: SE moderates the relationship between JI and UPB, such that the positive relationship is weaker when SE is high.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

3.1. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the demographic characteristics of the participants. It reveals the gender distribution of the participants, with 80.3% (n = 159) identifying as male, while only 19.7% (n = 39) identifying as female. This male-dominated sample may reflect sector-specific hiring trends or organizational demographics and should be taken into account when analyzing gender differences in JI or ethical behaviour. In terms of age, the majority of participants (77.3%, n = 153) were over the age of 30, indicating that the sample consists primarily of mature professionals, perhaps in their mid- or late-career years. Younger age groups were less represented, with only 1.5% (n = 3) under the age of 20, 4.0% (n = 8) between the ages of 20 and 25, and 17.2% (n = 34) between the ages of 26 and 30. Age can influence both the perceived threat of JI and the likelihood of engaging in unethical, pro-establishment behaviour, especially when job stability is at stake.

Educational background also varied, with nearly half of the participants (47.0%, n = 93) holding university degrees. Additionally, 30.3% (n = 60) had higher education (master's or doctorate), and 16.7% (n = 33) were classified as having a doctorate or other advanced qualifications. Only 6.1% (n = 12) had higher secondary education. This higher level of education in the sample may be associated with higher SE, as individuals with higher academic achievement may feel more confident in their abilities and less vulnerable to the negative effects of JI.

Work experience among the respondents was well-distributed. About a quarter of the sample (25.3%, n = 50) had less than five years of experience, while 24.7% (n = 49) had between five and ten years. Those with 10 to 15 years of experience

accounted for 22.7% (n = 45), and 27.3% (n = 54) had over 15 years of work experience.

Regarding job tenure in their current organization, 38.4% (n = 76) of respondents had worked for less than five years, indicating that a significant proportion of the workforce was relatively new to their companies. Meanwhile, 22.7% (n = 45) had worked with their organizations for 5–10 years, 21.2% (n = 42) for 11–15 years, and 17.7% (n = 35) for more than 15 years.

Table 1: Sample characteristics.

Category		n	%
Gender	Male	159	80,3
	Female	39	19,7
Age	<20	3	1,5
	20 - 25	8	4,0
	26-30	34	17,2
	>30	153	77,3
Education Level	Higher Secondary	12	6,1
	Graduate	93	47,0
	Postgraduate (Master/PhD)	60	30,3
	PhD and Others	33	16,7
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	50	25,3
	5-10 years	49	24,7
	10-15 years	45	22,7
	More than 15 years	54	27,3
Years in Current Firm	Less than 5 years	76	38,4
	5-10 years	45	22,7
	11-15 years	42	21,2
	More than 15 years	35	17,7

3.2. SCALE VALIDITIES AND RELIABILITIES

3.2.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 2: Factor Analysis results of JI.

Factor Name	Item Number	Quantitative JI	Qualitative JI	α	TVE
J1	PJ11:I am afraid I will get fired	0.880	0.140	.852	64.769
	PJ12:I worry about keeping my job	0.875	0.138		
	PJ13:I fear I will lose my job	0.787	0.112		
	PJ14:I think I might get fired in the near future	0.782	0.109		
	PJ19:My pay development in this organization is promising	0.219	0.635		
	PJ18:I believe that [the organization] will need my competence	0.211	0.634		

	also in the future				
	PJ17:I feel that [the organization] can provide me with a stimulating job content in the near future	0.183	0.605		
	PJ16:My future career opportunities in [the organization] are favorable	0.144	0.524		
	PJ15:I am sure I can keep my job	0.120	0.556		
	Total = 64.769 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) = 0.500 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 65.274 Degrees of Freedom (df) = 18 Significance (p-value) = < 0.001				

In Table 2, Quantitative Job Insecurity (QJI) relates to employees' perceptions of the risk of job loss or termination. Items PJ11–PJ14 load strongly on this dimension, with factor loadings ranging from 0.782 to 0.88, indicating that these items represent the perceived threat of job loss. Qualitative Job Insecurity (QLJI):

Qualitative job insecurity captures values in terms of anxiety about the attributes of the job one might lose (e.g., job prospects, potential relative salary growth, important skills). PJI5–PJI9 loads this factor better, with values ranging from 0.524 to 0.635, confirming its importance to this dimension; thus, the factor structure is bivariate, a position consistent with the full theory like (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), which states that insecurity is multidimensional, some quantitative and some qualitative. The total variance explained (TVE) was 64.769%; this is certainly above the generally accepted level of 50% to confirm that the two-factor model accounts for this variance in responses. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.500, the minimum acceptable threshold for factor analyzability (Kaiser, 1974). This value slightly indicates sample adequacy. Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 65.274$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that high enough correlations between items could be expected to justify factor analysis.

Table 3: Factor Analysis results of UPB.

Factor Name	Item Numbers	Factor Loading	α	TVE
UPB	UPB1: If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good.	0.845	0.766	63.354
	UPB2: If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients.	0.842		
	UPB3: If it would benefit my organization, I would withhold negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients.	0.838		
	UPB4: If my organization needed me to, I would give a good recommendation on behalf of an incompetent employee in the	0.757		

	hope that the person will become another organization's problem instead of my own.			
	UPB5: If my organization needed me to, I would withhold issuing a refund to a customer or client accidentally overcharged.	0.750		
	UPB6: If needed, I would conceal information from the public that could be damaging to my organization.	0.735		
	Total = 63.354			
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure = 0.856			
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (χ^2) = 616.499			
	Degrees of Freedom (df) = 15			
	Significance Level (p-value) = < 0.001			

In Table 3. All factor loadings are above the ideal threshold of 0.50. The KMO = 0.856 indicated excellent sampling adequacy, and the Bartlett test is statistically significant ($p < .001$), thereby confirming sufficient correlations between items for factor analysis. Only one factor is extracted, explaining 63.35% of the total variance, indicating that UPB items load soundly on a single underlying construct. The clustering values ranged from 0.735 to 0.845, all acceptable values.

Table 4: Factor Analysis results of SE.

Factor	Item Numbers	Factor Loading	α	TVE
SE	SE1: I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.	0.856	.739	61.405
	SE2: When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions.	0.853		

	SE3: Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.	0.692		
	SE4: My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.	0.688		
	SE5: I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.	0.680		
	SE6: I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job.	0.651		
	Total	= 61.405		
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	= 0.500		
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (χ^2)	= 98.297		
	Degrees of Freedom (df)	= 10		
	Significance (p-value)	= < .001		

In Table 4, the values KMO = 0.500, or factors would be acceptable with this average (normally the cutoff is ≥ 0.50). It was statistically significant for the Bartlett test ($p < .001$) because it was answered positively whether the correlation matrix is different from the identity matrix and implies the appropriateness of the factor analysis (EFA). According to two, the total value can be extracted about 61.41%, which is an acceptable common mean. According to all factor loadings, it can be seen that every one of the factor loadings was above 0.65 which can be interpreted to demonstrate a strong association between the items within their latent constructs. Explanation of all KMO = 0.500, meaning it would be acceptable for factor analysis with this average (usually, the threshold is ≥ 0.50). The Bartlett's test is statistically significant with $p < .001$, which affirms that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, making it fit for the factor analysis (EFA). The extractable percentage of the two factors is 61.41% cumulative, which is the acceptable common mean. All factor loadings are above 0.65, implying a strong association between the items with their respective latent constructs.

3.2.2. Model Fit

In this study, the multidimensional constructs of the factor analysis were validated using structural equation modeling (SEM). CFA was performed. Using the maximum likelihood method, the measurement model assesses the structural validity of the study variables. The analysis evaluates the relationships between JI and pro-organizational unethical behaviours, with each construct tested using first-order confirmatory factor models. The measurement model, in turn, validates these constructs based on their dimensions, as shown in the tables below. In this study, the multidimensional constructs of the factor analysis were validated using SEM. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed using AMOS software (version 25). Using the maximum likelihood method, the measurement model assesses the structural validity of the study variables. The analysis evaluates the relationships between perceived JI and UBP, with each construct tested using first-order confirmatory factor models. The measurement model, in turn, validates these constructs based on their dimensions, as shown in the tables below.

Table 5 presents the results of the CFA for the model. The standard deviations were statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5: Confirmatory factor analysis indicators for the effect of JI.

Name of the Construct	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	Result
Perceived JI	0.995	0.896	0.066	0.541	Good Model Fit

Table 5 shows the fit statistics for the following CFA analysis, which showed a very strong fit across most indices. Although the TLI is slightly below the minimum (0.896), the CFI is excellent, and the mean standard error is quite acceptable (RMSEA 0.066), indicating the validity of this model.

Table 6: Confirmatory factor analysis indicators for the effect of UBPI.

Name of the Construct	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	Result
UBP	0.959	0.956	0.031	0.052	Excellent model fit

In Table 6, CFA analysis showed a strong fit (CFI and TLI > 0.95, RMSEA $\approx$ 0.03, SRMR $\approx$ 0.05), indicating good discriminant validity.

Table 7: Confirmatory factor analysis indicators for the effect of SE.

Model Name	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	Result
SE	0.942	0.927	0.058	0.041	Good Model Fit

In Table 7, the given CFA model fit indices are derived from a confirmatory factor analysis conducted to validate the SE measurement model. Confirmatory factor analysis is an essential step in structural equation modeling (SEM) as it tests the fit of the observed data to certain hypothesized factor structures. The standard error model showed a very good comparative fit of 0.942, indicating strong data support for the hypothesis. The TLI of 0.927 supports the claim that the standard error model is well-specified. The SRMR of 0.041 indicates very small residuals in the standard error model, demonstrating its high fit to the data.

Table 8 shows the results of the CFA on the latent construct of the quantitative JI, which represents employees' perceptions of the risk of total job loss. This construct was operationalized through four items (PJI.1-PJI.4), each intended to capture different aspects of job loss anxiety.

Table 8: Standardized regression weights for perceived quantitative JI items.

Dimension	Items	Estimate/ Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	p
Quantitative Job Insecurity →	1. I am afraid I will get fired (PJI.1)	0.782	—	—	—

	2. I worry about keeping my job (PJI.2)	0.840	0.220	5.903	***
	I fear I will lose my job (PJI.3)	0.876	0.245	6.077	***
	I think I might get fired in the near future (PJI.4)	0.812	0.184	5.637	***

Table 8 shows the standardized regression weights for the four items measuring a latent dimension of quantitative JI. This dimension captures employees' perceptions of the risk of losing their jobs or continuing to work. The regression weights were obtained through CFA, which assesses the strength of each item's influence on the latent dimension. The standardized regression weight ranged from 0.782 to 0.876, indicating a high degree of correlation between the observed items and the latent dimension quantitative JI. Specifically, the item "I am afraid of losing my job" (PJI.3) exhibited the highest standardized loading (0.876), indicating that it had the highest predictive power for quantitative job insecurity in this model.

The item "I am afraid of being fired from my job" (PJI.1) also had a very strong loading (0.782) and served as the reference item, with an unstandardized p-value fixed at 1.000 to specify the model. All critical ratios (C.R.s) exceeded the recommended threshold of 1.96 and were statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, confirming their reliability and significance as a valid measure of the latent construct.

Overall, the results support the construct validity of the quantitative JI dimension, as all items loaded significantly and meaningfully on the latent variable. These findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the multidimensional concept of job insecurity, where fear of job loss is considered a fundamental cognitive and emotional component of the construct.

Table 9 presents CFA results on the latent construct of qualitative JI, which refers to an employee's worry over the quality and stability of perceived job features, such as job security, long-term prospects, and employment predictability. The five items measuring this concept (PJI.5 to PJI.9) were all reverse-coded statements that were originally designed to capture job security instead of insecurity.

Table 9: Standardized regression weights for perceived qualitative JI items.

Dimension	Items	Estimate Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	p
Qualitative Job Insecurity →	I am sure I can keep my job (reverse-coded) (PJI.5)	0.731	0.194	- 5.359	***
	My future career opportunities in [the organization] are favorable (reverse-coded) (PJI.6)	0.762	0.196	- 5.672	***
	I feel that [the organization] can provide me with a stimulating job content in the near future (reverse-coded) (PJI.7)	0.794	0.215	- 5.945	***

	I believe that [the organization] will need my competence also in the future (reverse-coded) (PJI.8)	0.755	0.188	- 5.751	***
	My pay development in this organization is promising(reverse-coded) (PJI.9)	0.772	0.217	- 5.592	***

Table 9 displays the CFA results for the qualitative JI latent structure using standardized and unstandardized regression weights. The job insecurity dimension refers to employees' perceptions of a threat to valued job benefits, such as career advancement opportunities, salary advancement, and the use of skills, rather than to the loss of the job itself (De Wit, 2005; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). This factor consists of five reverse-coded items (PJI.5 to PJI.9). The standardized regression weights for each of these items ranged from 0.731 to 0.794, showing strong and consistent associations between each observed item and the underlying construct of qualitative job insecurity. "I feel that [the organization] can provide me with a stimulating job content in the near future" (PJI.7) recorded the highest standardized loading (0.794), indicating that perceived enrichment and development opportunities form the core of participants' perceptions of qualitative insecurity. Items related to future career advancement opportunities (PJI.6), employee retention guarantees (PJI.5), perceived competency requirements (PJI.8), and expected wage advancements (PJI.9) showed high factor loadings, exceeding 0.73, indicating conceptual fit and consistency of the scale.

Table 10: Standardized regression weights for perceived UPB items.

Dimension	Items	Estimate/ Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	p
Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior →	If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good (UPB.1)	0.742	—	—	—
	If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients (UPB.2)	0.790	0.076	13.554	***
	If it would benefit my organization, I would withhold negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients (UPB.3)	0.781	0.079	12.478	***
	If my organization needed me to, I would give a good recommendation on behalf of an incompetent employee in the hope that the person will become another organization's problem instead of my own (UPB.4)	0.703	0.077	10.739	***
	If my organization needed me to, I would withhold issuing a refund to a	0.686	0.080	9.592	***

	customer or client accidentally overcharged (UPB.5)				
	If needed, I would conceal information from the public that could be damaging to my organization (UPB.6)	0.689	0.081	9.518	***

In Table 10, standardized regression weights are specified for six observed indicators of the latent construct UPB. UPB means unethical behavior performed by employees to make possible gains for their organizations, constituting actions such as falsifying information or behaving against ethical norms in protecting or augmenting organizations' faces (Umpress et al., 2010). The reference indicator used is "If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good" (UPB.1), with its unstandardized factor loading fixed at 1.000 in the estimation process. Its standardized loading is reported at 0.742, serving as the baseline for comparison. All remaining items have high standardized regression weights that range from 0.686 to 0.790, pointing to strong contributions to the UPB factor itself:

UPB.2 "If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients"/had the highest standardized loading (0.790), which points out its essential tying up with UPB. Other than that, UPB.3 (misleading customers) and UPB.4 (distorting facts) also significantly displayed standardized coefficients (0.781 and 0.703, respectively), indicating their prominence in conceptualizing unethical actions designed for pursuing organizational advantage.

Acceptable standardized loadings of the others, UPB.5 and UPB.6 were also noted (0.686 and 0.68, respectively), with statistically significant critical ratios (C.R. values > 9) and $p < .001$, thus supporting the reliability and statistical validity of the indicators. Collectively, the magnitude and statistical significance of these

loadings indicate that the UPB measurement model is both reliable and valid. All items align well with the theoretical structure of UPB, and their high standardized coefficients suggest minimal measurement error and high construct representation. This analysis shows that the six-item scale robustly measures the UPB construct critical to understanding the ethical boundaries employees may cross under perceived organizational demands or pressures.

Table 11: Standardized regression weights for perceived SE items.

Dimension	Items	Estimate Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	p
Self-Efficacy →	Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it(SE.3)	0.765	—	—	—
	When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions(SE.2)	0.793	0.141	7.350	***
	I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities (SE.1)	0.728	0.136	6.462	***
	My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future (SE.4)	0.818	0.150	8.290	***
	I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job (SE.5)	0.701	0.133	6.349	***

	I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job (SE.6)	0.740	0.135	6.869	***
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In Table 11, the standardized regression weights for the six observed items operating on the latent construct SE are shown. SE describes an individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed at accomplishing tasks and meeting challenges (Bandura, 1997). The standardized estimates allow a direct interpretation of the strength of the association of each item with the underlying factor, irrespective of the unit of measurement. The item "Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it" (SE.3) is used as the reference factor, with its loading fixed at 0.765 for model specification purposes. All other items had high standardized loadings varying from 0.701 to 0.818, showing that they strongly reflect the underlying concept of self-efficacy. Highest standardized loading was exhibited by item SE.4 ("My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future") at 0.818, thereby demonstrating that emotional regulation significantly impacts the perception of competence. Items SE.2 and SE.6 also showed strong correlations (0.793 and 0.740, respectively), thus indicating that persistence in problem-solving and resilience under stress are critical components of perceptions of SE.

Other items (SE.1, SE.5) also exhibited significant standardized loadings above 0.70, thereby further affirming the internal consistency of the item. All critical ratio (C.R.) values were higher than standard limits of ± 1.96 , and all p-values were found to be less than 0.001. This indicates that each indicator is significantly contributing toward the latent variable. These outcomes affirm the construct validity of the SE scale employed in this study. Thus, it can be concluded that the six-item SE scale is statistically reliable and conceptually valid on the basis of standardized estimates endowed to this research, with strong support for further structural modeling analysis of the actual role self-efficacy plays in the domain of organizational behavior.

3.2.3. Reliability Analysis

Table 12 presents the reliability analysis for the study's scales and subscales. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, which assesses internal consistency and reliability of the scales. A Cronbach's Alpha value above .70 is considered acceptable for research purposes, indicating that the scale reliably measures the intended construct.

Table 12: Reliability Statistics of study variables.

Scales	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	No of Items
Quantitative JI	36.9740	.881	4
Qualitative JI	38.9242	.766	5
Total of Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior	50.4394	.719	6
Total of SE	43.5758	.739	6

Table 12 is used to establish the internal consistency and reliability of the measuring tools used in the current study. The PJI scale has 2 dimensions 4 items, Quantitative JI and the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.881 and Qualitative JI 5 items the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.766 suggests that the internal consistency is strong in that the items are aligned in measuring the employees' perceived threats to their job security. Such a high alpha supports the scaling reliability for further analysis. The UPB scale consists of six items, and the Cronbach's alpha of 0.719 puts it above the acceptable limit. The next is a SE scale containing six items and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.739, a fairly good level of internal reliability.

3.3. TEST OF HYPOTHESES

3.3.1. The Impact of Perceived JI on UPB

Table 13: Relationship between Perceived JI, UPB, According to Linear Regression.

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-,331	3,503		-,094	,925	-7,240	6,578
	Total of Perceived JI	,594	,126	,318	4,703	,000	,345	,843
R ² = .101 F= 22.122 p=.000								
a. Dependent Variable: Total of UPB								

Table 13 contains the results of a simple linear regression analysis that tested **H1: JI is positively associated with UPB**. The analysis sought to determine whether employees with high levels of perceived JI are more likely to engage in unethical behavior aimed at serving the organization. Therefore, in this type of model, perceived JI is the independent variable, and UPB is the dependent variable.

The regression output shows that perceived JI is a statistically significant positive predictor of pro-organizational unethical behavior. More specifically, the unstandardized coefficient ($B = .594$) shows that a one-unit increase in perceived JI leads to an average increase of 0.594 UPB scores. This relationship is statistically significant at $p < .001$, as evidenced by the t-value of 4.703 and the p-value of 0.000, which is well below the standard significance threshold. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.318$) also provides a large medium effect size, indicating that the effect of JI on UPB is statistically significant in the context of this study.

The R-squared value ($R^2 = 0.101$) indicates that approximately 10.1% of the variance in pro-organizational unethical behavior is explained by perceived JI alone. Although this effect size is modest, it is statistically significant, as evidenced by the F-statistic ($F = 22.122$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that the regression model, in general, is consistent with the data.

The confidence interval for the regression coefficient ranges from 0.345 to 0.843, making this estimate more reliable, as it does not include the zero range at all, but rather remains entirely within the positive range. This reinforces the idea that perceived JI is indeed a valid predictor of UPB for this sample.

In summary, the results in Table 4.16 provide strong empirical support for the first hypothesis. Employees experiencing JI behave unethically toward the company, either to defend or enhance its value, perhaps as a mechanism for venting emotions or as a strategy to foster loyalty within the leadership. These findings point to the psychological and behavioral consequences of JI, demonstrating its important role as a risk factor for ethical compromise in such contexts. This result is consistent with Umphress et al., 2010, who found that job insecurity promotes unethical behavior among employees. It is also consistent with several studies that have also found that job insecurity promotes unethical organizational behavior among employees (Chirumbolo and Hellgren, 2003; Emberland, 2010; Ghosh, 2017; Lawrence and Kacmar, 2017; Safavi and Karatepe, 2019; Obeng et al., 2020; Abbas et al., 2021).

The PROCESS model by Hayes (2017) was used to assess the role of self-efficacy as a moderator in the relationship between perceived job insecurity and unethical pro-organizational behavior. According to this model, a significant interaction effect is established by examining the p-value along with the Lower Level Confidence Interval (LLCI) and Upper Level Confidence Interval (ULCI).

Overall, the model was significant, $R^2 = 0.16$, $F(3, 228) = 14.64$, $p < .001$, hence the predictors accounted for 16.15% variance in Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior.

Since the overall model was significant, moderation was assessed by looking into the interaction between Perceived Job Insecurity and Self-Efficacy. The interaction term was significant, $\beta = -0.130$.

$t(228) = -2.00$, $p = 0.046$, with a 95% confidence interval estimate from -0.256 to -0.004. This indicates that Self-Efficacy is indeed a significant moderator of the relationship between Perceived Job Insecurity and Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior, such that higher Self-Efficacy weakens the positive link between job insecurity and unethical conduct.

3.3.2. Moderating The Role of Self Efficacy

The results presented in the table 4.14 indicate that PJI is a significant predictor of pro-organizational UPB, and that this relationship is moderated by SE. High self-efficacy appears to work as a psychological buffer that lessens the likelihood of committing unethical acts under high job insecurity. These findings thus underscore the mitigating impact of personal resources such as SE on the negative behavioral effects of PJI. This thereby has theoretical and practical implications for consideration in the furtherance of self-efficacy development programs in ethically fragile organizational contexts.

Table 14: Moderation Analysis of PJI on UPB Moderated by SE.

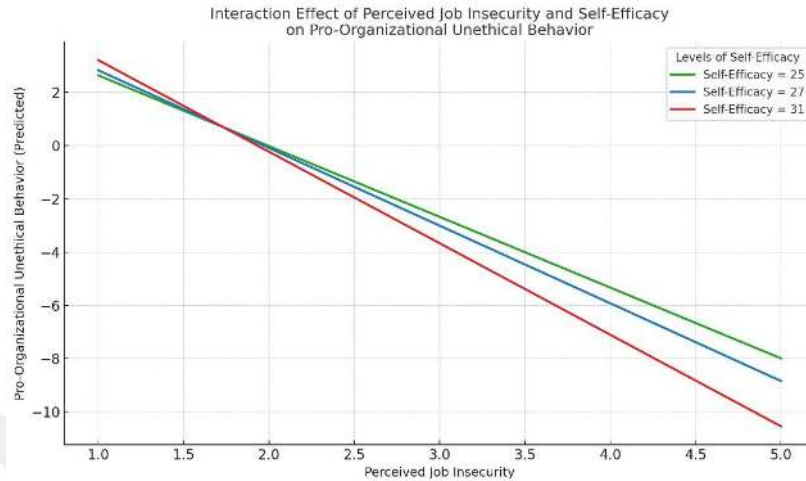
Predictor	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
(Intercept)	-0.331	3.503	-0.094	0.925	-7.240	6.578
Perceived Job Insecurity (PJI)	0.594	0.126	4.703	0.000	0.345	0.843
Self-Efficacy (SE)	0.225	0.082	2.737	0.007	0.063	0.387
PJI × SE (Interaction)	-0.130*	0.065*	-2.00*	0.046*	-0.256*	0.004*

In table 14 displays the results from a moderation test examining the interaction effects of PJI and SE on UPB. The model included three predictors: the main

effect of PJI, the main effect of SE, and the interaction term ($PJI \times SE$). The results indicated that PJI has a positive and statistically significant impact on UPB ($B = 0.594$; $p < 0.001$), meaning the more employees perceive insecurity regarding their job, the more likely they are to resort to unethical behaviors that might benefit the organization. Furthermore, SE also shows positive and significant correlation with UPB ($B = 0.225$, $p = 0.007$), indicating that those with higher self-efficacy may feel more empowered or justified in these behaviors, perhaps seeing them as proactive or beneficial to the organization. It was also found that the interaction measure ($PJI \times SE$) is negative and significant ($B = -0.130$, $p = 0.046$), therefore the moderation effect is supported: self-efficacy moderates the positive relationship between job insecurity and unethical behavior. In other words, employees high in self-efficacy are less likely to commit unethical acts benefiting the organization when facing job insecurity compared to those low in self-efficacy. The confidence intervals ($LLCI = -0.256$, $ULCI = -0.004$) for the interaction term do not cross zero, thus confirming the statistical significance of the moderation effect at the 95% level of confidence.

This results is consistent with a study conducted in Nigeria, which found that self-efficacy moderated the relationship between perceived job insecurity and organizational commitment among layoff survivors among Nigerian public workers. As perceived job insecurity increased, survivors with moderate to high levels of SE demonstrated higher levels of organizational commitment than those with low SE (Adebayo, 2014). This is consistent with a study conducted in Europe that found that self-efficacy moderated the association between job insecurity and employees' assessments of barriers (perceiving insecurity as a barrier), with low self-efficacy amplifying negative assessments and reducing proactive behavior (Yao et al., 2021)

Figure 4: Interactive Diagram Demonstrating the Moderating Effect of SE on the Relationship between JI and UPB.



In Figure 4 reveals the effect of PJI on UPB based on three levels of SE. The green line (SE = 25): At low levels of self-efficacy, the relationship between perceived job insecurity and unethical behavior is mild, which means the adverse effect is weaker. Blue line (SE = 27): The effect becomes stronger at medium levels. Red line (SE = 31): At high levels of SE, perceived job insecurity predicts high levels of unethical behavior.

From the regression results, the interaction coefficient ($PJI \times SE$) is negative and significant ($B = -0.130$, $p = 0.046$), reflecting moderate effects. It suggests that the positive effects of job insecurity on unethical behavior become weaker with increasing self-efficacy. However, visualization shows that at high levels of self-efficacy, the procedural structure of unethical behavior begins to reverse, indicating yet another layer of complexity where people with high self-efficacy undertake more aggressive unethical behaviors to protect their organizations with threats of job insecurity. The graph indicates that self-efficacy is a significant moderator in the relationship between job insecurity and unethical behavior, which indicates that interventions aimed at self-efficacy may have unintended consequences, particularly in high-stress or uncertain environments.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to assess how JI is related to UPB, in particular with the moderating impact of SE among employees of the Misurata Free Zone Company in Libya. Using a robust methodology of structured Arabic questionnaires, CFA, and moderation testing through the structural equation model, this research brought forth many important insights.

Employees experiencing JI behave unethically toward the organization, either to defend or enhance its value, perhaps as a coping mechanism or as a strategy to foster loyalty within the leadership. These findings point to the psychological and behavioral consequences of JI, demonstrating its important role as a risk factor for ethical compromise in such contexts.

High levels of SE may mitigate or act as a social contagion on the effect of enhancing JI on pro-organizational unethical behavior. Simply put, JI leads to pro-organizational unethical behavior among employees, but the effect is less pronounced among those with high SE beliefs. Furthermore, the direct path from PJI to UPB is positive and significant.

Moderation analysis reveals that SE plays a protective role, mitigating the negative effect of self-efficacy on unethical behavior in the organizational environment. These findings underscore the importance of psychological resources, such as self-efficacy, in setting ethical boundaries in stressful workplace situations.

The findings confirmed the H1 - a statistically significant positive relationship was proven between JI and UPB. Employees making their jobs insecure were more likely to engage in unethical acts, usually to benefit the organization, to ensure a

certain level of job security or to show their loyalty. Such behavior may theoretically appear pro-organizational, though in terms of long-term ethical standards and institutional integrity, it undermines such values.

H2 was confirmed: SE was a strong moderator in the relationship between JI and UPB. More specifically, higher levels of SE reduced the positive relationship between PJI and UPB, indicating that individuals respond less with unethical behavior when their perception of security is high if they are quite self-efficacious in managing job-related challenges.

The findings correlate with earlier studies (König et al., 2010) regarding the examination of quantitative JI and its impact on counterproductive work behavior, where a strong positive association was found between perceived JI and counterproductive work behavior. However, generalized self-efficacy significantly moderated the relationship: employees high in SE reported much less overtime under high job insecurity than those lower in SE (König et al., 2010). This provides support for the idea that SE may be protective against the adverse consequences of insecurity on unethical behavior. It corresponds with a Chinese investigation among financial services workers, where feelings of JI predicted negative emotions (anxiety and pessimism, in particular) and reduced unethical behavior; thus SE clearly features into this model because it moderated the stress trajectory: higher social status individuals experienced fewer negative emotions to a significant degree and were less likely to withdraw from informal social behaviors when under threat. Although UPB was not the prime focus here, this suggests that SE allows for emotional regulation and moral resilience in times of insecurity (Yu et al., 2021).

These findings have very deep implications within the context of Libya, which is characterized by persistent socio-economic instability and political uncertainties. Under such transitional or post-conflict economies, JI is more than an organizational concern. Rather, it becomes a reality of the system itself; it's defined or shaped by weak institutional structures, volatile labor markets, and

unpredictable governance. So, coming to that, the relevance of the study's demonstration that perceived job insecurity influences unethical promotional organizational behavior is even more relevant. Notably, employees working in environments with high unemployment rates and insufficient legal protection experience frequent organizational restructuring; thus, such people are often likely to develop unethical behaviors through the coping mechanism to retain their employment status or favor in their organizations.

Also, the demographic heterogeneity of the sample, which displays a myriad of ages, educational backgrounds, job types, and sectors, enhances the external validity of the results. Very high response rate strengthens it further in terms of robustness, implying that job insecurity and unethical behavior might not be only particular phenomena but are actually found within several organizational strata. Thus, findings are applicable not only in Libya but may also be extrapolated to similar socio-political contexts such as those in other MENA countries or fragile states that are facing labor precarity. This adds completely to the current understanding of organizational behavior under chronic uncertainty, and it underscores the need for contextually sensitive leadership, psychological resource development (e.g., SE training), and ethical reinforcement strategies in workplaces that are navigating through post-conflict recovery or economic transition.

SUGGESTIONS

Given this protective role, organizations will invest in training programs to empower employees' belief toward self-efficacy, especially organizations that operate in unstable environments. Resilience, coping strategies, and performance management workshops new constructs will help foster the psychological resources needed to buffer the negative effects of job insecurity.

Transparent communication patterns regarding the organizational changes, restructuring, and job prospects must be prioritized by management. Open

discussions lessen uncertainty and stress, reducing the cognitive and emotional challenges linked to job insecurity and decreasing the potential for UPB.

At all levels of management, ethical leadership needs to be strengthened. Ethical standards displayed by leaders should openly declare that unethical practices are forbidden, irrespective of whether they seem to succeed, disrupt, or resent the organization. Ethicized performance measures and clear reporting mechanisms further help entrench ethical norms into its core processes.

The human resource divisions should actively monitor and assess through regular surveys or feedback systems how employees view their job security. Stress-related threats to job security may be identified early enough for remedial actions such as career counseling, role restructuring, or improved support services.

Such a policy for decision-makers and implementers against unethical practices emanating from job insecurity would include updating HR policies, forming ethics committees, and integrating ethical decision-making into organizational strategy.

The study was restricted to the employees of Misurata Free Zone, Libya. Future studies need to expand the sample to include participants from both organizations and sectors, including public and private institutions so that generalizing the findings can be done and comparative insights provided on how different organizational structures and cultures influence the relationship between job insecurity and unethical behavior.

Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the study leaves room for doubts on causal conclusions, and longitudinal studies can be suggested to assess changes in job insecurity, self-efficacy, and unethical behaviors over time. Such designs allow for fine-tuning the study over the rapidly changing nature of

psychological and behavioral responses within the context of the workplace, especially in a climate of economic or political instability.

While this study examined self-efficacy as a mediator, future work might examine other psychological or organizational variables that could affect the job insecurity-pro-organizational-unethical-behaviors relationship. Variables such as organizational commitment, ethical identity, leadership style, or perceived organizational justice may prove to be enlightening. With regard to the quantitative findings, the future studies may also consider implementing qualitative techniques such as interviews and focus groups. This is likely to unravel further motivations behind unethical behaviors in organizations and provide context-related explanations, especially in regards to non-Western or high-risk work environments like Libya.

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APPENDIX 1 – ORIGINALITY REPORT



T.C.
ANKARA BİLİM ÜNİVERSİTESİ
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

Öğrenci No	ABU-LEE-0012
Tarih	05.08.2025
Öğretim No	
Öğretim No	

MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT

ANKARA SCIENCE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Date: 11/08/2025

Thesis Title: THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED JOB INSECURITY ON UNETHICAL PRO-ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY

According to the originality report obtained by my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on 31/07/2025 for the total of 84 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 20 %.

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- ☒ Approval and Declaration sections excluded
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I declare that I have carefully read Ankara Bilim University Graduate Education Institute Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

Date and Signature

Name Surname: SALAHEDDIN SULIMAN ALAHWEL

Student No: 235020003

Department: BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Program:

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Asst. Prof. Pelin KARACA KALKAN

(Title, Name Surname, Signature)

APPENDIX 2 – ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.
ANKARA BİLİM ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Etik Kurul Başkanlığı

Sayı: 2025/5

21/03/2025

Konu: Etik Kurul Onayı

Sayın Salaheddin Suliman Alahwel;

“The Effect of Perceived Job Insecurity on Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy” (Algılanan İş Güvencesizliğinin Örgüt Yararına Etik Olmayan Davranışlar Üzerindeki Etkisi: Öz Yeterliliğin Düzenleyici Rolü) isimli çalışmanız için Ankara Bilim Üniversitesi Etik Kuruluna yaptığınız başvuru 21/03/2025 tarihinde icra edilen etik kurul toplantısında görüşülmüş ve çalışmanın yürütülmesinin Ankara Bilim Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırmalar ve Yayın Etiği Yönetmeliği’ne uygun olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

APPENDIX 3 – QUESTIONNAIRE

The Effect of Perceived Job Insecurity on Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: The Moderating Role of Self Efficacy

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is part of a master's thesis titled "The Effect of Perceived Job Insecurity on Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: The Moderating Role of Self Efficacy" conducted at Ankara Science University, Graduate School of Education, Department of Business Administration, under the supervision of Dr. Pelin Karaca Kalkan. Your participation is voluntary, and no identifying information is requested. Your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will only be used for statistical analysis. The questionnaire aims to assess your perception of job insecurity practices within your organization and your attitude towards your job and organization. Please read each question carefully and mark the option that best represents your opinion with an X. Your participation is highly valuable for our research, and we thank you for your time and contribution.

Master's Student: Salaheddin Suliman Mohamed Alahwel

E-Mail: salahsleman90@gmail.com

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Pelin Karaca Kalkan.

I have read the above explanations, and I declare that I have voluntarily participated in this study.

SECTION A: Demographic

1. Gender	☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age	☐ <20 ☐ 20 - 25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ >30
3. Education Level	☐ Higher Secondary ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Graduate ☐ Postgraduate (Master/PhD) ☐ PhD and Others
4. Years of Experience	☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-15 years ☐ 16-20 years ☐ More than 20 years
5. Years in Current Firm	☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-15 years ☐ 16-20 years ☐ More than 20 years

SECTION B: Job insecurity

This section includes statements regarding your perception of job insecurity practices within your organization. Please select the option that most closely aligns with your views:

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Perceived Job Insecurity					
1. I am afraid I will get fired	1	2	3	4	5
2. I worry about keeping my job	1	2	3	4	5
3. I fear I will lose my job	1	2	3	4	5
4. I think I might get fired in the near future	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am sure I can keep my job	1	2	3	4	5
6. My future career opportunities in [the organization] are favorable	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel that [the organization] can provide me with a stimulating job content in the near future	1	2	3	4	5
8. I believe that [the organization] will need my competence also in the future	1	2	3	4	5
9. My pay development in this organization is promising	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior

This section includes statements regarding Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior. Please select the option that most closely aligns with your views:

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

UBP					
1. If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good.	1	2	3	4	5
2. If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients.	1	2	3	4	5
3. If it would benefit my organization, I would withhold negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients.	1	2	3	4	5
4. If my organization needed me to, I would give a good recommendation on behalf of an incompetent employee in the hope that the person will become another organization's problem instead of my own.	1	2	3	4	5
5. If my organization needed me to, I would withhold issuing a refund to a customer or client accidentally overcharged.	1	2	3	4	5
6. If needed, I would conceal information from the public that could be damaging to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Self-Efficacy

This section includes statements regarding to your Self-Efficacy. Please select the option that most closely aligns with your views:

1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Self-Efficacy					
1. I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job because I can rely on my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I am confronted with a problem in my job, I can usually find several solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Whatever comes my way in my job, I can usually handle it.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for my occupational future.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I meet the goals that I set for myself in my job.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel prepared for most of the demands in my job.	1	2	3	4	5