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**Title:** Job Insecurity and Service Encounter Quality: An Empirical Study of Employee–Customer Interactions in the Service Sector

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## Job Insecurity and Service Encounter Quality: An Empirical Study of Employee–Customer Interactions in the Service Sector

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### Abstract

Job insecurity is an emerging and pervasive problem within the service industry, and affects the wellbeing and service performance of employees, and ultimately the level of customer satisfaction. The current research examined the intercorrelations among job insecurity, emotional exhaustion, quality of employee-customer interaction, and organizational support. Using a quantitative method, a questionnaire survey was conducted among 330 service industry workers, and the result showed negative correlation among job insecurity and the quality of employee-customer interaction, whereas a positive intercorrelation among job insecurity and emotional exhaustion. Organizational support moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and the quality of employee-customer interaction. The findings of the current study suggest that reducing job insecurity and strengthening organizational support can enhance customer satisfaction and service performance by improving employee–customer interaction quality. In particular, organizational support functions as a key job resource that buffers the adverse effects of emotional exhaustion, helping employees sustain high-quality customer interactions even under conditions of insecurity. These insights highlight the importance of supportive HR practices such as transparent communication, fair procedures, recognition, and stress-management resources to protect employee well-being and maintain service excellence

**Keywords:** *Customer, Employee, Exhaustion, Interaction quality, Job insecurity.*

### 1. Introduction

The service sector has undergone a radical transformation in the past two decades, and the emergence of the customer has led to the promotion of consumerism, as the demanding customer has brought the loyalty concept into focus in the marketing literature (Toufaily, Ricard, & Perrien, 2013; Van Lierop & El-Geneidy, 2016). Nevertheless, job insecurity is only one among numerous problems confronted by service workers and could have substantial implications for organizational performance as well as workers' welfare (Qu, Walter, Zhang, & Zhang, 2025; Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2002).

Based on Wang et al. (2019), job insecurity is a prevalent problem among the service sector that negatively influences staff members' attitudes, behavior, and relations with customers. It refers to an imagined risk of losing one's employment or being unsure of future employment opportunities. Job insecurity has been linked to a variety of employee outcomes, such as reduced work satisfaction, higher intentions to leave the company, and decreased organizational commitment (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2021; C. Lee, Huang, & Ashford, 2018).

One of the key determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty is the quality of employee-customer interactions (Han, Yee, & Yeung, 2024). However, it is commonly known that work uncertainty has a detrimental effect on various employee outcomes, very little study has looked at how job insecurity affects employee-customer interactions. Employee-customer interaction is also a significant driver of customer satisfaction and loyalty, and there exists a vast

knowledge base which must be researched. Enhanced knowledge regarding the mechanisms underlying the association between job insecurity and quality of interactions with customers must be developed (Lai & Wong, 2021).

To fill the existing gaps, the present study explores the link between job insecurity and the quality of employee-customer relationships in the research context. Organizational support represents the first key actor in the moderation mechanism, while emotional exhaustion represents the first key actor in the mediation process. Theoretical frameworks of the present study include the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, Tirone, Holmgren, & Gerhart, 2016) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023). The present research studies the mediating role of emotional exhaustion and organizational support as a moderator, and the direct influences of job insecurity on employee-customer interaction quality by using a quantitative approach based on survey responses of employees working in the service industry.

The findings will also help service organizations in developing those strategies that reduce the adverse effects of job insecurity in employee-customer relationships. With an understanding of the processes of this relationship and the role of emotional exhaustion and organizational support, service organizations can establish strategies specific to interventions aimed at improving employee welfare and, subsequently, customer satisfaction in order to improve organizational performance.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Job insecurity to Employee-Customer Interaction Quality

Quality of employee-customer interaction is a critical organizational performance measure because it directly affects customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bitner et al., 1990). Conceptually, job insecurity may affect the behavior and attitude of employees, subsequently influencing their quality of customer interaction (Aguiar-Quintana, Araujo-Cabrera, & Park, 2020). Some research has found high positive correlations between the quality of employee-customer interaction and customer satisfaction (Bahadur, Aziz, & Zulfiqar, 2018), implying that good employee-customer interaction results in customer satisfaction. Moreover, research has found relationships between customer retention, customer loyalty, and company success with employee-customer interaction quality (Yee, Yeung, & Cheng, 2010).

Insecurity in jobs has been found to negatively affect employee-customer interaction quality (Aguiar-Quintana et al., 2020). Insecure employees can be more likely to focus on their own interests and not on providing high-quality customer interactions, which could decrease customer satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately to the disadvantage of organizational success. Therefore, organizations have to place maximum emphasis on both quality of employee-customer interaction and having a sense of job security among employees to provide quality customer interaction, enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, and contribute to organizational success in the long term (Liang, Chu, & Lin, 2020). As employees feel organizational secure, they generally deliver better-quality customer interactions and foster positive employee-customer relationships.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Job insecurity will be negatively correlated to quality of employee-customer interactions.*

### 2.2 The mediating role of emotional exhaustion

Millions of workers worldwide are affected by the prevalent and undesirable phenomena of job instability (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Hngoi, Abdullah, Wan Sulaiman, & Zaiedy Nor, 2023). Employees' emotional resources are triggered by job instability, which has been described as a stressor and is associated with undesirable employee outcomes (Hobfoll et al., 2016). Research evidence indicates that job insecurity predicts emotional exhaustion both positively and significantly (An, Gu, Obrenovic, & Godinic, 2023). It is accountable for

decreased job performance, increased turnover intentions, and a decline in job satisfaction (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Ersoy, Mahmood, Sharif, Ersoy, & Ehtiyar, 2023).

In addition, Numerous detrimental effects have been connected to employment uncertainty including lower organizational commitment, lower citizenship behavior, and negative physical and mental well-being consequences (Todorović & Jovanović, 2025). According to Douglas, Haar, and Harris (2017), there is a positive correlation between job insecurity with symptoms of depression and anxiety. The implications of these findings are that job insecurity is a substantial threat to the health of employees and companies, and this means organizations should address employees' job security problems.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Job insecurity will be positively correlated with emotional exhaustion.*

Job insecurity leads to serious implications for job performance and workers' well-being. The relationship between work instability and the caliber of interactions between employees and customers has been found to be mediated by emotional tiredness (Jiang & Lavaysse, 2018). Employees who experience significant levels of emotional tiredness are more likely to provide subpar customer service. Empirical data reveal inverse relationship between emotional exhaustion and customer interaction quality, showing that emotionally exhausted workers are unable to achieve high-quality customer interactions (C.-J. Lee & Huang, 2020).

Emotional exhaustion has also been found to be associated with many adverse consequences such as lower job performance, higher turnover intentions, and lower job satisfaction (Tourigny, Baba, Han, & Wang, 2013). Emotional exhaustion was negatively correlated with job performance. In addition, emotional exhaustion can negatively influence the well-being of employees through increased stress, anxiety, and depression (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), which means that emotional exhaustion influences both work performance and personal well-being. Organizations must ensure employee well-being in their organizations in order to prevent emotional exhaustion in their workers by providing stress management resources, creating work-life balance, and enhancing work-related communication. Implementation or adoption of this strategy in organizations can prevent the harmful effects caused by emotional exhaustion and encourage healthy productivity in organizations.

*H<sub>3</sub>: Emotional exhaustion will be negatively correlated to the quality of employee-customer interactions.*

*H<sub>4</sub>: Emotional exhaustion mediates the positive relationship between job insecurity and quality of employee-customer interactions.*

### **2.3 The moderating role of Organizational Support**

Organizational support represents a critical job resource that can cushion the adverse effects of job insecurity on employee outcomes. Drawing on Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory, job insecurity can be viewed as a salient job demand that drains employees' energy and psychological capacity, whereas organizational support functions as a resource that buffers strain and sustains performance (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007). Accordingly, theoretical work proposes that organizational support can operate as a moderator in the relationship between job insecurity and employee outcomes, including employee–customer interaction quality (Marchand & Vandenberghe, 2016). Employees who perceive high levels of support are more likely to maintain high-quality customer interactions even when they experience job insecurity, because support provides emotional reassurance, practical assistance, and coping resources.

Empirical evidence also indicates that organizational support is positively associated with employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, and improved performance (Zumrah & Boyle, 2015), organizational support is positively linked to job performance. Beyond these direct effects. Research suggests that organizational support can

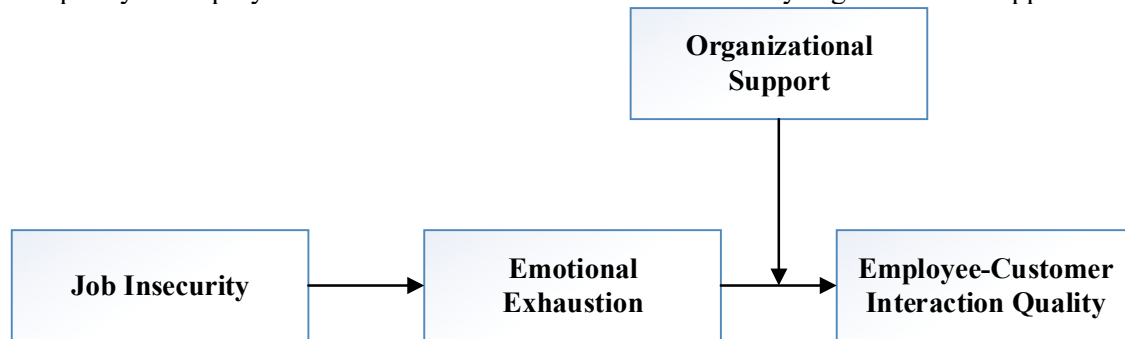
mitigate the negative consequences of job insecurity (Cao, Liu, & Wong, 2024), consistent with the JD-R buffering proposition that resources weaken the impact of demands on strain and downstream performance. Firms ought to emphasize offering support to their workers, especially in times of job instability, through stress management resources, open communication, and value acknowledgment for employees. Such employee support will foster favorable results such as job satisfaction, improved work performance, and high-quality employee-customer interaction.

*H<sub>5</sub>: Organizational support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion such that this relationship will be weak such when organizational support is high.*

*H<sub>6</sub>: Organizational support will moderate the indirect relationship between job insecurity and employee-customer interaction quality through emotional exhaustion.*

## 2.4 Structural Model

Figure 1 displays the structural model used in this investigation. According to the model, job insecurity has a negative correlation with the quality of employee-customer interactions but a good correlation with emotional tiredness. The association between emotional exhaustion and the quality of employee-customer interactions to be moderated by organizational support.



**Figure 1.** Structural Model

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

The study collected data from respondents in Rawalpindi and Islamabad using a quantitative research approach and a questionnaire. The goal was to determine how job insecurity, emotional exhaustion, and organizational support affected the quality of employee-customer interactions.

### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The research focused on service sector organizations' employees who are based in Islamabad and Rawalpindi (ISB/RWP). The sample of employees represented workers from different service industries such as restaurants, retail stores, marketing firms, and research institutions. Convenience sampling was employed in approaching employees from diverse organizations. The sample was composed of 330 respondents with equal gender distribution (165 females, 165 males). Although the sample was large, the convenience sampling method means that the sample may not be representative and it could restrict generalizability of findings.

### 3.3 Data Collection Process

A survey instrument was developed to collect information from 330 service sector workers in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. A pilot test (n = 10) was carried out to validate and check the reliability of the survey. The survey had a 100% response rate since all the approached

employees consented to participate. Rights of participants were maintained, and anonymity and confidentiality were preserved. Two weeks were consumed in data collection, and SPSS version 30.0.0 the data was analyzed using statistical tools.

### 3.4 Measures

Data for this study was gathered using a survey questionnaire. Various sections in the questionnaire assessed different constructs:

#### 3.4.1 Job Insecurity:

Assessed with De Witte (2000) four-item scale. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with statements such as: "Chances are that I will soon lose my job," "I am sure I can keep my job," "I feel insecure about the future of my job," and "I think I might lose my job in the near future." Responses were made on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

**3.4.2 Employee-Customer Interaction Quality:** Measured with a three-item scale from the study of Bettencourt and Brown (1997). Responses were obtained on statements such as: "I offer outstanding service to customers," "I am able to handle customer complaints in an appropriate manner," and "Customers compliment me." Ratings employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

**3.4.3 Emotional Exhaustion:** Eight-item from the study of Maslach and Jackson (1981) is used to measure emotional exhaustion. The frequency of phrases such as "I feel emotionally exhausted from my job," "I feel tired when I wake up in the morning and have to face another day at work," and "I feel that I am running out of rope" was reported by the respondents. A 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Almost Always), was employed for responses.

**3.4.4 Organizational Support:** Measured with the 8-item scale of Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986). Participants assessed statements like "My organization supports customer service," "I get frequent feedback about my performance," and "My organization is concerned with my well-being." A 5-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 5 denoting "strongly agree," was used to collect responses.

**Table 1. Measurement Scale**

Variables	Scale	Items	Response Scale
Job Insecurity	(De Witte, 2000)	4	1-5 Likert Scale
Employee-Customer Interaction Quality	(Bettencourt & Brown, 1997)	3	1-5 Likert Scale
Emotional Exhaustion	(Maslach & Jackson, 1981)	8	1-5 Frequency Scale
Organizational Support	(Eisenberger et al., 1986)	8	1-5 Likert Scale

### 3.5 Reliability Analysis

To ascertain the questionnaire's internal consistency, reliability tests were conducted. For each construct, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. Christmann and Van Aelst (2006) states that Cronbach's alpha is the most trustworthy measure of scale reliability. The internal consistency statistics in Table 1 illustrate that all four constructs possess Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7 indicate strong internal consistency. Job Insecurity also possesses an acceptable Cronbach's alpha of 0.708. Employee-Customer Interaction Quality has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.732,

indicating strong dependability. Emotional exhaustion has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.787, indicating strong reliability. With an outstanding Cronbach's alpha of 0.859, Organizational Support has the best reliability.

### 3.6 Control Variables

To investigate how demographics, affect job insecurity (JI), regression analysis was used. Age did not substantially correlate with JI, according to the results ( $b = 0.047, p = 0.602$ ). Similarly, there was no significant relationship between gender ( $b = 0.130, p = 0.665$ ) and organization type ( $b = -0.091, p = 0.761$ ). Nonetheless, there was a significant positive association found between education level and JI ( $b = -0.586, p = 0.004$ ), indicating that greater job insecurity is associated with low education levels. JI was negatively associated with job experience ( $b = -0.322, p = 0.026$ ) such that higher job experience is related to lower job insecurity. Therefore, education level and experience in a job were treated as control variables in later analyses because they have the ability to affect JI.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics and correlation coefficient for each study variable. The results showed job insecurity is negatively associated with employee-customer interaction quality, while positively associated with emotional exhaustion, supporting H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>. The results exhibited emotional exhaustion is negatively associated with employee-customer interaction quality, proving H<sub>3</sub>.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Job Insecurity	2.73	0.67	1	-0.349**	0.195**	-0.044
2. Employee-Customer Interaction Quality	3.86	0.88		1	-0.193**	0.376**
3. Emotional Exhaustion	2.81	0.75			1	-0.249*
4. Organizational Support	3.37	0.71				1

Note. \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < 0.05$  (2-tailed); N = 330

### 4.2 Mediation Regression Analysis

PROCESS macro Model 4 and 1 were used for mediation and moderated analysis respectively in order to test the hypotheses. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Results of Moderated Regression Analysis using PROCESS Macro**

Outcome: ECIQ	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
<b>Mediation (JI→EE→ECIQ)</b>						
Total Effects	0.181	0.071	2.543	<b>0.000</b>	0.182	0.460
Direct Effects	0.401	0.082	4.890	<b>0.000</b>	0.097	0.435
Indirect Effects	-0.220	0.054	-4.401	<b>0.009</b>	-0.355	-0.146

Note: Sample Size = 330, Bootstrapped Samples = 10,000, CI = 95%; JI = Job Insecurity; EE = Emotional Exhaustion; ECIQ = Employee-Customer Interaction Quality.

Table 3 displays the results indirect effects, the mediation analysis indicated significant total effects on Employee-Customer Interaction Quality. When emotional exhaustion (EE) was added as mediator, the direct effect of JI on ECIQ remained significant. Moreover, the indirect effect of JI on ECIQ through EE was significant, implying partial mediation. Hence, H<sub>4</sub> was supported.

### 4.3 Conditional Effects Analysis

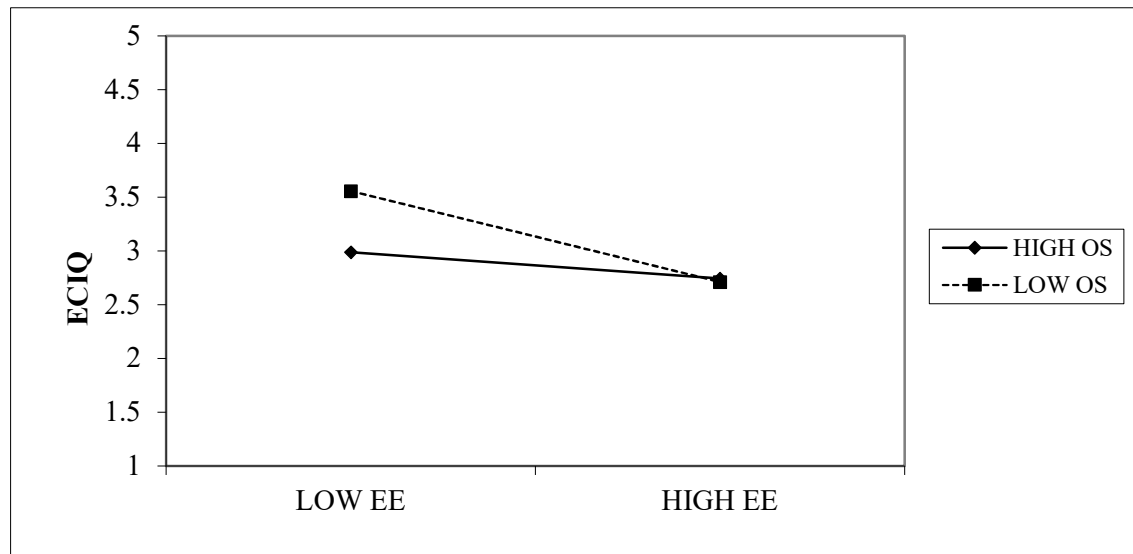
Moderation results shows that emotional exhaustion negatively predict ECIQ, whereas OS positively predict ESIQ (Table 4). Interaction term showed OS moderated the relationship between EE and ECIQ, that organizational support buffer the effects of emotional exhaustion on ECIQ (see Figure. 2), supported H<sub>5</sub>. The negative association between emotional exhaustion and interaction quality is stronger at low organizational support and becomes weak/non-significant at high organizational support, indicating a buffering effect.

**Table 4. Interaction & Conditional Effects**

	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
<b>Moderation Analysis: EE × OS → ECIQ</b>						
Constant	3.806	0.047	80.140	0.000	3.713	3.900
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	-0.153	0.043	-3.560	0.004	-0.238	-0.068
Organizational Support (OS)	0.412	0.070	5.884	0.000	0.275	0.550
EE × OS	-0.109	0.048	3.265	0.004	-0.255	-0.063
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.1651; F(3,326) = 21.46; p < .001; ΔR <sup>2</sup> due to interaction = 0.0285; F = 10.658; p < .01						
<b>Conditional effect on values of Moderators</b>						
Low (-1 SD: 2.66)	-0.266	0.062	-4.293	0.000	-0.388	-0.144
Mean (3.37)	-0.153	0.043	-3.560	0.000	-0.238	-0.068
High (+1 SD: 4.08)	-0.041	0.057	-0.706	0.480	-0.154	0.072

Note. LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Interval and ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Interval

To better understand the moderation effects, conditional effects were analyzed at different levels of organizational support. Simple slope analysis reveals that emotional exhaustion has the strongest negative effect on interaction quality when organizational support is low ( $b = -0.266, p < .001$ ), a weaker negative effect at mean support ( $b = -0.154, p < .001$ ), and a non-significant effect when support is high ( $b = -0.041, p = .48$ ). Hence, established H<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure 2.** Interaction Plot

### 4.4 Key Findings

The key findings are summarized below:

- JI significantly decrease the interactional quality of employee-customer.

- JI cause high anxiety and stress in employee behavior and increase emotional exhaustion.
- EE significantly reduces employee-customer interaction quality.
- EE partially mediates the JI & ECIQ, job insecurity influences emotional exhaustion which translates into deteriorating ECIQ.
- Organizational support (OS) significantly improves ECIQ.
- OS moderates the relationship between EE and ECIQ (buffering effect).
- The negative effect of EE is stronger on ECIQ when OS is low. At average OS, EE still harms ECIQ but less strongly.
- The overall model is statistically significant and explains meaningful variance in ECIQ.

**Table 5: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results**

	Predicted Relationship	Result
H1	Job insecurity will be negatively correlated to quality of employee-customer interactions.	Supported
H2	Job insecurity will be positively correlated to emotional exhaustion.	Supported
H3	Emotional exhaustion will be negatively correlated to the quality of employee-customer interactions.	Supported
H4	Emotional exhaustion mediates the negative relationship between job insecurity and quality of employee-customer interactions.	Partially Supported
H5	Organizational support will moderate the relationship between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion such that this relationship will be weaker such when organizational support is high.	Supported
H6	Organizational support will moderate the indirect relationship between job insecurity and employee-customer interaction quality through emotional exhaustion.	Supported

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Key Findings Interpretation

This study reveals several important insights into the connections between organizational support, employee-customer interaction quality, emotional weariness, and job insecurity in the context of Pakistan's service industry. Job Insecurity and Emotional weariness: According to the Conservation of Resources hypothesis, there is a strong positive correlation between job insecurity and emotional weariness that job insecurity threatens employees' valued resources, leading to stress and emotional exhaustion. This finding extends previous studies and confirms that in the Pakistani service sector, job insecurity contributes significantly to emotional strain among employees (Qu et al., 2025; Sverke et al., 2002).

**Employee-Customer Interaction Quality:** The significant association between job insecurity and employee-customer interaction quality supports the findings by Aguiar-Quintana et al. (2020) for Pakistani service employees to compartmentalize their job insecurity issues to ensure service quality. The high positive relationship between job insecurity and employee-customer interaction quality highlights the significance of supportive organizational settings towards service quality.

**Demographic Variables:** The strong negative correlation between level of education and job insecurity, and the negative correlation between job experience and job insecurity, are useful to consider in an understanding of patterns of vulnerability. Less educated staff may face higher job insecurity as a consequence of increased expectations or sensitization to the market environment, whereas experience seems to act as a guarantor of security, perhaps through acquired competencies and organizational familiarity.

**Organizational Support as a Moderator.** According to expectations, organizational support buffered the adverse relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee-customer interaction quality. This result extends the situations with high job insecurity, organizational

support could release pressure on employees' emotional health. Workers who get high organizational support may sense greater duty to pay back through performance despite job insecurity and thus possibly add more to their emotional load (Bakker et al., 2007; Zumrah & Boyle, 2015). This supports the common supposition that organizational support always acts against stressors and illustrates the intricate interplay in labor relationships.

### **5.2 Theoretical Implications**

The results generalize Conservation of Resources theory by indicating that job insecurity threaten the cognitive and emotional resources pool of employees, thereby increasing strain (stress-strain). Employee further prevent resource loss and undermines interactional quality of employee-customer. This work contributes to JD-R (Job Demands-Resources) paradigm by emphasizing the multifaceted nature of organizational support, which supports against job demands. The novel moderating effect goes as common presuppositions regarding resource buffering effects and implies the JD-R model reflects cultural and contextual variables that shape the functionality of resources in various settings. Moreover, the research makes theoretical contributions to service management by showing employee-customer interaction quality is durable in light of unstable employment and by implying that service behavior may be sustained through professional norms or another mechanism even when workers experience personal employment insecurity.

### **5.3 Practical Implications**

Based on this study, there are several practical implications for service firms, namely:

**Transparent Communication:** Organizations must design open communication strategies pertaining to job security, particularly in conditions of organizational change or economic decline. Transparent communication may inform strategies for managing employee reactions to job insecurity and even reduce the associated emotional exhaustion.

**Context-Sensitive Support Programs:** The finding that organizational support sometimes strengthens the job insecurity-emotional exhaustion relationship suggests that support programs need to be carefully designed. Rather than offering blanket support programs, organizations need to implement context-sensitive programs that consider the specific situation of job insecurity and provide resources relevant to that situation without placing pressure on employees.

**Experience Valuation:** The inverse correlation between job experience and job insecurity suggests that organizations should acknowledge and value the experience of employees. The adoption of mentoring programs, experience milestone celebratory events, and career paths where longevity is rewarded might lower job insecurity, particularly among lower-level employees.

**Education-Oriented Interventions:** There being a positive relationship between the level of education and job insecurity, organizations should develop focused interventions for highly educated employees. They may include clearly communicating growth prospects, engaging them in strategic initiatives, and ensuring their full utilization of skills to deal with potential issues regarding job security.

**Customer Service Training:** Employee-customer interaction quality resilience implies that service training initiatives are successful even under job insecurity situations. Firms need to continue investing in customer service training while tackling the hidden issues of job insecurity to ensure service quality and employee welfare.

### **5.4 Implications for Practice**

Service sector organizations should consider several strategies based on these findings:

- Employ proactive communication regarding employment security: Ongoing, open communication regarding organizational stability and opportunities for employment may mitigate perceptions of job insecurity.
- Design context-sensitive support programs: Instead of generic support programs, design specific interventions that tackle specific job insecurity issues without placing added stress on workers.
- Track employee well-being metrics consistently: Put systems in place to monitor emotional exhaustion and other well-being measures to detect early warning signs and take action promptly.
- Train supervisors to identify and handle emotional exhaustion: Prepare managers with competencies to spot symptoms of emotional exhaustion and offer proper assistance.
- Cultivate career paths that honor education and experience: Design growth opportunities that tap into the educational backgrounds of employees and respect the merit of experience.

### 5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite its contribution, this study has many drawbacks. The cross-sectional design is not as strong for causal inferences, and, additionally, the self-report measures may be biased. The sample taken from only one geographical location could limit generalizability, and a particular emphasis on service industries might not generalize to the whole service industry.

Future studies should overcome these limitations by using:

*Longitudinal designs* to determine causality and to see how these relations change over time, especially when periods of job security change.

*Data collection from multiple sources.* integration of the ratings by supervisors, customers, and objective measures of performance in order to avoid common method bias.

*Investigation into the underlying mechanisms.* Therefore, viewing the psychological mechanisms whereby organizational support would increase rather than buffer the consequences of job insecurity.

*Cross-cultural comparisons.* The study of how these associations work across cultures contributes a lot to understanding universal patterns and culture contingencies.

*Intervention studies.* The studies assessing certain kinds of interventions that have been carried out to reduce job insecurity and emotional exhaustion in order to determine whether they are effective in practice.

*Customer outcome analysis.* Measurement of customer satisfaction and loyalty directly in order to identify the relationship between the quality of employee-customer interaction and organizational performance.

### 5.6 Conclusion

This research aimed to glean the manner in which job insecurity affects the emotional and service-related performance among the employees in the service sector in Pakistan. The framework was developed using the Conservation of Resources Theory alongside the Job Demands-Resources Model, suggesting the critical role played by organizational support as a resource which doesn't act as a safeguard under all circumstances.

With a quantitative, survey research method, data was collected from a total of 330 service sector employees in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, working in a variety of service organizations such as restaurants, retail shops, marketing companies, and research organizations, keeping an equal proportion of both genders.

This result supports and reinforces the wider literature interpretation used throughout this manuscript that job insecurity is a chronic stress source that precipitates resource loss and accumulates exhaustion levels that are especially important for roles with a considerable amount of client contact/service employment. Secondly, the data regarding the provision of the

service the dimension of employee/customer interaction quality was more complex than suggested in the 'job insecurity degrades the service' hypothesis. Overall, the patterns here suggest that while job insecurity might be capable of having an inherently detrimental impact on the level of interaction quality, the presentation of service behavior might be capable of having elements of resilience in practice potentially driven by the influence of professional norms in the service environment or the presence of fear-induced performance maintenance. Notably, examining conditional effects revealed that organizational support moderated and significantly enhanced interaction quality at lower and mean levels of organizational support, although becoming non-significant at high levels of organizational support.

Meanwhile, the text's discussion calls attention to another seemingly contrary finding of the study, that support in the workplace enhanced (instead of diminishing) the link between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion, suggesting that such support in job insecure conditions may involve 'hidden costs' in terms of increased feelings of obligation. The implications of this study are of both practical and theoretical significance. Theoretical implications: This study has added relevance to JD-R theory by proposing that organizational support may consist of multiple aspects and its influence may change according to the manner in which it is interpreted by employees in high-insecure contexts.

It also advances resource-based reasoning to the extent that it finds that resource provision may increase the strength of reactions to resource threats under certain conditions, an interpretation that challenges the call to move towards more nuanced theorizing on exactly why and how resources are helpful versus harmful to employees. Finally, the research makes a contribution to the field of service management insofar as it suggests that the quality of employee-customer interaction may remain relatively resilient in the face of employment insecurity, potentially underlining the unique dynamics associated with frontline service work. In essence, the paper puts forward the argument that service organizations must consider the risk to employee well-being posed by the risk of JI. Specifically, the paper advocates proactive communication on the topic of employment security, the development of programs targeted to the individual organizational context (and not across-the-board approaches), as well as monitoring well-being outcomes like emotional exhaustion.

It also points out the importance of training supervisors to identify symptoms of burnout, designing professional advancement opportunities which take into account education and experience, and continuing customer service training as a way to ensure service standards are upheld, though underlying insecurities remain. Nevertheless, the manuscript takes care to state important limitations. Being cross-sectional makes the study non-causal, there are dangers of biases with self-reporting methods, and the results are not very generalizable with the study population selected on convenience sampling within one geographical location. These restrictions pose important challenges and opportunities. This paper demands longitudinal studies, multiple sources of data (such as supervisors and customers), greater insight into the underlying processes that explain why support could exacerbate strain under insecurity, cross-cultural studies, and experimentation, including what truly reduces feelings of insecurity and exhaustion.

It also calls attention to a future-oriented agenda that links variables from the domain of employees and organizations to customer- and market-facing outcome variables (such as brand representation conduct, online marketing competence, AI/GenAI readiness, AI self-efficacy, and marketing analytics expertise). In summary, the study promotes a well-rounded message: job insecurity is indeed an important predictor of emotional exhaustion, and organizational support, although a positive determinant of service function, presents a degree of complexity in insecure environments, potentially mitigating the service experience, while aggravating emotional strain. For service organizations in Pakistan, it means that the challenge is not only to "increase support," but to ensure support while addressing uncertainty without adding more

pressures, and to deal with insecurity in work as a human problem and a performance issue. If properly considered, such strategies may allow employees' well-being and quality service interactions to remain protected.

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### **Data Availability Statement**

The data is available from the corresponding author upon responsible request.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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