

Facing Job Uncertainties: The Lived Experiences and Challenges Encountered by Government Contractual Workers

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Date received: June 29, 2024

Date revised: July 10, 2024

Date accepted: July 16, 2024

Originality: 91%

Grammarly Score: 99%

Similarity: 9%

Recommended citation:

Abanto, R., Marcelino, A.R., Oyao, R. (2024). Facing job uncertainties: the lived experiences and challenges encountered by government contractual workers. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 2(8), 512-521. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2024.0322>

Abstract. Contractualization remains a contentious issue, particularly in the Philippines, where "Endo" (end of contract) refers to short-term employment. This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to investigate the challenges faced by job-order employees in a Philippine government agency. The study employed a descriptive-phenomenological research design. Eleven individuals employed under job order arrangements participated in semi-structured key informant interviews (KII). The collected data were analyzed using Colaizzi's approach. The results revealed the following themes regarding their challenges: insecurities, pressures, disincentives; work commitment; advancement; and optimism for coping mechanisms. Despite the challenges of job-order employment, the informants managed to perform their assigned services effectively. Additionally, they expressed a desire to become regular government employees. The study recommends that management improve job characteristics and the work environment through clear communication to increase satisfaction and retention. Employees should enhance their qualifications by obtaining master's degrees, specialized training, and attending seminars to improve job stability and prospects for permanent employment. Management should establish a clear path from temporary to permanent roles and implement a fair contract renewal process to promote stability and long-term commitment, reduce social comparison, and increase workplace productivity.

Keywords: Contractual worker; Government worker; Public administration; Job uncertainties; Job order employees; Phenomenology; Philippines.

1.0 Introduction

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) conducted a study in 2023 that revealed a population of approximately 832,812 (29.68%) individuals classified as short-term or seasonal employees and those engaged in unpaid family work, marking a 29.71 percent increase from 2022. According to the Presidential Communications Office (2024), with the release of CSC-COA-DBM JC No. 1, s. 2017, the number of COS and JO employees in the government has grown. In Philippine government agencies such as Pag-IBIG Fund, there is evidence of high turnover of job order workers who resigned from the agency and transferred to other government agencies for greener pastures as regular employees. One of the main reasons they resigned from the fund was a limited *Plantilla* or no available regular position. This issue has created paralysis in the totality of the branch operations if the job orders employees to resign from their duties in office.

The incidence of precarious employment among job order personnel is rising within the country and in other nearby countries. The prevalence of labor-management disputes, or the absence of employer-employee ties, is a pervasive concern in the public sector. According to Abelido's (2017) research, neighboring countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) also engage in contextualization. Indonesia exhibits a substantial proportion of informal employment, with around 65% of its workforce engaged in such arrangements. Similarly, Malaysia demonstrates a notable prevalence of informal employment, accounting for approximately 28% of its labor force. On the other hand, Thailand experiences a significantly higher proportion of informal employment, with approximately 63% of its workforce engaged in such arrangements. Lastly, Vietnam showcases a moderate prevalence of informal employment, with approximately 42% of its labor force involved in such employment arrangements. According to the statistics, a significant proportion of individuals employed in the government sector in the Philippines is approximately 35%, which accounts for one in every three people.

As per the 1993 Guidelines on Appointments and Other Personnel Actions issued by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the term "job order" (JO) pertains to a form of employment that encompasses a fixed sum of work or services, such as janitorial, security, or consultancy services. It is important to note that a job order does not establish an employer-employee relationship. Specifically, a job order typically assigns "piece work" or intermittent job assignments for a brief period not exceeding six months (CSC, 1993). Such contracts do not classify workers as government employees, thereby disqualifying them from government employee benefits like the personnel economic relief allowance (PERA), cost of living allowance (COLA), and representation and transportation allowance (RATA). These benefits are additional monetary compensation provided on top of the monthly salary of government employees (CSC 1993). The criteria further stipulate that a contract of this nature, unlike permanent employment, does not necessitate clearance from the CSC. In 1998, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) released Revised Omnibus Rules on Appointments and Other Personnel Actions, which incorporated regulations about work-order employment that were fundamentally comparable to those previously established. The government's definitions of contractual employment are noteworthy and summarized as follows: A contractual employee undertakes a specific task or activity for a limited duration, typically not exceeding one year (CSC 1998).

Regarding the depiction of lump sum services or "piece work," it is important to note that workers engaged through individual job orders (JOs) perform various services, including general support, administrative, technical, and even supervisory and managerial tasks. Regular employees perform similar tasks, but it is crucial to note that the Civil Service Commission (CSC) mandates the submission of service contracts to the relevant CSC regional office for review. This review process aims to guarantee that the contracts do not contain certain provisions, as delineated by the CSC in 2002.

The laws delineate the parameters for the purported "autonomy" of work-order employees, namely those who are self-employed. The primary focus is highlighting the distinction between contractual workers and permanent employees of a government agency, specifically in terms of the nature and duration of their services. Contractual workers are typically engaged to provide lump-sum services for a specified period, which differs from the tasks performed by permanent employees and those crucial to the government agency's functioning. The primary determinant for contract fulfillment would be completing the tasks mandated within the designated timeframe. Regrettably, this work arrangement was susceptible to varying interpretations, resulting in hiring practices that facilitated the emergence of controversial working circumstances.

Using contractual labor arrangements to provide public services has increased the number of contractual workers within the public sector. The researchers widely acknowledge the job order employee as a contractual work arrangement where individuals meet the requirements for permanent employment but lack the corresponding rights associated with permanent employment. The absence of a conventional employment arrangement that protects workers from a purely market-driven system is known as job insecurity. Precarious employment encompasses several work arrangements, such as part-time employment, temporary employment, dependent self-employment, and subcontracted work (Wilson, 2018). Job insecurity is linked to various factors, including but not limited to flexible working hours, short-term contracts, limited social protection, and inadequate compensation (Rubery, 2018).

In the interim, it is crucial to consider a more all-encompassing understanding of job anxieties, specifically referring to the lack of any form of employment security as advocated by proponents of government work arrangements. The author identifies seven key dimensions of security in the labor market. These dimensions include 1) labor market security, which refers to the availability of long-term, full-time employment opportunities; 2) job security, which entails protection against discriminatory recruitment and dismissal practices, as well as the regulation of employment practices; 3) work security, which encompasses the existence of career advancement prospects; 4) occupational safety, which pertains to the health and safety conditions in the workplace; 5) reproductive skills security, which involves access to training opportunities and the development of skills; 6) employment security, which encompasses adequate wages, guaranteed benefits, and social protection; and 7) political security, as discussed by Deeming (2013). The concept of citizenship in the workplace emphasizes the ability of employees to exercise their civil, political, and social rights while engaged in their professional duties. This aspect encompasses an additional component inherent within a conventional employment arrangement, namely, a personal life beyond the confines of work. Individuals separate their professional responsibilities from their non-work-related commitments (Rubery, 2018).

In addition to welfare and social safety, labor security encompasses other elements that play a significant role in shaping employees' feelings of identity and belonging and their entitlement to freedom of expression, representation, and economic fairness (Fudge, 2010). However, it is important to note that contractual employment can result in a diminished sense of identification, affiliation, and moral and behavioral dedication among job-order employees, creating a division between them and their regular colleagues. This division ultimately diminishes the perceived worth and impact of their work.

The issue of contractual employment has been a significant focal point in the Philippine labor market, predating the official recognition of the term "contractual" in 1974 by Presidential Decree No. 442, also known as the Labor Code. The prevalence of contracting out has increased significantly to the point where it is considered commonplace. The Labor Code has undergone revisions, now distinguishing between illegal and permissible labor contracting activities. Over time, there has been a persistent presence of discontent and disillusionment about the well-being of Filipino laborers, which has perpetuated the ongoing discussion and analysis around contractual employment within the realm of politics.

As a former job order employee, a researcher developed a keen interest in exploring this phenomenon. The researcher, intrigued by the behavior of job order personnel and eager to gain insights through the scientific method, deemed this phenomenon worthy of exploration. Based on experience, how many job order personnel have worked in the Pag-IBIG Fund for many years without resigning yet have actively sought a permanent position for several years? The researcher believes that this phenomenon presents a challenge for job order personnel in the Pag-IBIG Fund, as they lack job security, employer-employee relationships, bonuses, and leave credits. Furthermore, the management does not prioritize the growing number of job-order employees in the fund. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge, both from the perspective of the job applicant and as an individual, by offering insights into this phenomenon. The primary objective of this research was to examine the difficulties, adaptive strategies, and goals experienced by job-order employees inside the Pag-IBIG Fund organization. The researcher also emphasized their contribution to the broader agency. This study's findings contributed to understanding job order personnel's experiences in the Pag-IBIG Fund and those in other government agencies, particularly those with similar expectations for job order personnel.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The researcher utilized a qualitative phenomenological research approach. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach concerned with the examination and analysis of human behavior. The text cites Creswell (2007) and Van Manen (1997) extensively. The researcher employed the descriptive phenomenology approach to investigate the behavior of work order personnel regarding job retention. According to Husserl's philosophical framework, the descriptive phenomenological method involved meticulously examining lived experiences. Once the researcher collected the primary data, he conducted a comprehensive analysis using the perspective of phenomenological psychological reduction (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). Giorgi (2007) preferred Heidegger's and Husserl's phenomenological methods due to their comprehensive approach, which applies to various objects. Giorgi

emphasized that how an object manifests itself should be the foundation for investigative procedures (pp. 73–73). This study primarily investigated the behavioral patterns employees employed under job-order arrangements exhibited. Researchers specifically examined the obstacles individuals face and explored their corresponding coping techniques. Adopting a descriptive phenomenological approach, the primary objective of his study was to investigate the behavior of job-order people and examine their job retention strategies within the context of their work environment. To truly understand these people and how they handle their jobs, he had to avoid giving his interpretations. The researcher actively listened to gather firsthand accounts, enabling me to construct a meticulous depiction of the phenomenon. The researcher endeavored to adhere to Husserl's proposition of perceiving things in their unadulterated state (Shosha, 2012).

2.2 Research Locale

As of March 2024, the Pag-IBIG Fund-Davao had approximately 200 non-regular employees. The researcher conducted the study exclusively at Pag-IBIG Fund-Davao. This study focused on the contractual employees' lived experiences and challenges.

2.3 Research Participants

The researcher ensured that the informants selected for this study met the predetermined criteria. The criterion encompassed the subsequent elements: (a) The informants should consist of job order personnel currently employed at Pag-IBIG Fund. (b) The informants should fall under the category of "contractual workers," indicating their continued presence in the workplace to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in their tasks. (c) Not all informants have attained regular employee status for a period ranging from 1 year to 10 years. The researcher restricted the scope of inclusion to 10 years for job order employees in the Fund, as it is possible that job order employees may have transitioned into regular employment status beyond this timeframe. After one year of being a job order employee, the researcher believed he had already encountered challenges from the agency, regular employees, and clients. Eleven individuals employed under job orders, consisting of three males and nine females, could partake in the Key Informant Interviews (KII). The numerical value fell within the specified range, as proposed by Morse (1994). To facilitate the recruitment of informants, the researcher sought assistance from the branch head and supervisor to obtain their valuable insights and recommendations. The researcher asked if they could let him interview the job order personnel in a purposeful, convenient sampling.

After obtaining the identities of the job order personnel, the researcher proceeded to compose letters addressed to them, in which he requested their active participation. The researcher also conducted telephone inquiries to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study. After receiving affirmative feedback, he proceeded to schedule the interview. This study employed purposive sampling because it aligned with the research objectives and addressed the challenges of recruiting suitable informants. This sampling strategy facilitated identifying and selecting informants with relevant expertise in the issue under investigation, ensuring credible and reliable information (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The interviewees used for this study were individuals employed as job order personnel at Pag-IBIG Fund Davao.

2.4 Research Instrument

The responses from key informant interviews (KII) served as the primary data sources for this study. Kumar (1989) asserts that the advantage of requiring only a small number of participants to gather information about the phenomenon under investigation typically favors the selection of key informant interviewers (KII). The limited number of options that met the established criteria for inclusion led to the decision to employ this technique. The interview followed a semi-structured format, employing a set of predetermined interview guide questions. The researcher sought consent from the participants to employ social media platforms such as Facebook Messenger to conduct interviews and face-to-face conversations while adhering to social distancing guidelines. To establish a comfortable atmosphere for the informants, the researcher conducted the interview conversationally. Van Manen (1997) utilized the interview to establish a conversational rapport with the informant, gather material for elucidating the phenomenon's significance, and establish a methodological approach. The initial interview revealed that the interviewee, a job order staff member, had spent over four years in the organization. The researcher followed Creswell's (2007) data collection cycle during the data collection process. Initially, the researcher identified the informants who met the predetermined inclusion criteria through purposive sampling. Therefore, the researcher utilized purposive, convenient sampling. Furthermore, the researcher established a

rapport with the participants before the formal interview began. The researcher allowed them to use their native tongue. Subsequently, the researcher collected data through key informant interviews. The researcher determined the interview venue by utilizing various communication platforms, including Facebook Messenger, telephone conversations, and in-person interactions that adhered to social distancing protocols. The researcher asked them questions that aligned with the study's primary objectives. The researcher conducted the interview using the common dialects of the informants, Cebuano, English, and Tagalog, and asked the following three research questions: (a) What are the job-order personnel's difficulties in job retention? (b) What are their coping mechanisms? What are the job-order employee's work efficiency and efficacy goals?

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

While examining the data, we adhered to Colaizzi's (1978) methodology. According to Shosha (2012, p. 33), Colaizzi's technique consists of seven distinct steps:

- Step 1: Review each transcript thoroughly multiple times to comprehensively understand its overall content.
- Step 2: Extract noteworthy statements from each transcript relevant to the investigated topic. Document the aforementioned statements on a separate sheet, indicating the corresponding page and line numbers.
- Step 3: These expressions of significance should inform the formulation of meanings.
- Step 4: You should organize the ascribed significance into categories, clusters of themes, and individual themes.
- Step 5: A comprehensive depiction of the phenomenon under investigation should incorporate the study's findings.
- Step 6: It is necessary to provide a comprehensive description of the underlying structure of the phenomenon.
- Step 7: Finally, it is imperative to seek validation of the research participants' findings to establish a comparison between the descriptive data obtained and their personal experiences.

First, the researcher engaged in multiple readings of the transcripts to comprehensively comprehend the responses provided by the informants. The researcher approached this task in an analytical manner to develop a personal comprehension of the actual response. However, before that, the researcher had previously participated in informal conversations following each interview he conducted. Nevertheless, the researcher meticulously documented these dialogues or exchanges since he deemed it crucial to prioritize the authentic reactions of the individuals involved as the primary dataset for subsequent analysis and interpretation.

Second, when analyzing the transcript, the researcher noticed noteworthy statements. The researcher contributed to this stage by autonomously identifying noteworthy statements from the transcribed data or transcripts. The researcher then shared the results of his analysis, compiling the significant statements he found. The researcher organized these statements into a tabular format, creating three columns. The initial column comprised the statements the researcher had identified as important. The second column contained the pseudonym assigned to each statement and its matching transcript, page number, and line numbers. The researcher allocated the third column for the subsequent stage. Next, the researcher proceeded to articulate the significance of each sentence. The researcher analyzed by scrutinizing the notable statement, the direct answer, and elucidating its intended significance. Given the potential for outsiders to overlook the intended significance, especially with interviews conducted in the native language, the researcher deemed it vital to provide meaning.

The researcher ensured that the statements provided by the informants accurately reflected their intended meaning, thus establishing a definitive interpretation. The researcher inserted these definitions into the third column of our initial table. The researcher then identified the theme clusters and emergent themes by providing defined meanings. The researcher generated the second and third tables to facilitate the analysis process. The researcher organized the formed meanings into categories and divided them into clusters based on thematic similarities. To clarify, the researcher organized the constructed interpretations into distinct classifications corresponding to a distinctive arrangement of clusters of motifs (Shosha, 2012, p. 35). The researcher analyzed and arranged the cluster themes according to their established meanings, resulting in a unique structure or grouping of meanings. This process led to the creation of topic clusters. The second table comprised the derived significance obtained from the third column of the initial table, together with the thematic clusters. After identifying the topic clusters, the researcher constructed an additional table to facilitate further analysis. The third table included

clusters of themes and emergent topics. The researcher analyzed the cluster of topics to derive the emerging themes and then organized them into a distinct construct.

Fifth, the researcher presented the results, focusing on the emergent themes and comprehensively describing the phenomenon. This study analyzes the obstacles, coping methods, and goals experienced by job-order employees in the Philippine Government, focusing on those employed by the Pag-IBIG Fund. By delving into these individuals' lives, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of their professional circumstances. After completing the findings, the researcher sought the expertise of a knowledgeable individual to conduct a thorough assessment and confirm the comprehensiveness of the phenomenon's description. Additionally, the researcher examined the underlying framework of the findings, specifically focusing on the presence of recurrent or redundant motifs. The researcher eliminated certain motifs during the analysis due to their redundancy. After completing this procedure, the researcher ultimately identified three themes about obstacles, three topics concerning coping methods, and two themes related to goals. Finally, the researcher requested that the informants authenticate their findings to ascertain whether they accurately depicted their experiences. The researcher obtained confirmation of the findings by utilizing a social media platform, specifically Facebook Chat.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Contacting job-order employees and extending an invitation to participate in his study presented moderate difficulty. Except for a small number of coworkers, the entirety of his participant pool consists of individuals familiar with him. Given that he conducted most of his data collection online, primarily through social media platforms, and conducted face-to-face interviews with adherence to social distancing measures, the researcher anticipated encountering challenges in establishing trust, ensuring confidentiality, building rapport, and securing participants' commitment to responding to his inquiries, particularly given their demanding work schedules. The researcher encountered difficulty distinguishing between persistence and obtrusion when engaging in follow-up interactions. Observations reveal that some individuals have shown reluctance to share additional details, citing concerns about potential harm to their employment status, especially given their lack of job stability. Considering these considerations, the researcher endeavored to carefully organize and articulate the discussions presented in this paper about the working circumstances and experiences of the participants to avoid any potential harm that may arise from disseminating this information.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Challenges for Job Order Employees in the Pag-IBIG Fund

The researcher initially focused on the challenges faced by the informants. After the interviews concluded, the researcher thoroughly analyzed the collected data, identifying three prominent themes. These factors encompassed feelings of self-doubt, external expectations, and negative influences that discouraged motivation.

Insecurities

One of the shared experiences among job-order employees was the feeling of not having job security. Employees expressed worries about the contract agreement, their employment status, and the absence of regularization guarantees constraints' situations. For a job-order employee, the absence of an employer-employee relationship can lead to envy towards the regular employee's status and a loss of confidence in completing assigned tasks. Jon, a 28-year-old on a job order for five years, expressed her feelings to her peers.

"We lose the employee-employer relationship when we are job-order employees. We should receive the same benefits as regular employees. Our jobs do not provide any security. This is nerve-wracking. How long would it take for us to stay here? Five years, ten years, or more? What saddened me was that we renewed our contract every six months." (T8, P1, L15-18)

According to the informants' accounts, individuals, particularly job-order employees, may feel that their tenure at the Fund lacks security, potentially limiting their opportunities to pursue career advancement in another government agency. They believe other regular employees view them as mere "job-order employees," susceptible to quick replacement and termination.

Pressures

Job Order employees looked to themselves as front-liners who covered the highest number in the fund. However, regular employees also abuse job orders to complete their pending tasks.

"This presents a significant challenge as I struggle to complete my tasks within the allotted time. My regular employees have transferred a significant portion of their workload to me. I even jeopardized my first job. I do not have any choice. Comply with the instructions." (T6, P2, L38–40)

One job-order employee narrated her experience in the office. She occasionally discriminated against other employees, leading to a special suspension of work that other co-employees favored, which resulted in plans for turnover.

Disincentives

A job order is also part of the fund's success and failure. If the organization achieves its target, every agency member should have a shared blessing. However, job-order employees received nothing from management as a token of appreciation.

"Even if we could hit the annual performance target, luckily, regular employees would enjoy the incentive bonus more. Unfortunately, we do not receive anything but thank you." (T3, P2, L27–28)

Based on their experiences, job-order employees often feel jealous of the incentives that regular employees receive. They may be uncertain about the organization's plans to hire them as permanent employees in the fund, which could potentially impact their employment status, particularly when it comes to benefits and incentives.

3.2 Coping Mechanisms for Job Order Employees

The researcher inquired about the informants' strategies for managing the various obstacles they encountered. The researcher used Colaizzi's method to analyze all their responses and identified three emerging themes: work commitment, optimism, and advancement.

Work Commitment

They have demonstrated commendable and responsive actions in their assigned roles as job-order employees. This inspires and commits them to exceeding expectations, establishing goals, and delivering public service to clients.

"Firstly, I must perform my duties efficiently by office procedures. In other words, you must be effective in your work. What additional steps can I take to achieve the office target in such a situation? I would be more responsible for my assigned tasks. I must grow over time." (T7, P2, L63–65)

On the other hand, job-order employees are also committed to showing how flexible they are with the assignment. Even human resource management handles the job-order employee well, making them more capable in their jobs.

"In our assigned jobs, we get to deal with different people. What I appreciate about our human resource management is their adept handling of us. This motivates me because I have learned much from them." (T4, P1, L12–14)

After sharing all their coping mechanisms, job-order employees improved their performance by demonstrating a stronger commitment to their work. They pledged to perform their duties to the best of their abilities every day.

Advancement

Job Order employees also coped with their challenges by obtaining master's degrees to secure work at the office. They stayed longer in the agency, and their bosses encouraged them to pursue higher education.

"For me, it is beneficial to invest in a master's degree so that we can secure our work in the office. You know what I mean. In one day, we will all be regular employees. We stayed here longer, but our boss suggested that we gain our post-graduate degree while we were still young." (T1, P1, L28–31)

According to their experiences, job-order employees would be more advanced and skilled if they received proper training to further their careers.

Optimism

Job-order employees are also hopeful about achieving their dream of tenure security. This is why they rely on management decisions to fulfill their promise of regularization. Job-order employees also wait for the management to quickly absorb them, ensuring the security of their current jobs.

"In the simplest ways, I always keep my spirit high and maintain my composure, and then I am hopeful every day if they make their plans to absorb us. I diligently perform my duties in the office." (T3, P2, L32–33)

According to their experiences, opening to possibilities is one of their coping mechanisms. Being competitive and hopeful about their job status helps them cope with workplace competition.

3.3 Discussion

Conducting interviews with the informants proved to be a gratifying experience as a former job order researcher. Furthermore, it catalyzed his intellectual growth. The study recommended that management improve job characteristics and the work environment through clear communication to increase satisfaction and retention. Management should establish a clear path from temporary to permanent roles and use a fair contract renewal method to promote stability and long-term commitment, reducing social comparison and increasing workplace productivity. Employees should improve themselves by obtaining master's degrees, specialized training, and seminars that could improve job stability and the prospect of permanent employment.

The researcher gained valuable insights from their discourse, particularly regarding their strategies for managing various forms of stress. Additionally, their objectives provided insights into the importance of dedication and efficacy in their role as frontline workers. His experience working with task-order employees has undoubtedly provided him with valuable insights and knowledge, benefiting him personally and professionally as a public servant. Individuals' obstacles, coping methods, and objectives in job-order employment provide valuable insights for themselves, their coworkers, and society.

Insufficient efforts to investigate this problem within the nation have prompted this study to offer a limited understanding of job-order employees' lived experiences and goals. The lack of an employer-employee relationship posed significant challenges for the job-order employees, resulting in a less than satisfactory experience. The individuals in question have mentioned various challenges, including insecurity, external demands, and factors that discourage or demotivate them. Falco et al. (2008) found a significant correlation between temporary employment contracts and employees' perceptions of job security disadvantage and feelings of inequity and deprivation. The job order employees expressed concerns regarding the potential instability of their employment status if the management chooses not to renew their memorandum of agreement after six months.

The study's findings show that Pag-IBIG Fund engages job order employees under contracts with varying durations, from one to six months. As a result, these employees frequently compare themselves with other workers, particularly those holding regular employment positions. The job discontent experienced by job order employees in Pag-IBIG Fund regarding their job order contract can be attributed to the notion of social comparison, which involves comparing an individual's job position with that of others (Falco, 2008).

Both the private and public sectors in the Philippine environment have widely implemented the practice of contractualization. An employer and a worker establish a contractual agreement known as "short-term employment," where both parties mutually agree that the worker will work for a limited duration of approximately five months. This arrangement may involve exceptions to the worker's entitlements, such as job security, financial compensation, non-monetary perks, and social protection benefits.

Valuing employees is synonymous with valuing the organization. According to Beheshti Far (2012), employers must support their employees to achieve favorable outcomes within the firm. The government and non-

government sectors are expressing concern over the need for prompt action to improve and reform the employment situation of job-order employees (Chowdhury, 2011). The agency is believed to benefit from the commitment of job order employees to their assigned jobs. They would gain a strong foundation in work ethics, customer care, and the organization's mission and vision through master's degrees, training, and seminars.

The job-order employee advised other coworkers to be self-prepared and motivated. Work setting positively impacted employee retention and feedback, so the organization needed to appreciate the importance of a favorable working environment (Maulabakhsh, 2015). However, being self-prepared and motivated was an advantage to taking steps to make an employee more responsible and committed to their job assignment. Somehow, it would test their patience and loyalty while keeping them in the agency for many years. If the agency provided manpower development opportunities, such as training and seminars, and adequately cared for them to maintain their current positions, job-order employees would likely become more motivated.

4.0 Conclusion

In the Philippines, job-order employees remain a significant proportion of the labor force. Despite its increasing prevalence, management continues to overlook this group, treating them similarly to ordinary employees. This study highlights job-order employees' challenges, coping mechanisms, and aspirations. The findings describe the challenges, insecurities, pressures, and disincentives from the agency, clients, and other regular employees. Nevertheless, individuals rely on work dedication, career progression, and a positive outlook as their most effective strategies for managing challenges. Despite the hurdles posed by society, individuals persist in carrying out their designated jobs. Despite the challenges of being a job-order employee, these employees found a way to remain committed to their assigned jobs and saw the Pag-IBIG Fund as a valuable tool for their personal growth. They even advise other job-order employees to be self-prepared and motivated in their assigned tasks. The findings of this study may serve as a source of motivation for various government agencies, including the Pag-IBIG Fund, to prioritize the job characteristics, incentives and recognition, and training and development of job-order employees within their workplaces. Considering these findings, firms that engage in contractualization must ensure equitable treatment of their job-order employees and promptly transition them into permanent positions. The researcher anticipates a surge in interest in this study. The researcher expected the outcomes of this study to significantly contribute to initiatives and advancements aimed at improving employment arrangements and work-life balance for task-order employees, which could ultimately lead to their transition into permanent positions within the government sector shortly.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, are Doctor of Public Administration students at the University of Mindanao in Matina, Davao City.

Conception and Design: Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, developed the research topic and study framework, concentrating on the experiences and obstacles encountered by government contract workers. They also developed the study's methodology, research questions, and objectives.

Data Collection and Analysis: Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, gathered the information through interviews and surveys of Pag-IBIG Fund job order workers. They were responsible for assessing the obtained data, identifying significant themes, and interpreting the findings better to understand the participants' lived experiences and issues.

Writing and Manuscript Preparation: Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, wrote the introduction, literature review, methods, findings, and discussion parts. They used data to effectively express and justify the study's aims, conclusions, and implications.

Revision and Finalization: Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, read and edited the work based on comments from peers and advisers. They improved the arguments, guaranteed cohesion, and clarity, and finished the work before submission.

Overall Contribution: Rolando R. Abanto II, MPA, Anna Rose T. Marcelino, MPA and Roldan P. Oyao, MPA, contributed significantly to the manuscript's idea, design, analysis, writing, and revision. Their thorough engagement ensured that the study was high-quality and relevant to the subject of public administration and government contractors' experiences.

6.0 Funding

The study does not involve funding from the Pag-IBIG Fund or other agencies.

7.0 Conflict of Interests

In this situation, a conflict of interest arises because the researcher previously worked for the Pag-IBIG Fund, which may have influenced their research on the issues that contractual workers face within the business. This link may impair their neutrality when assessing data or drawing judgments about these workers' experiences. It is critical for the researcher to recognize this possible bias and take actions to reduce it, such as identifying prior employment and ensuring that their analysis is objective and based only on the data obtained. Addressing this issue in a transparent manner is critical to sustaining the integrity and credibility of the study findings.

8.0 Acknowledgment

The researcher would like to thank Dr. Randy Tudy, my former professor at Cor Jesu College Inc., as well as his family, friends, and job-order employees who have contributed to the study's success.

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