

Evaluating the Work Efficiency and Job Satisfaction of the Non-Regular Employees in Dole Region 1: Towards an Effective Professional Development Program

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated the work efficiency and job satisfaction of non-regular employees in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 1, Philippines. It aimed to assess their work efficiency, overall job satisfaction, and the challenges affecting their motivation and career growth. Non-regular employees play a crucial role in government agencies, yet they often experience disparities in benefits and opportunities compared to regular employees. Using a mixed-method approach through the concurrent triangulation design, data were collected through surveys and interviews with non-regular employees. The study analyzed their work efficiency, levels of job satisfaction, and the factors influencing their motivation. Results revealed that these employees, primarily young, female, and single, demonstrate high efficiency and satisfaction in their roles. Their strong performance is attributed to their dedication and adaptability in carrying out their responsibilities. However, despite their positive work attitudes, they face significant challenges that may hinder long-term job satisfaction. One of the main concerns highlighted in the study is the limited access to professional development opportunities. To address these challenges, the study recommends that DOLE Region 1 adopt a comprehensive policy framework aimed at enhancing the work experience of non-regular employees. This framework should encompass key strategies such as ensuring equal access to training opportunities, providing financial support for career development, and establishing a structured rewards and recognition system. By addressing these critical areas, DOLE Region 1 can significantly improve job satisfaction and enhance overall organizational effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Non-regular Employees, Work Efficiency, Job Satisfaction, Professional Development Program, DOLE, Mixed Methods Research, Concurrent Triangulation Design, Philippines

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving global economy, organizations are increasingly relying on flexible work arrangements, often employing job order employees to meet their staffing needs (ILO, 2019; Huong, 2019; Khann, 2020). This trend, while offering organizations flexibility and cost-effectiveness (Huong, 2019; Tang, 2020), raises concerns about the well-being and performance of this contingent workforce (ILO, 2019; WEF, 2021; Castellaci & Viñas-Bardolet, 2020). Research suggests that job order employees, as part of the broader category of non-regular workers, despite their valuable contributions, often face challenges related to job security, limited access to benefits, and restricted career advancement opportunities (Castellaci & Viñas-Bardolet, 2020; WEF, 2021; ILO, 2019; Khann, 2020; Tang, 2020). These factors can significantly impact their job satisfaction and work efficiency, potentially hindering their overall performance and engagement (Burke & Barron, 2014; Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020; Ismael et al., 2021; Inayat & Khan, 2021; Stroh, Brettel, & Reuschenback, 2020). Furthermore, the gig economy, where many job order employees operate, can contribute to feelings of isolation and disconnect from the organizational culture (WEF, 2021; ILO, 2021), further affecting job satisfaction (European Trade Union Institute, 2020).

The challenges faced by non-regular employees are not limited to the global stage. In the ASEAN region, where the prevalence of non-regular employees in both public and private sectors has risen significantly in recent years (Huong, 2019), these workers often experience similar difficulties (Khann, 2020; Tang, 2020). Research in Vietnam has found that non-regular employees, such as the job order employees, report lower levels of work efficiency compared to their permanent counterparts, mainly due to the uncertainty and instability associated with their employment status (Nguyen et al., 2021). The absence of proper labor regulations and protection for job order workers in ASEAN is also a significant concern (Tang, 2020), leaving them vulnerable to unfair treatment and limited benefits.

Evaluating the Work Efficiency and Job Satisfaction of the Non-Regular Employees in Dole Region 1: Towards an Effective Professional Development Program

The Philippines, a member of ASEAN, is not immune to these challenges. Within the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 1, a region where the use of non-regular employees through job orders and contract of service is prevalent (Garcia, 2020; Reyes, 2019; Santos, 2022), these workers often face similar issues (Reyes, 2019; Ongera & Juma, 2023; Kumari et al., 2021; Mendoza, 2021). Despite possessing the necessary qualifications and having successfully passed the Career Service Examination administered by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), non-regular employees in the Philippines lack the security of tenure enjoyed by their regular counterparts (Chandola et al., 2019; Tan, 2021; Ong, 2020). Their contracts are typically short-term, often lasting only six months or even three months, creating a sense of uncertainty and instability (Chandola et al., 2019; Tan, 2021; Ong, 2020). This precarious employment status can lead to stress, anxiety, and financial instability for individuals and their families (Chandola et al., 2019).

The lack of access to professional development programs and rewards and recognition further compounds the challenges faced by job order and contract of service employees in the Philippines (Reyes, 2019; Ongera & Juma, 2023; Kumari et al., 2021; Mendoza, 2021; Villanueva, 2021; Bautista, 2023). These programs are often designed for regular employees, leaving non-regular workers with fewer chances for career growth (Reyes, 2019; Ongera & Juma, 2023). The absence of recognition and rewards for non-regular employees can lead to feelings of under-evaluation and decreased motivation (Mendoza, 2021; Villanueva, 2021; Bautista, 2023). This can create a cycle of disadvantage, hindering their ability to acquire new skills, stay updated with industry trends, and enhance their knowledge base, ultimately limiting their career progression and job satisfaction (Reyes, 2019; Ongera & Juma, 2023).

This research focused on the experiences of non-regular employees within the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 1 in the Philippines, specifically in La Union, a region where the use of non-regular employees through job orders and contract of service is prevalent (Garcia, 2020; Reyes, 2019; Santos, 2022; Chandola et al., 2019; Tan, 2021; Ong, 2020; Reyes, 2019; Ongera & Juma, 2023; Kumari et al., 2021; Mendoza, 2021; Villanueva, 2021; Bautista, 2023). The study aimed to investigate the relationship between work efficiency and job satisfaction among these employees, exploring the challenges they face in accessing professional development opportunities and receiving adequate rewards and recognition. By understanding these factors, the study sought to identify potential interventions that can enhance the well-being and performance of non-regular employees, ultimately contributing to a more effective and motivated workforce within DOLE Region 1.

The study explored the demographic profile of non-regular employees within DOLE Region 1, examining factors such as age, sex, civil status, family monthly income, and highest educational attainment. This analysis helped to understand the unique characteristics of this workforce and how these factors may influence their experiences and expectations within the organization. The study assessed the level of work efficiency among non-regular employees, evaluating their performance in areas such as quality of work, communication skills, task complexity, and problem-solving skills. The assessment provided insights into their strengths and areas where further development may be needed to enhance their overall performance and align their work capabilities with organizational expectations.

Furthermore, the study examined the level of job satisfaction among non-regular employees, focusing on factors such as job security, rewards and recognition, opportunities for growth, and work environment. This analysis aimed to determine how these variables affect the employees' overall work satisfaction and motivation. The study also investigated the relationship between work efficiency and job satisfaction, exploring whether there is a correlation between these two factors. The investigation helped to understand how work efficiency may influence job satisfaction and vice versa, providing insights into the interplay between these two key aspects of employee performance.

Finally, the study investigated the challenges faced by non-regular employees in accessing professional development opportunities and receiving adequate rewards and recognition. Through qualitative interviews and thematic analysis, the study explored the specific barriers that non-regular employees encounter in accessing training and development programs, as well as the impact of a lack of recognition on their motivation and job satisfaction. This analysis will provide valuable insights into the specific needs and concerns of this workforce, informing the development of targeted interventions to address these challenges. This research is significant because it seeks to address the critical need to improve the well-being and performance of non-regular employees within DOLE Region 1. By understanding the relationship between work efficiency and job satisfaction, as well as the challenges faced by these employees in accessing professional development and rewards, the study aims to inform the development of more effective policies and programs that can enhance the overall effectiveness and motivation of this vital segment of the workforce. The findings of this research will be valuable for organizations seeking to create a more supportive and empowering work environment for non-regular employees, ultimately contributing to a more engaged and productive workforce.

Evaluating the Work Efficiency and Job Satisfaction of the Non-Regular Employees in Dole Region 1: Towards an Effective Professional Development Program

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a concurrent mixed-method approach specifically utilizing the concurrent triangulation design, combining quantitative and qualitative research elements to gain a comprehensive understanding of the work efficiency and job satisfaction of non-regular employees within DOLE Region 1, and to propose a sustainable professional development program for them. This approach, as advocated by Creswell and Clark (2018), allows for a more holistic understanding of complex research problems by integrating various approaches, traditions, and techniques, overcoming the limitations of solely qualitative or quantitative research. The study was conducted in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 1 offices, specifically in the Central Pangasinan Field Office, Eastern Pangasinan Field Office, Ilocos Norte Field Office, Ilocos Sur Field Office, La Union Field Office, and Western Pangasinan Field Office. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select a representative sample of 70 non-regular employees from a total population of 134, ensuring that the sample accurately reflected the diversity of the non-regular employee population across the different field

The research instrument consisted of four parts: a demographic questionnaire, a work efficiency assessment, a job satisfaction survey, and an interview guide to gather qualitative data on challenges faced by non-regular employees. The instruments were developed through a rigorous process of initial drafting, expert review, pilot testing, and finalization. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, content validity was established through expert review, Cronbach's alpha analysis was performed to measure internal consistency, factor analysis was conducted to validate the constructs of work efficiency and job satisfaction, and thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Ethical considerations were paramount, with informed consent obtained from all participants, confidentiality maintained, and all relevant ethical guidelines adhered to.

Data was collected through an online survey using Google Forms and face-to-face interviews with ten non-regular employees. The collected data, both quantitative and qualitative, was meticulously tabulated, evaluated, and interpreted using appropriate statistical instruments and thematic analysis techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages for demographic information, means and standard deviation to evaluate work efficiency and job satisfaction levels, and the Pearson correlation coefficient to identify any significant relationship between work efficiency and job satisfaction. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns. The combined findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses provided a comprehensive understanding of the work efficiency, job satisfaction, and challenges faced by non-regular employees, informing the development of a proposed professional development program.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the work efficiency, job performance, and challenges faced by non-regular employees within the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Region 1, specifically in La Union, Philippines. The research revealed a predominantly young, female, and single workforce, with a majority of non-regular employees holding a bachelor's degree and earning below ₱30,000. This demographic profile highlights the unique characteristics of this workforce and suggests that non-regular positions may appeal to individuals seeking flexible work arrangements or those in the early stages of their careers.

The study's analysis of work efficiency demonstrated that non-regular employees consistently exhibit a high level of efficiency across various indicators, including quality of work, communication skills, task complexity, and problem-solving skills. This finding aligns with previous research highlighting the potential for non-regular employees such as job order and contract of service employees to contribute significantly to organizational success (Lisi & Malo, 2019). Despite their temporary employment status, non-regular employees in DOLE Region 1 demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering high-quality work and effectively managing their responsibilities. However, the study also revealed potential areas for improvement in communication skills and systematic problem-solving. While employees generally perform well in these areas, the observed variability in responses suggests that some individuals may benefit from targeted training or support to enhance their communication clarity and analytical thinking. This reinforces the importance of providing ongoing professional development opportunities for non-regular employees to ensure their continued growth and effectiveness.

The analysis of job performance revealed a generally positive perception of the work environment and opportunities for growth. However, the study highlighted the need for improvement in job security and rewards and recognition. This finding is consistent with existing research emphasizing the crucial role of job security and recognition in fostering employee morale and motivation (Ocampo et al., 2018; Medina et al., 2022). Non-regular employees, often facing uncertainty about their employment status, may experience reduced motivation and commitment when they perceive a lack of job security or recognition for their contributions.

Evaluating the Work Efficiency and Job Satisfaction of the Non-Regular Employees in Dole Region 1: Towards an Effective Professional Development Program

The correlation analysis provided strong evidence supporting the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between work efficiency and job satisfaction among non-regular employees. This finding underscores the importance of creating a supportive work environment with user-friendly tools and processes to enhance efficiency and productivity (Omar et al., 2019; Davidescu et al., 2020). The study's findings suggest that when employees perceive tools as useful, processes as easy to navigate, and feel confident in the systems they use, their performance improves, leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction.

The qualitative data analysis revealed a compelling picture of the challenges faced by non-regular employees in accessing professional development opportunities and receiving adequate rewards and recognition. The study illuminated a lack of access to professional development opportunities, leading to difficulties in executing work effectively, feelings of being undervalued, and a lack of motivation. Despite these challenges, non-regular employees demonstrated a strong desire to learn and improve themselves, believing that access to professional development programs and recognition for their work would significantly enhance their confidence, motivation, and work efficiency. These findings underscore the critical need for organizations to address the barriers to professional development for non-regular employees, creating a more supportive and empowering work environment that allows them to reach their full potential and contribute significantly to organizational success. This aligns with existing research highlighting the importance of employee development and recognition in fostering a positive and productive work environment (Ocampo et al., 2018; Medina et al., 2022).

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Research Aimed To Comprehensively Examine The Work Efficiency, Job Satisfaction, And Challenges Encountered By Non-Regular Employees Within The Department Of Labor And Employment (Dole) Region 1, Specifically In La Union. The Study Revealed A Compelling Picture Of This Workforce, Primarily Composed Of Younger, Female, And Single Individuals With A Strong Educational Foundation. Despite Their Temporary Employment Status, Non-Regular Employees Demonstrated A High Level Of Work Efficiency Across Various Indicators, Including Quality Of Work, Communication Skills, Task Complexity, And Problem-Solving Skills. They Also Expressed A Generally Positive Perception Of Their Work Environment And Opportunities For Growth. However, The Study Also Highlighted Significant Challenges Faced By These Employees, Particularly In Accessing Professional Development Opportunities And Receiving Adequate Rewards And Recognition. The Lack Of Access To Training Programs And Limited Opportunities For Career Advancement Resulted In Feelings Of Being Undervalued And A Lack Of Motivation. This, In Turn, Can Lead To Decreased Productivity And Reduced Job Satisfaction. The Study's Findings Also Revealed A Significant Positive Correlation Between Work Efficiency And Job Satisfaction, Emphasizing The Importance Of Fostering A Supportive Work Environment With User-Friendly Tools And Processes For These Employees. To Address These Challenges And Enhance The Well-Being And Performance Of Non-Regular Employees, Several Recommendations Are Proposed. First, Dole Region 1 Should Implement A Comprehensive Strategy Through Crafting A Policy Framework That Prioritizes The Professional Development Of Non-Regular Employees, Ensuring Equal Access To Training Alongside Regular Employees, Providing Financial Assistance For Training Costs, And Exploring Partnerships With External Training Providers Or Offering Online Courses To Expand Training Opportunities. Second, Robust Rewards And Recognition Programs Should Be Implemented Specifically For Non-Regular Employees To Demonstrate Appreciation For Their Efforts And Motivate Them. Third, Collaborative Development Of Individual Career Development Plans Will Provide Non-Regular Employees With A Sense Of Direction And Purpose, Outlining Their Goals, Skills Development Needs, And Potential Career Paths. Finally, Regular Performance Reviews Should Be Conducted To Provide Constructive Feedback And Identify Areas For Improvement, Demonstrating A Genuine Interest In Their Professional Growth And Advancement. By Implementing These Recommendations, Dole Region 1 Can Create A More Supportive And Empowering Work Environment For Job Order Employees, Fostering Their Professional Growth, Enhancing Their Work Efficiency And Job Satisfaction, And Maximizing Their Contributions To Organizational Success.

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Evaluating the Work Efficiency and Job Satisfaction of the Non-Regular Employees in Dole Region 1: Towards an Effective Professional Development Program

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