

Impact of Online Gig Economy and Satisfaction of Workers: A Mixed Method Design

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Abstract: This mixed method study explored the Impact of Online Gig Economy on the Satisfaction of Workers, focusing on the level of impact on the career, health, schedule and economic aspect and the level of their satisfaction in terms of job, income, career development and overall satisfaction. Data were gathered online through Focus Group Discussion and questionnaire with 406 respondents in the Philippines servicing various niches. It also examined the influence and relationship of the Impact of Online Gig Economy on the Satisfaction of Workers using linear regression analysis. Results showed that respondents have a high level of satisfaction from the very high level of career growth and economic advancement opportunities they enjoyed compared to traditional employment. However, workers also experienced high level of occupational health issues from lack of sleep, sedentary lifestyle, developing unhealthy eating habits and isolation, high extent of operational difficulties such as the need for stable supply of electricity and internet connection and the lack of representation, tax/employment classification and government protection, and high extent of professional challenges in obtaining clients and upskilling and learning software usage, social media marketing and digital platforms. The results further indicated a moderate positive correlation between the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. Furthermore, the very high level of Impact of Online Gig Economy on the career and economic aspect significantly influence the high level of satisfaction of workers, but there may still be unaccounted factors influencing it.

Keywords: Online Gig Economy, Online Freelance Workers, Virtual Assistants, Impact, Satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

The concept of the gig economy emerged during the recession since most people relied on short-term employment after losing their jobs. It provides an opportunity to deliver "bridge employment" during a recession when typical full-time occupations are outside their reach (Donovan et al., 2016). According to Techtarget (2020), the gig economy is a free-market system in which businesses use independent contractors for brief projects or service engagements. The lack of regular employment opportunities is what motivates people to work as independent contractors, also known as "gig workers," "independent workers," or "freelancers" (Friedman, 2014). The gig economy is characterized by "a way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separate pieces of work, each paid separately, rather than working for an employer," according to Cambridge Dictionary (2020). Aloisi (2015) described gig work, also known as micro-tasking, as a new manifestation of Taylorism in the form of micro-segmenting the labor market based on extremely short-term activities.

The gig economy made a substantial contribution to the labor force in several nations prior to the onset of the pandemic. Approximately one-tenth of the British and 8 percent of the American workforce work in the gig economy as of 2019

(Graham, 2019). During the pandemic, there was a surge in both the supply and demand for gig economy jobs worldwide, with online work focused in specific nations (Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2022; Umar et al., 2020). Kässi and Lehdonvirta (2022) concluded that India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan are the top three nations where online work is conducted, with about half of all online work worldwide being undertaken in these three countries. The Philippines is rated 7th, with roughly 2.8 percent of online work globally being done in the country. Upon closer study, different countries seem to have various comparative advantages. For instance, India's 49 percent, Russia's 73 percent, and Ukraine's 86 percent are believed to have a comparative edge in terms of software development and technology. In comparison, Bangladesh's 68 percent, Indonesia's 77 percent, and the Philippines' 45 percent are stated to have a comparative advantage in terms of creative and multimedia online work (Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al., 2020; Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2022).

Gig workers enter into formal agreements with on-demand platforms to supply services to the platforms' clients or task providers. The clients or task providers (hereinafter referred to as clients) are the end users, either individual consumer or an institution, that make a request for an individual gig worker to do a task (Minter, 2017). On some platforms, the workers actively seek out posted projects of varied scale and needs and then select which to pursue by submitting applications with initial bids, which could be based on either fixed rates or hourly wages (Kuhn & Maleki, 2017). In a study conducted by Chen and Soriano (2022), some workers became single "worker-agencies" who outsource projects or segments of their projects to other workers, including family members or neighbors.

Furthermore, owing to computerization and globalization, the gig economy has spread throughout all nations and resulted in the development of prominent gig work sourcing platforms (Aloisi, 2015). According to Warner (2020), Freelancer.com, Upwork.com, and Fiverr.com are the three leading marketplace participants in the online marketplace industry, boasting respective registered user counts of 31 million, 17 million, and 7 million. According to the most recent Payoneer Freelancer Income Survey (2018), the average hourly wage for gig workers worldwide is \$19. Their fees, however, range from \$11 to \$28, based on the skill set and industry (Thibodeaux, 2020). Offering "people in poor countries access to buyers in rich countries" is made possible in large part by digital sourcing platforms. In comparison to the traditional economy, the gig economy may not make a significant contribution, but it does employ 53 million people and has an estimated turnover of 1.3 trillion (Staffing Business, 2019). Globally, the gig economy is growing, according to a recent poll. According to Statista (2020) and Pofeldt (2019), there were 62.2 million freelancers working in the USA in 2019, as opposed to 3.7 million in 2014.

Due in part to new technology platforms, the prevalence of nontraditional and contingent work agreements is rising. This creates new opportunities but also raises new legal, regulatory, and public policy issues. Significant regulatory gaps have emerged as a result of the evolution of the employment relationship over time (Dokko et al., 2015). The term "OFW," originally referring to "Overseas Filipino Workers," has recently been reinterpreted to describe "Online Filipino Workers," where individuals still earn dollars but without the need to leave the country (Go, 2017). The author observed the growing number of Filipinos who engage as online gig workers, commonly known as virtual assistants or freelancers, but their population is not available from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). This is evidenced by the numerous online communities with large followings which offer online courses for different niches. To have a better picture and understanding of the phenomenon, the author made a study about this workforce and examined the impact of Online Gig Economy on the workers, their motivation in joining this contingent work, the issues and challenges they face, and how their experiences are similar or different from their counterparts from the neighboring Asian countries and the rest of the world.

The gig economy phenomenon has existed throughout the years, and it was thrust into the spotlight during the COVID-19 pandemic when mobility was restricted and workers were obliged to work from home as part of health protocol. Out of necessity, displaced laborers participate in the online gig economy. Others utilize this as an opportunity to supplement their income or pursue alternative careers beyond the conventional 9 to 5 schedule. For some, this presents an opportunity to earn a higher salary than if they were to work locally, and it also provides schedule flexibility. Also emphasized was the necessity for online gig workers to acquire new skill sets, including proficiency with computers and online software, in order to land job opportunities on crowdsourcing marketplaces and online platforms. The online gig economy presented significant businesses with a chance to reduce their labor expenses through the procurement of less expensive services from workers belonging to developing nations. Due to their classification as independent contractors, gig workers are not eligible for union representation, health insurance benefits, or retirement programs. The rise in the number of Filipino individuals engaged in online gig work via digital platforms and online communities prompted the researcher to conduct the study to know its impact on the workers, the issues and challenges they encountered and provide policy

recommendations that would establish regulatory frameworks for this workforce that would safeguard their employment rights and promote their professional development.

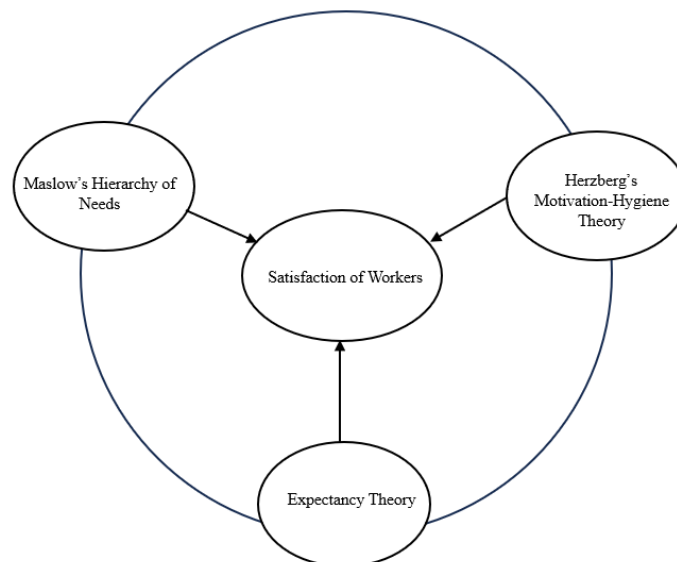
Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework helps identify the variables of the study with a mixed methods design and employs an exploratory sequential approach. It was conducted in two phases, where the first phase used the qualitative method to explore the impact, issues, and challenges of the online gig economy on the workers, while the second phase used the quantitative method to measure the level of impact, extent of issues and challenges of the online gig economy and the level of satisfaction of workers.

There are three theories that can help explain the job satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and motivation of the online gig workers. First is Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow’s theory is a motivational theory in psychology which is hierarchical in nature. The five-tier model of human needs often depicted in the pyramid starts at the bottom starting with physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs. It postulates that a person is satisfied if his needs are fulfilled. Second is Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Two-Factor Theory) which postulates that there are two factors that influence motivation and job satisfaction. Job satisfiers are called motivators and the dissatisfies are called hygiene factors. Such that the elements creating discontent are distinct from those causing satisfaction, they cannot be viewed as the opposite of each other. The inverse of contentment is not discontent but rather no satisfaction, and it goes the same for dissatisfaction: no dissatisfaction. Third is the Expectancy Theory of Motivation postulated by Victor Vroom. It states that a person decides how to act or behave as they are motivated to pick a given conduct because of the expected outcome it will produce. It involves three components namely expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. In summary, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs presents a broad framework of human needs, the Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory focuses on job motivators and hygiene factors, and the Expectancy Theory explains how human expectations influence motivation. Together, these theories give us a clear view of the factors which cause satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and motivation to the workers of the online gig economy.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework

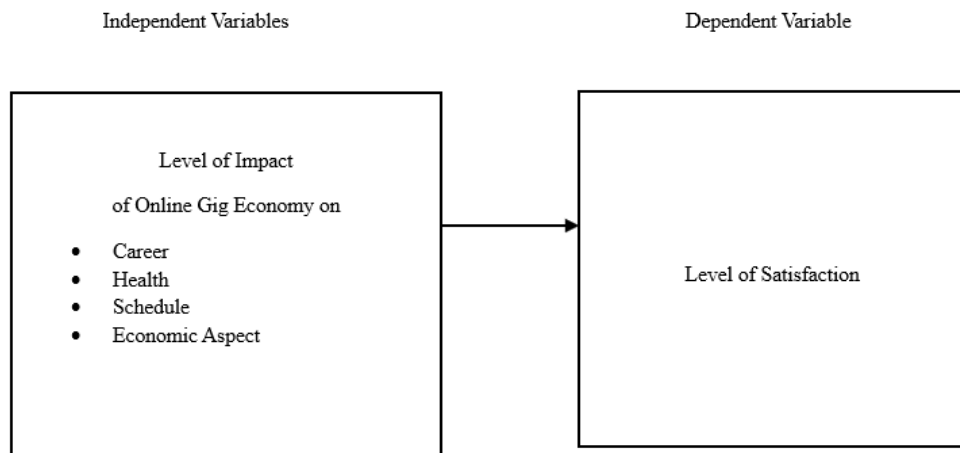


Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework demonstrates how the concepts depicted are operationalized in the second phase of the study which employed the quantitative method. Figure 2 presented five major variables with Independent Variables namely the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy on the Career, Health, Schedule and Economic Aspect of workers, and the Dependent Variable namely the Level of Satisfaction of workers. The framework shows that the Independent Variables affect the Level of Satisfaction of workers. Further, the study also investigated whether the Independent Variables significantly influence the Dependent Variable.

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework



Statement of the Problem

This study aims to propose policy recommendations based on the Impact of the Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How do participants describe the online gig economy in terms of:
 - 1.1 Impact; and
 - 1.2 Issues and challenges?
2. What is the level of impact of online gig economy on workers?
3. What is the extent and nature of issues and challenges experienced by workers of the online gig economy?
4. What is the level of satisfaction of respondents in terms of the following:
 - 4.1 Job;
 - 4.2 Income;
 - 4.3 Career Development; and
 - 4.4 Overall Satisfaction?
5. Does the impact on career, health, schedule, and economic aspect significantly influence the level of satisfaction of workers?
6. Based on the findings of the study, what policy recommendations can be designed?

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the level of impact and the level of satisfaction of workers.

Scope and Delimitation

This study on Impact of Online Gig Economy and Satisfaction of Workers is a mixed method design using exploratory sequential approach. It is focused on the Filipino online gig workers in the country working in the professional services classification commonly known as virtual assistants, in addition to knowing the impact and level of impact, and the extent and nature of issues of the gig economy on their career, health, work schedule and, economic aspect, the extent and nature of challenges experienced by the participants and respondents, and the level of satisfaction of the respondents in terms of job, income, career development, and overall satisfaction. This study was conducted in the second trimester and third trimester of the Academic Year 2023-2024 all over the Philippines via online platforms.

II. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the design of the entire study. It presents in detail the step-by-step procedure, the selection of respondents, research instruments, the data gathering procedure, statistical tools, data analysis and interpretation.

Research Design

This study is a mixed method design and used the exploratory-sequential approach. In general, when variables are unknown, this approach is useful to identify important variables for subsequent quantitative analysis. The sequential approach is used when the researcher is interested in following up qualitative findings with quantitative analysis. This two-phase approach is particularly useful for a researcher interested in developing new instrument, taxonomy, or treatment protocol (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

In this study, the hypothesis and assumptions are statements that were tested to draw substantive evidence to prove the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable and, the influence of the Impact of Online Gig Economy on the Level of Satisfaction of workers.

Selection of Respondents

The researcher employed demographic stratification in selecting respondents. Guest et, al. (2016) proposed that 12 interviews should be sufficient to achieve data saturation in homogenous studies using purposeful sampling like many qualitative studies. The participants of the first phase of the study were purposively selected from identified online communities with the endorsement of the online community founders or administrators and are articulate in the English and Filipino languages. A total of seven participants were interviewed through Focus Group Discussion via online videoconferencing platform using a researcher-made interview guide questions. The respondents of the second phase of the study were purposively selected from the same identified online communities or referrals from virtual assistants using a researcher-made online questionnaire. Participants and respondents of the study must be Filipino citizens residing in the country who are actively working as online worker for platform clients, direct clients, agency or as “worker-agency,” be it part-time or full-time, with either local or international clients or both, servicing any niche. Since the population of Filipino virtual assistants is unknown, the sample size was determined using Cochran’s formula which totals to 385 respondents.

Research Instruments

Two researcher-made instruments were used in this study. These instruments were restated and validated to align to the objectives of the study and to fit in online workers’ experience in the Online Gig Economy. Verbal elements of most items of these instruments were modified to explicitly measure the constructs in the context of exploring and measuring the Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Satisfaction of Workers and, the nature and extent of issues and challenges they experienced such that the analysis of the results answer the purpose of this study.

A pilot testing was conducted to test the reliability of the Online Questionnaire using Cronbach’s Alpha which measures internal consistency and is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. The reliability testing result was $\alpha = 0.73$ and is interpreted as acceptable.

Data Gathering Procedure

The primary focus of this study is to know how Online Gig Economy affect the workers and the level of impact on their career, health, schedule and economic aspect, the nature and extent of issues and challenges they experienced and, their level of satisfaction in terms of job, income, career development and overall satisfaction.

The first phase of the study was conducted through Focus Group Discussion using the researcher-made interview guide questions via online videoconferencing platform. The second phase of the study was conducted using the researcher-made Online Questionnaire via Google Form which was linked to a Google Sheet that automatically summarized the responses using descriptive statistics namely frequency and percentage.

Data Analysis

The researcher processed the first phase of the study using the thematic analysis by Robert E. Stake (1995) by transcribing the audio recording in verbatim, followed by identifying significant statements. The formulated meanings from the Focus Group Discussion were restated and incorporated in the Online Questionnaire. The second phase of the study was

processed and summarized using descriptive statistics namely frequency, percentage and weighted mean and was interpreted using the Mean Range of Rating Scale with (1.00-1.49) as Very Low Impact / Least Extent / Very Low Satisfaction, (1.50-2.49) as Low Impact / Low Extent / Low Satisfaction, (2.50-3.49) as Moderate Impact / Moderate Extent / Moderate Satisfaction, (3.50-4.49) as High Impact / High Extent / High Satisfaction and, (4.50-5.00) as Very High Impact / Very High Extent / Very High Satisfaction.

The hypotheses testing to determine the significant relationships between levels of impact and the level of satisfaction of workers were analyzed using inferential statistics and running the IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software performing linear regression analysis.

Box 1

Mean Range of Rating Scale

Weighted Mean Interval	Description	Interpretation
4.50-5.00	The impact is very high / extent is very high / satisfaction is very high rated at 80-100%	Very High Impact / Very High Extent / Very High Satisfaction
3.50-4.49	The impact is high / extent is high / satisfaction is high rated at 60-79%	High Impact / High Extent / High Satisfaction
2.50-3.49	The impact is moderate/ extent is moderate / satisfaction is moderate rated at 40-59%	Moderate Impact / Moderate Extent / Moderate Satisfaction
1.50-2.49	The impact is low/ extent is low / satisfaction is low rated at 20-39%	Low Impact / Low Extent / Low Satisfaction
1.00-1.49	The impact is very low/ extent is least / satisfaction is very low rated at 0-19%	Very Low Impact / Least Extent / Very Low Satisfaction

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Impact of Online Gig Economy

Online Gig Economy has a positive impact on the career of workers as career growth was highlighted in the thematic analysis. The participants had new career or additional career which they saw as professional growth by becoming a freelancer. It enhanced the personal and professional lives of the workers where they become more productive as they have a chance to get more clients. Being a virtual assistant who serves on different niches made workers feel a sense of fulfilment. According to Bernard (2021), employees are resigning because they wish to pursue more “fulfilling” tasks and business endeavors. This fact was also highlighted in the study of Ozimek (2021), that many employees are thinking about quitting their 9 to 5 employment in order to pursue careers in the “gig economy”.

Online Gig Workers encountered occupational health issues due to the nature of their jobs. The most common experience among the participants were inadequate hours of sleep, sedentary lifestyle, and lack of exercise, developing unhealthy eating habits and anxiety due to isolation which may affect their health in the long run. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2019), Digitalization and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) poses an increase in some psychosocial risk from poorer work-life balance, isolation, job insecurity and cyber-bullying. It also increase ergonomic risk from increasing use of mobile devices, and sedentary lifestyle leading to the increased risk of associated health problems such as musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), visual fatigue, obesity, heart disease, among others.

Online Gig Economy provided workers with remote work flexibility which allows them to bring their work wherever they go, even in the confines of their own homes wherein they can spend more time with their families and doing household chores. The flexible time arrangement also allowed them to work part-time or full-time, at the time of their choice and it provided them savings in terms of time and resources from daily commute. Kuek et al. (2015) said that gig work is thought to give workers the flexibility to choose the job they do, at their own place and time. However, academics raised concerns on the flexibility of contract works and emphasized the importance of differentiating between flexibility controlled by workers and that which is determined by managers (Lambert, Haley-Lock, & Henly, 2012; Lehdonvirta, 2018; Shockley & Allen, 2007). The ILO (2019) presented opportunities of possible reduction in some psychosocial risks from improved work-life balance due to telework and reduction of stress associated with commuting.

Online Gig Workers enjoyed economic advancement opportunities such as competitive remuneration compared to their salaries from traditional employment. They were able to provide for their family's needs, build their finances and became entrepreneurs; from being a worker to business owners or "worker-agency." Gig work enables workers to earn more money than if they were to work in local employment and workers transform these gig jobs into their primary jobs (Anwar & Graham, 2020). In the United States, gig work can also provide an opportunity to earn a higher take-home pay where gig workers performing freelance work and deliveries earn more than the country's median hourly wage (Statista, 2022a; 2022b).

Issues and Challenges of Online Gig Economy

Online Gig Workers also experienced issues on their jobs, highlighted as operational difficulties in the thematic analysis. These ranged from job stability and security, overseas contract implementation, pay discrimination, stringent job qualification, lack of representation, tax /employment classifications and government protection, and reliable supply of electricity and internet connection. Electricity and internet connection are essential in the Online Gig Economy as workers' productivity and income are greatly affected in the event of power and connectivity outage. According to Graham et al. (2017), most gig work in developing nations like India, Pakistan and the Philippines comes from foreign clients while 75% of gig work in the United States are from domestic clients resulting to a usually higher hourly pay than that of their international counterparts.

Online Gig Workers encountered professional challenges on their jobs from the experience of the participants of the focus group discussion which ranged from difficulty in client getting, upskilling on software usage, digital platforms, and social media marketing and, lack of income stability. The participants also narrated their challenges in adjusting to their work schedules, the need to have work discipline, isolation and, being prone to abuses of rude clients. In the study of Warner (2020), getting gig tasks becomes tougher as many gig workers from poor nations compete for jobs at a lower earning rate (fees per hour), thus freelancers need to enhance their skills in computer proficiency, networking prowess, and marketing acumen to increase their prospects in getting work on digital platforms. A literature from ILO (2019), mentioned the challenges of digitalization and ICT which include poorer work-life balance from a perceived need to be "available" at all times, isolation brought by remote working and lack of social interaction, performance monitoring, job insecurity, aggression and attacks or cyber-bullying.

Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy

Online Gig Economy has a very high level impact on the career of workers with a weighted mean of 4.543. Responses ranged from high impact to very high impact where 64% of the respondents gave a rating of very high level. The top four indicators were additional career path, becoming a freelancer, unlimited income potential and, new career path for workers which were also synonymous to career growth from the thematic analysis.

Online Gig Workers encountered a high level of impact on their health with a weighed mean of 3.702. Responses ranged from moderate impact to very high impact where 38% of the respondents gave a rating of high level. The top indicator of occupational health issues was lack of sleep, followed by sedentary lifestyle, developing unhealthy eating habits and isolation. According to Grant (2007), gig economy has actually isolated workers from traditional employment relationships, such as those with coworkers. Isolation and sedentary lifestyle were also included on the list of risks that workers face brought by digitalization and ICT according to ILO (2019).

Online Gig Economy has a high level impact on the schedule of workers with a weighted mean of 4.498. Responses ranged from high impact to very high impact where 63% of the respondents gave a rating of very high level. Top three indicators were savings from conveyance/daily commute, work freedom and flexibility and, freedom to earn more which may not be available to workers in traditional employment. These indicators were synonymous with remote work flexibility from thematic analysis. In the study of Jacobs (2017), to be their own bosses and have total control over their time is another motivation for gig workers that may be categorized as opportunity driven.

Online Gig Economy has a very high level impact on the economic aspect of workers with a weighted mean of 4.516. Responses ranged from high to very high where 62% of the respondents gave a rating of a very high level. The top indicators were competitive income compared to salaries from traditional employment, sustain family's needs and build savings and entrepreneurship potential. These indicators were closely associated with economic advancement opportunities derived from the thematic analysis. According to Statista (2022a; 2022b), gig work provides workers an opportunity to earn higher take-home pay. Entrepreneurial potential was also mentioned in the study of Chen and Soriano

(2022), where workers become single “worker-agencies”, outsourcing projects or segment of their projects to other workers, including family members or neighbors.

Nature and Extent of Issues and Challenges of Online Gig Economy

Online Gig Workers experienced high extent of issues with a weighted mean of 3.614. Responses ranged from moderate to very high where 43% of the respondents gave a rating of high extent. The top three indicators were reliable supply of electricity and internet connection, different mindset when dealing with local and foreign clients and, lack of representation, tax/employment classification and government protection which were summarized as operational difficulties in the thematic analysis. As mentioned earlier, power and connectivity outage affect the productivity and income of workers. One interesting finding from the focus group discussion was the different mindset when dealing with local and foreign clients. The participant who serves in the bookkeeping and accounting niche narrated her experience, that foreign clients hire online bookkeepers/accountants because they needed help with their books and filing of taxes. Local clients hire bookkeepers/accountants because it would “cost them less than paying their taxes.” The lack of tax/employment classification issue was also raised in the focus group discussion. According to Serafica and Oren (2022), in contrast to permanent employees, freelance workers and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) encounter challenges in determining accurate tax liability due to prevailing tax legislation in the Philippines.

Online Gig Workers also experienced high extent of challenges with a weighted mean of 3.685. Responses ranged from moderate to very high where 47% of respondents gave a rating of high extent. The top three indicators were the need to upskill and learn software usage, social media marketing and digital platforms, the need to have discipline and time management to attain healthy work-life integration and, difficulty in obtaining clients, which also akin to professional challenges. In the study of Warner (2020), it stated that freelancers can enhance their prospects of getting work on digital platforms by possessing a diverse range of inherent skills, including but not limited to computer proficiency, networking prowess and marketing acumen. The difficulty in obtaining clients could not only be attributed to client getting skills but also to steep competition. According to Graham et al. (2017), gig workers continuously face intense competition from foreign labor on digital platforms in the gig economy as there is always a greater number of job seekers than available opportunities.

Level of Satisfaction of Workers of the Online Gig Economy

Online Gig Workers have a high level of satisfaction with a weighted mean of 3.911. Responses ranged from moderate to very high where 47% of the respondents gave a rating of high level. All four indicators received a rating of high level satisfaction where the overall satisfaction tops the list with a weighted mean of 4.010, followed by job satisfaction with 3.958, career development satisfaction with 3.899 and income satisfaction with 3.788. The workers’ satisfaction was also congruent to the the impact of gig economy on the career and economic aspect of workers based on the thematic analysis where the themes career growth and economic advancement opportunities were derived. This was also in agreement on the level of impact on the career and economy of workers where both predictors received a rating of high level.

Influence of the Impact of Online Gig Economy on the Satisfaction of Workers

The Multiple Regression Analysis of Impact of Online Gig Economy (Dependent Variable: Satisfaction of Workers) describes the performance and goodness-of-fit of a regression model with "Satisfaction of Workers" as the dependent variable and one or more independent variables. These statistics suggest that the independent variables in the model have some explanatory power for the Satisfaction of Workers, but there may still be unaccounted factors influencing it, as indicated by the relatively low R² value of 0.215. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate indicates the average deviation of actual observations from the predicted values.

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results provide information about the overall significance of the regression model in explaining the variability in the dependent variable "Satisfaction of Workers" and the contribution of both the regression model and the residual error to the total variability. These suggest that the regression model is statistically significant in explaining the variability in the Satisfaction of Workers, as indicated by the low p-value ($p < .001$). The F-value (27.498) further supports this conclusion, indicating that the explained variance by the model is significantly greater than the unexplained variance.

The Regression Coefficients b and Beta whose predictors are Level of Impact on Career with a p-value of less than .001, Level of Impact on Health with .155, Level of Impact on Schedule .121, Level of Impact on Economy less than .001, and dependent variable Level of Satisfaction of Workers. Two of the coefficients are statistically significant at 95%

confidence level namely Level of Impact on Career with a p-value ($p < .001$) and Level of Impact on Economy also with a p-value ($p < .001$). It further indicates that the Level of Impact on Career and Level of Impact on Economy significantly influence the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. On the other hand, Level of Impact on Health and Level of Impact on Schedule are statistically insignificant thus, those two have no significant influence on the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. Furthermore, it is supported by the High Level of Satisfaction of Workers despite experiencing High Level of Impact on Health, and High Extent of Issues and Challenges.

Policy Recommendations

The freelancers faced various issues and challenges while working in the online gig economy. Among the issues they encountered was the need for a reliable supply of electricity and internet connection, which tops the list. Their productivity and income were very much affected in the event of power and connectivity outage. With this, the researcher proposes to enjoin the government to increase public and private sector investment in modernizing and expanding electricity grids and internet infrastructure and, to implement effective regulatory reforms which provide performance-based incentives to companies that perform within the allowable frequency of outage and penalties to those companies that perform below standard. Next on the list is the lack of representation, tax/employment classification and government protection. There is a pending legislation from the 19th Congress of Philippines introduced by Senator Joel Villanueva as Senate Bill No. 136, An Act Providing Protection to Freelancers and For Other Purposes. Section 6 of the proposed bill covers the rights of the freelancers such as right to representation and participation in policy and decision-making processes and social dialogue, right to social protection and social welfare benefits; and right to speedy redress of grievances, including alternative dispute resolution processes. The researcher proposes the standardization and information dissemination of applicable tax for professional services and online workers and, the provision of assistance to online workers for dispute resolution from a government agency.

Online gig workers also face professional challenges on their jobs. The need to upskill and learn software usage, social media marketing and digital platforms tops the list. Online workers encounter difficulties in client getting not only because of lack of skills but also due to steep competition. The researcher proposes the provision of advanced niche-based and digital marketing skills from government agencies like the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to enhance the workers' chance to land online jobs and thrive in the competitive Online Gig Economy. Some of these skills are not part of the academic curriculum therefore those were not commonly taught in schools, except for courses related to digital marketing, information technology, and other related applications. To bridge the skills gap, prospective and existing freelancers turn to online communities which offer various short online courses and internship to help them jumpstart their online gig jobs. These "skills-maker" courses are quite expensive for those who are still starting to work as virtual assistants. The researcher also proposes to include advanced niche-based and digital marketing skills in the academic curriculum as elective subjects.

Relationship between the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers

There is a significant relationship between the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. The Model Summary's R value is 0.464, indicating a moderate positive correlation between the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. The Regression Coefficients b and Beta shows the new table model whose predictors are Level of Impact on Career with a p-value of less than .001, Level of Impact on Health with .155, Level of Impact on Schedule .121, and Level of Impact on Economy less than .001. In this case, the significant value is $\alpha = .05$. If the p-value is less than or equal to the significant value $\leq .05$, then the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Two of the coefficients are statistically significant at 95% confidence level namely Level of Impact on Career with a p-value ($p < .001$), and Level of Impact on Economy which also have a p-value ($p < .001$). Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the Level of Impact on Career and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers, and between the Level of Impact on Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. Moreover, the other two coefficients are statistically insignificant at 95% confidence level namely Level of Impact on Health with a p-value ($p = .155$), and Level of Impact on Schedule with a p-value ($p = .121$). Therefore, there is no significant relationship between the Level of Impact on Health and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers, and between the Level of Impact on Schedule and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers.

Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Online Gig Economy has a positive impact on the career of workers based on the thematic analysis which highlighted career growth among the participants. This is also supported by the very high level of impact on the career of workers with a weighted mean of 4.543 based on the respondents of the online survey. However, online gig workers encountered

occupational health issues due to the nature of the job namely, inadequate hours of sleep, sedentary lifestyle, and lack of exercise, developing unhealthy eating habits and anxiety due to isolation which may affect their health in the long run as shared by the participants. This resulted to a high level impact on the health of the respondents with a weighted mean of 3.702. Online Gig Economy provided workers with remote work flexibility which allows them to bring their work wherever they go and provides them more time to be with their families, do household chores, work part-time or full time. It also provided them savings in terms of time and resources from the daily commute. This is supported by the result of the online survey from respondents with a weighted mean of 4.498 and interpreted as high level impact on the schedule of workers. Online Gig Workers enjoyed economic advancement opportunities based on the thematic analysis. The participants shared that they have competitive remuneration compared to their salaries from traditional employment, how they were able to provide for their family's needs, build their finances and became entrepreneurs; from being a worker to business owners or "worker-agency." The survey result from the respondents yielded a very high level impact on the economic aspect of workers with a weighted mean of 4.516.

Online Gig Workers also experienced issues and challenges on their jobs. The operational difficulties based from the thematic analysis ranged from job stability and security, overseas contract implementation, pay discrimination, stringent job qualification, lack of representation, tax /employment classifications and government protection, and reliable supply of electricity and internet connection. This is also supported by the result of the online survey where the respondents experienced high extent of issues ranging from reliable supply of electricity and internet connection, different mindset when dealing with local and foreign clients and, lack of representation, tax/employment classification and government protection with a weighted mean of 3.614. The workers also faced professional challenges namely difficulty in client getting, upskilling on software usage, digital platforms, and social media marketing and, lack of income stability. Furthermore, the participants also narrated their challenges in adjusting to their work schedules, the need to have work discipline, isolation and, being prone to abuses of rude clients based on the thematic analysis. This resulted to a high extent of challenges faced by workers ranging from the need to upskill and learn software usage, social media marketing and digital platforms, the need to have discipline and time management to attain healthy work-life integration and, difficulty in obtaining clients with a weighted mean of 3.685.

Implication of Findings

The theoretical implications of the study can be explained by the three theories of job satisfaction and motivation which were earlier presented in the Theoretical Framework. It helped in understanding the aspects that affect Online Gig Economy and identify the causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and motivation among online gig workers in the Philippines. For them, Online Gig Economy helped in achieving their physiological, safety, and social needs, and it gave them a sense of fulfillment which satisfied their self-esteem and self-actualization needs. This is aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs which postulates that a person is satisfied if his requirements are fulfilled. Gig workers have a high level of satisfaction with a weighted mean of 3.911 resulting from the positive impact of Online Gig Economy on their careers which gave them career growth and, positive impact on their economy which gave them economic advancement opportunities. Moreover, the high level of impact of their careers with a weighted mean of 4.543 and high level of impact on their economy with a weighted mean of 4.516 also contributed to their high level of satisfaction.

The Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Two Factor Theory) was depicted by the results of the study. The theory postulates that job satisfiers are called motivators and the dissatisfies are called hygiene factors. Such that the elements creating discontent are distinct from those causing satisfaction, they cannot be viewed as the opposite of each other. The inverse of contentment is not discontent but rather no satisfaction, and it goes the same for dissatisfaction: no dissatisfaction. The satisfaction of workers in terms of their job, income, career development, and overall satisfaction were the motivators, and the issues and challenges were the hygiene factors. The workers maintained a high level of motivation (high level of satisfaction in terms of their job, income, career development and overall satisfaction has a weighted mean of 3.911) despite the high extent and wide variability of hygiene factors (high extent of issues and high extent of challenges have a weighted mean of 3.614 and 3.685 respectively). This suggests that workers remained highly motivated and highly satisfied notwithstanding the high level of operational difficulties they encountered and the high level of professional challenges they faced.

The Expectancy Theory of Motivation states that a person decides how to act or behave as they are motivated to pick a given conduct because of the expected effect it will produce. This explains why workers were motivated to engage in the Online Gig Economy because they expected to enjoy career growth, remote work flexibility and, economic advancement opportunities which may not be available in the traditional employment. Altogether, these theories offer a comprehensive understanding of what drives gig workers' motivation and satisfaction on their online jobs.

The practical implications of the study are depicted from the shared experiences of the research participants and respondents. According to the Labor Force Survey released by the Philippine Statistics Authority dated August 7, 2024, the year 2023 posted 12.3% underemployment rate and 4.3% unemployment rate. The lack of regular employment opportunities with competitive compensation and the prevalence of endo or short-term fixed-term employment in the country motivated the workers to engage in the online gig economy and become freelancers. For others, this is an opportunity to pursue alternative careers beyond the 9 to 5 schedule of traditional employment. Based on the study, the gig workers enjoyed career growth, remote work flexibility and, economic advancement opportunities which may not be available for them in the traditional employment. However, workers also faced occupational health issues brought by lack of sleep from graveyard shifts, prolonged work hours and screen time, sedentary lifestyle and, development of unhealthy eating habits which poses an increase on health risks. The major operational issues they encountered on their jobs were the need for stable source electricity and internet connection and the lack of representation, employment/tax classification and government protection. The main professional challenges gig workers faced were the need to upskill and learn software usage, social media marketing and digital platform, the need for discipline and time-management skills to attain healthy work-life integration and, obtaining clients. The increasing number of contingent workforce engaging in online gig economy creates work opportunities, however it also poses new legal, regulatory and policy issues which the researcher aims to shed light into.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings stated above, the researcher arrived on the following conclusions.

Online gig economy has a positive impact on the career of workers as it provides career growth which may not be available to them from traditional employment. It may have a negative impact on the health of workers from working on graveyard shift which may result to lack of sleep, prolonged work hours and screen time, sedentary lifestyle and developing unhealthy eating habits. It also has a positive impact on the schedule of workers as it offers work flexibility, work freedom and freedom to earn more compared to traditional employment. It provides savings to workers such as time, resources and incidental expenses from conveyance and daily commute. However, the work freedom and flexibility may not be true for some workers as they still work on a specified time set by the client with a time tracker. It has a positive impact on the economy of workers as it offers competitive income compared to traditional employment which helped them sustain their family's needs and build their finances. It also helped them with investment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Online gig economy has a very high level of impact on the career and economic aspect of workers, and it also has a high level of impact on their health and schedule. It gives workers a high level of satisfaction in terms of job, income, career development and overall satisfaction even though they experienced high extent of issues and challenges. There is a need now to enact legislation to protect and promote the rights of online gig workers aimed to address the issues and challenges the workers faced, ensure job sustainability and, help in producing globally competitive "Online Freelance Workers" (OFW) with thriving careers in the online job market.

The very high level of impact of online gig economy on the career and economic aspect of workers significantly influence the high level of satisfaction of workers, but there may still be unaccounted factors influencing it. There is a significant relationship between the Level of Impact on Career and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers, and between the Level of Impact on Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers, while there is no significant relationship between the Level of Impact on Health and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers, and between the Level of Impact on Schedule and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers. This is substantiated by the High Level of Satisfaction of Workers despite having High Level of Impact on the Health of the Workers, and High Extent of Issues and Challenges experienced by the workers. Lastly, it could be said that there is a significant relationship between the Level of Impact of Online Gig Economy and the Level of Satisfaction of Workers.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Expand the study to further identify other factors influencing the Level of Satisfaction of Workers.
2. Include the demographic profile of online gig workers in the next study.
3. Explore the relationship between the extent of issues and challenges and the level of satisfaction of workers.

4. Further identify the knowledge and skills gap of online gig workers as basis of training intervention.
5. Identify other issues and challenges experienced by online gig workers not covered in the study as basis of further policy recommendation.
6. Promote innovative and agile Human Resource Management and explore the feasibility and viability of hiring online gig workers in the private and government entities in the country.

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