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Research Article

Motivation to Stay, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges Among Regular Employees Amidst the Privatization of Government-Owned Casinos

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ABSTRACT

With the ongoing privatization of government-owned casinos, this imperative decision to improve operations and fair-market competition for the gaming industry comes with workplace challenges that directly affect the tenured employees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR). Based on these, the quantitative-descriptive study concentrated on examining the motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges of the rank-and-file employees across Luzon, who were selected through stratified random sampling. The data was collected using a structured survey, which was designed to measure the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, as well as challenges (job security, career advancement, and working conditions) of the employees. Through the utilization of the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test, the significant differences of participants demographically amongst the mentioned variables are determined. Moreover, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to identify significant relationships between motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and employee challenges. Results revealed significant differences in workplace challenges and job satisfaction amidst the privatization. Furthermore, perceived job security and both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were found to have been key predictors of employees' motivation to stay. The findings suggest that transparent communication regarding retirement transition packages, job role recalibration, and enhanced performance appraisal, as well as compensation frameworks that consider the employees' age, tenure, position, and job grade, are the most critical levers for maintaining workforce stability, motivation, and retention. These insights could guide PAGCOR and policymakers in formulating employee-centered strategies that mitigate the adverse effects of organizational change and sustain employee engagement.

Keywords: *Government-owned casinos, Job satisfaction, Motivation to stay, Working conditions, Workplace challenges*

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Background

The ongoing privatization of government-owned casinos by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) marks a significant transition in the Philippine gambling industry. Slated for completion by 2028, the privatization aims to enhance a fair competitive market amongst casinos and focus on regulatory responsibilities (Chan, 2024). This shift, driven by the increasing success of privately owned casinos which have outperformed state-run branches, presents a range of professional and personal challenges to employees. This particular change gives rise for employees to face uncertain job security, potential relocation, and the loss of benefits tied to their tenure. Consequently, loss of status and career stability poses significant emotional challenges to employees who undergo organizational shifts (Alshahrani, 2019; Zehra & Siddiqui, 2020). While the gaming industry purports an important transition for growth, it is crucial to understand and examine how regular employees navigate the difficulties related to this change.

Privatization has been widely adopted to enhance efficiency and competitiveness across industries. In the gaming sector, the strong financial performance and demand of the e-games sector has encouraged state-run casinos to pursue privatization to remain competitive (Chan, 2024). However, despite potential operational gains, privatization may adversely affect employees by increasing job insecurity, influencing work stress, and higher turnover intention (Fallatah & Halawani, 2023; Mamun, 2021). Albeit privatization led to positive organizational improvements due to consistent supplemental training and development programs, areas that comprise job security and effective communication amongst employees affected the latter's satisfaction (Dad, 2022). In the Philippine context, the implications of government-run casinos undergoing privatization for tenured employees are underexplored. However, there have been records of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that have undergone privatization. One of these is the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage Systems (MWSS) in Metro Manila, which has been privatized for improved efficiency of water supply, better

operational functions, and to cope with the economic challenges at the time. Cruz (2001)'s case study found that the transition indeed led to improved water supply across Manila and helped disperse the low productivity rates within the enterprise. However, the transition also posed challenges due to the massive layoffs, job security, and retrenchment risks, which have certainly affected the employees. This shows that the privatization efforts of SOEs primarily aid in improving the services, revenue, and management; their impacts, however, particularly in the labor sector, have to be approached with extensive skill-enhancement programs and recalibrating income distributions (Tano, 2024).

Despite such findings, there is a visible literature gap that examines how privatization impacts regular employees of SOEs during the transition changes. Most studies focus on addressing and identifying the impact of privatization economically and operationally (Alabastro, 2022; Bajra et al., 2021), with limited concentration aimed at identifying the employees' well-being. Consequently, the limited research purports that the impact of privatization on job satisfaction and retention, specifically in niche sectors like government-owned casinos, is both varied and context-dependent, making it challenging to incorporate in the local setting. While studies show factors such as pay equity, job equity, and corporate social responsibility initiatives influence satisfaction and retention (Kim et al., 2020; To & Huang, 2022), its limited regional context (e.g., Macao and USA) require broader regional context across different gaming markets. The need to explore these aspects is also emphasized in recent literature, which highlights the absence of research focused on the experiences and performance of employees in privatized organizations (Shafai, 2022), especially in the Philippines. Employees are considered to be one of the most important members of an organization, as their respective roles contribute to the effective functioning of operations. Studies show that job satisfaction is strongly related to job performance, productivity, commitment, and lower absenteeism (Cruz et al., 2025; Delos Santos et al., 2025; Gazi et al., 2024). In addition, public sector employees were found to be more satisfied with their jobs

and were less motivated by financial rewards, in comparison with the private sector employees who prioritize fair pay and motivation (Caogdan et al., 2023; Kalaivani & R.Nirmala, 2025). This highlights that public sector employees value the difference in organizational structure and administration, and that they are most likely to be affected by major changes, specifically the privatization of government-owned casinos.

Thus, this study aimed to explore how these employees cope with the changing landscape, focusing on the relationship between job satisfaction, retention, and the challenges they face. Specifically, the study examined the following: firstly, employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation during privatization, their work-life balance, and overall satisfaction with their roles; secondly, the factors that influence employees' decision to remain in government-owned casinos; and lastly, the multifaceted challenges employees face brought about by the privatization. Thus, the findings from this study would contribute to bridging the literature gap regarding the labor sector's challenges during privatization across the gaming sector and to provide insights as to what employee retention and intervention strategies should be implemented during the critical transition of PAGCOR.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored in the following theories: Social Exchange Theory (SET), Job Embeddedness Theory, and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Collectively, these theories provide a comprehensive framework and basis to further understand how employees' job satisfaction, motivation to stay, and workplace challenges during the privatization of government-owned casinos coalesce into driving forces that change the employees' behavior and perception, based on specific conditions.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that individuals view and examine relationships based on their respective costs and rewards, consequently influencing their decisions to depart or stay in a specific organization (Blau, 1964; Küçük, 2020). In this study, the aforementioned theory helps explain why regular employees in government-owned casinos may

choose to stay despite privatization, due to benefits such as job security, long-term employment benefits, and commitment to public service. The SET also highlights employees' investments in their roles, both emotionally and professionally (De Souza Meira & Hancer, 2021), and that the presence of an ongoing exchange relationship between the employees and the government-owned casinos can be attributed to the possibility of the employees' choice to reject early retirement or reemployment during the privatization.

Job Embeddedness Theory states that factors such as link, fit, and sacrifice, when evaluated, help in understanding the reasoning behind the employees' decision to remain in an organization (Mitchell et al., 2001; Wu, 2023). To further expound, links refer to employees' connections or relationships with both colleagues and stakeholders, fit evaluates the intersection or similarity of the employee's personal values and the culture of the organization they belong to, and sacrifice examines the possible losses that are associated with departing the organization. Furthermore, the theory can also be utilized to help understand employees' voluntary turnover, and simultaneously as a tool to predict employee retention across organizational contexts (Shah et al., 2020).

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory understands the employees' motivators and external, material factors that both contribute to job satisfaction; motivators that help increase job satisfaction include workplace recognition, growth, and achievement, while hygiene factors that mitigate job dissatisfaction are good compensation, working conditions, and job stability and security (Herzberg, 1966; Shinde, 2025). This theory would serve as a fundamental guide to explain why regular employees who experience significant changes in job benefits, job security, and uncertain career opportunities have their motivation to stay in the organization change, while factors such as enriching the nature of work and organizational recognition help stabilize the challenges brought about by privatization.

Collectively, the aforementioned theories explore and aid in understanding the multidimensional facets of the employees' social and organizational ties, material and emotional

relationships within the organization, and the factors that impact the employees' job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Respectively, the study sought to examine the factors that have influenced regular employees' retention in government-owned casinos, and it is through these theories that the establishment of policy recommendations aimed at sustaining the well-being and motivation to stay of the employees during privatization was enriched and understood.

Methods

Research Design. This study made use of a quantitative-descriptive research design, employing a correlational, comparative, and survey approach to properly examine the employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges undergoing privatization across the government-owned casinos in Luzon. The aforementioned research design was utilized to apply a systematic method and analysis of numerical data, to be able to do a robust statistical comparison, and also examine the correlation among the variables used in the study (Mohajan, 2020), which are the employees' job satisfaction, motivation to stay, career advancement, job security, as well as working conditions and challenges. On the other hand, the survey approach in the study was used to be able to measure the variables using standardized instruments and relevant questionnaires; specifically, Likert scales, which are compatible with producing reliable and comparable data among the participants (Koo & Yang, 2025). This design supports the generalization of findings to the broader population of tenured employees in government-owned casinos, and to evaluate how the privatization process influences their motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges.

Participants and Sampling Procedure. The study utilized a probability sampling method, specifically the stratified random sampling technique. This method is appropriate for examining distinct categories within a large, heterogeneous population and supports proportional representation across strata (Makwana et al., 2023). The study sampled from the employees of government-owned casinos operated by the Philippine Amusement

and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), drawn from branches in Metro Manila, Pampanga (City of Angeles), Olongapo City, CALABARZON area, Tagaytay, Laguna, and Bulacan, from ages 35 to 65 years old. A total of 300 participants from 1,203 employees were stratified by length of service (10–15, 16–20, 21–25, and 25 years and above), position (e.g., rank-and-file positions like Dealers, Shufflers, Operations Staff, Pit Officer, and Shuffler), and job grade (Grades 4–11), after which random samples were drawn from each stratum. These respondents are deemed significant in the study as they are the ones who are directly experiencing the organizational shift due to privatization in government-owned casinos. Thus, their response would aid in ascertaining and producing meaningful inferences on how changes in administration impact job satisfaction, motivation to stay, and challenges experienced by regular employees from different demographic groups.

Instrument of the Study. The research instrument was an expert-validated research instrument aligned with the objectives of the study, which have been content validated by industry experts and were subjected to pilot testing to ensure its accuracy and effectiveness in measuring the relevant variables. The questionnaire comprised four sections: demographic profile, motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges related to job security, career advancement, and working conditions. The demographic items included in the study were categorized into six: casino-specific items, age, gender, position, job grade, and length of service. In terms of items focused on measuring employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges, these were tailored to address privatization-related concerns, specifically focusing on job benefits, career opportunities, and employment stability. All the items made use of a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) to properly describe and determine the responses of the participants. Integrated, the instrument used in the study helped in measuring the variables related to the impact of privatization on the employees of government-owned casinos in Luzon.

Data Gathering Procedure. To gather the data relevant to the study, the adapted

questionnaire validated by industry experts was given to the participants grouped in strata (e.g., job grade and job positions) through self-administration. The participants are primarily sampled from PAGCOR-operated casinos in the following locations: Metro Manila, Pampanga (City of Angeles), Olongapo City, CALABARZON area, Tagaytay, Laguna, and Bulacan. The method of the questionnaire distribution is made both online and in traditional pen-and-paper formats that differ depending on the respondents' accessibility, and was distributed after receiving the approval of the casino management. The answered and completed questionnaires were re-checked afterwards to ensure that the responses were complete, consistent, and accurate. The results were then organized, analyzed, and interpreted using the selected and appropriate statistical analysis techniques to ensure that the employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges during privatization were measured successfully.

Data Analysis. To analyze and interpret the pertinent data, frequency and percentage were used to summarize and determine the distribution of the respondents' demographic groups. Mean and standard deviation were also utilized to accurately describe the employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and perceived workplace challenges. Nonparametric tests were applied to examine group differences across demographic variables. Due to the non-normal distribution of data, particularly

due to the use of the four-point Likert scale and limited sampled population (Luzon branches of PAGCOR), the Mann-Whitney U Test were used to compare two demographic groups (e.g., gender), while the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied to employ comparisons in larger demographic groups of the participants (e.g., age, job grade, length of service, and job position). Lastly, Pearson's or Spearman's correlation coefficients were used to assess whether there are significant relationships among the respondents' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges experienced during the privatization.

Ethical Considerations. The study adhered to the strict ethical guidelines of research, data privacy, and research participation principles. All the data gathered from the study were stored securely and can only be accessible to the researchers, which were analyzed objectively and fairly. The identities of the respondents were kept confidential, and any personal identifier information were not included in the data analysis and reports aside from age, gender, job grade, length of service, and job position. Additionally, the respondents were informed about the purpose of the research prior to their participation, as well as their rights to withdraw at any time. Finally, all the collected data from the participants were only used for the purpose of the study, and any significant revisions were subject for approval and review by the immediate supervisor of the researchers.

Results and Discussion

The Level of Regular Employees' Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges

Table 1. The Level of Regular Employees' Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges

Variables	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1. Employees' Intrinsic Motivation to Stay	3.00	0.776	Moderately Motivated to Stay
2. Employees' Extrinsic Motivation to Stay	2.68	0.803	Moderately Motivated to Stay
3. Employees' Job Satisfaction	2.12	0.804	Slightly Satisfied
4. Employees' Challenges in terms of Job Security	3.56	0.675	High Job Security Concern
5. Employees' Challenges in terms of Career Advancement	3.37	0.701	Significant Career Advancement Challenges
6. Employees' Challenges in terms of Working Conditions	3.37	0.686	Severe Deterioration in Working Conditions

Table 1 presents the overall motivation, job satisfaction, job security, career advancement, and working conditions level of regular employees during the privatization of government-owned casinos. In terms of intrinsic motivation, the respondents had an overall mean of 3.00 ($SD = 0.776$), with a verbal interpretation of 'moderately motivated to stay.' This was supported by Albrecht et al. (2021) who found in their study that employees who feel socially connected and autonomous are more likely to engage meaningfully and persist in their roles, especially when they are given task and skill variety. Autonomy, being part of the three basic psychological needs linked to intrinsic motivation, is also a significant factor that helps employee engage more meaningfully to their work alongside social connectedness (Autin et al., 2021). This suggests that while employees find a fair degree of internal satisfaction in their work, there is still a probability for improvement in fostering deeper emotional or professional investment in the organization. On the other hand, the respondents' extrinsic motivation, with an overall mean of 2.68 ($SD = 0.803$), shows that they are also moderately motivated to stay. Particularly, factors like compensation, benefits, promotion, and working conditions influence the employees' intention to stay (Bugay et al., 2025; Cachero et al., 2026; Gupta, 2023; Menon & Bhagat, 2023; van der Hulst & Zwaal, 2024). This indicates that employees moderately value external factors-such as compensation, benefits, and job security in influencing their decision to stay in the casino organization during the organizational shift. These results parallel on the Social Exchange Theory, which explains that due to the employees' perceived and existing emotional relationship and evaluated rewards towards the organization, they have decided to remain.

In terms of job satisfaction, with an overall mean score of 2.12 ($SD = 0.804$), the employees are shown to be 'slightly satisfied' which is indicative of a generally low level of satisfaction during the organizational privatization process. It suggests that while some transitional support was provided, it was not sufficient to generate a meaningful sense of satisfaction or engagement among employees affected by the structural change, as there is an unclear

structure and communication to inform the employees regarding the new policies and systems related to their workload, professional growth, organizational collaboration, and overall importance to the refined goals during the privatization. Also, it postulates the importance of maintaining role clarity, particularly during organizational changes, as it significantly impacts the employees' resilience, job satisfaction, and adaptability (Bernuzzi et al., 2023; Neves & van Dam 2024; Tao & Campbell, 2020). Additionally, to significantly increase employee's readiness for change, inclusive leadership and transparent messaging should be considered, which is critically important during transitions such as privatization (Abdulla et al., 2024), as it aids in instilling security and inclusiveness among employees. Regarding job security, the results show that the employees had an overall mean of 3.56 ($SD = 0.675$) meaning that the respondents are greatly concerned about the stability of their employment and are insecure during their organization's privatization. Specifically, due to the discussions regarding lay-offs, possible job loss, termination, downsizing, and unclear policies as well as criteria regarding job retention, the employees' job security was significantly impacted, resulting to high job insecurity. This was highlighted in a study by Russo and Terraneo (2020) which examined the impact of job insecurity to the mental well-being of open and non-open-ended contract workers and found that the higher the self-perceived job insecurity including the sense of powerlessness of the employees, the lower their mental well-being. It emphasizes how organizational transitions not only impact operations, but also influence the psychological state of employees, particularly in consideration with job retainment and opportunities.

The respondents' challenges during the privatization in terms of career advancement, with an overall mean of 3.37 ($SD = 0.701$), is interpreted as 'significant career advancement challenges.' This suggests that employees perceive major barriers to their growth and promotional opportunities under the new privatized structure, such as prioritization of external hiring instead of internal promotions, reduced career progression opportunities, insufficient training and development, lesser promotion

opportunities for tenured employees, and inconsistent communication regarding the policies related to career advancement. This aligns with the findings of Belschak et al. (2020), which explains that employees' negative beliefs during large-scale organizational change led to decreased engagement and higher turnover intentions. Furthermore, Darling and Cunningham (2023) found that public service employees' career plateau is typically caused by perceptions of favouritism and discrimination, competition, and skills and education deficiency. All these highlight the importance of transparent advancement opportunities and organizational communication, which have been shown to influence employee engagement and commitment (Jiang & Shen, 2020; Weer & Greenhaus, 2020). Lastly, the employees' challenges in terms of working conditions with an overall composite mean of 3.37 ($SD = 0.686$), shows that there is a severe deterioration in their working conditions. This indicates that the respondents perceive significant negative changes in their workplace environment, resources, morale, and overall operations as a result of the shift toward privatization. This in

cludes decreased availability of necessary re

sources used in daily operations, a less conducive and safe physical environment, a lack of additional support, and heightened confusion in workplace policies, and lower morale since the start of the privatization. The prior mentioned systemic change often generates psychological stress among employees which mediates employees' resistance to change, and

underscores the significance of addressing factors such as self-esteem, communication, and self-efficacy, which are related to morale, in order to effectively implement organizational shift (Abdulla et al., 2024; Potemkin, 2021). Although workload remains a concern, its relatively lower rating suggests that it is overshadowed by more immediate emotional and structural disruptions associated with privatization.

In summary, the levels of the employees' motivation during privatization shows that they are committed to the organization despite the on-going transitional change. Particularly, while compensation and benefits are important, the interpersonal relationships and commitment that they have towards the government-owned casinos are the factors that increase employee retention. However, the organization shall take into account the job dissatisfaction, job insecurity, deteriorating working conditions, and impeded career advancement shown from the response of the rank-and-file employees to mitigate the negative impacts of privatization to the respondents' overall turnover intentions and engagement, as it can effectively increase the motivation of the respondents, as highlighted in Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory and the Job Embeddedness Theory. By enriching the hygiene factors and strengthening the links and sacrifice factors of the privatization framework, the current negative disposition of the employees propagated by uncertainty in their tenure, compensation, roles, promotions, and morale may decrease.

Regular Employees' Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges When Grouped According to Age, Gender, Length of Service, Position, and Job Grade

Table 2. Regular Employees' Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges When Grouped According to Age, Gender, Length of Service, Position, and Job Grade

Variable	Groups	Kruskal Wallis <i>H</i>	<i>p</i>
Intrinsic Motivation	Age	2.101	.350
	Length of Service	5.557	.235
	Position	14.644	.005
	Job Grade	16.885	.180
Extrinsic Motivation	Age	1.372	.504
	Length of Service	.952	.917
	Position	4.110	.391
	Job Grade	4.616	.707

Variable	Groups	Kruskal Wallis <i>H</i>	<i>p</i>
Job Satisfaction	Age	11.966	.003
	Length of Service	4.944	.293
	Position	29.745	.000
	Job Grade	30.410	.000
Job Security Challenges	Age	9.788	.007
	Length of Service	9.727	.045
	Position	38.047	.000
	Job Grade	38.589	.000
Career Advancement Challenges	Age	9.699	.008
	Length of Service	7.223	.125
	Position	21.834	.000
	Job Grade	21.142	.004
Working Conditions Challenges	Age	8.846	.012
	Length of Service	10.071	.039
	Position	31.085	.000
	Job Grade	28.419	.000

Table 2 shows the difference between motivation, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges when grouped according to age, length of service, job position, and job grade. In terms of age, the results revealed no statistically significant differences among the intrinsic ($p = .350$) and extrinsic ($p = .504$) motivation across the age groups (35-45, 46-55, 56-65). Similarly, length of service indicated that there are no significant differences in both motivational factors ($p = .235$, $p = .917$) based on tenure, as well as job position which include Dealer, Operation's Staff, Pit Officer, Shuffler, and Sorter in terms of extrinsic motivation ($p = .391$). However, there is a significant difference in the intrinsic motivation of employees based on job position ($p = .005$). Specifically, dealers, shufflers, and pit officers had the highest level of intrinsic motivation. This indicates that those with direct and active engagement in gaming operations find their roles more intrinsically rewarding. This may be attributed to the interactive nature of their tasks, opportunities for skill utilization, real-time decision-making, and high social engagement, which foster the antecedent of motivation: sense of purpose, followed by competence, and autonomy, of which the last two are key components of intrinsic motivation (Good et al., 2021; Honig, 2021). On the contrary, operations staff and sorters have the lowest intrinsic motivation. This may be attributed to the predominantly repetitive nature

or back-end with lower interaction and reward of their tasks, that are not psychologically engaging.

Consequently, workers in the aforementioned positions might consider their jobs more as duties than as a way to grow and find personal satisfaction and fulfillment in their jobs. Furthermore, the results suggest that while there is no significant difference in the respondents' extrinsic motivation ($p = .707$) when grouped according to their job grades, their intrinsic motivation differ ($p = .018$). Specifically, employees in higher job grades (e.g., Job Grade 8 and 10) exhibit greater intrinsic motivation than those in lower grades (e.g., Job Grade 4), likely due to increased autonomy, decision-making authority, leadership roles, and alignment with professional values. More importantly, enriched job roles with high levels of autonomy, skill variety, task significance, and performance feedback are shown to foster higher intrinsic motivation (Zhao et al., 2024). This emphasizes the necessity to continuously examine job roles and find ways to innovate and enrich them, as employees with low job grades tend to have limited autonomy and professional growth opportunities. The low intrinsic motivation affirms the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, which explains that factors such as workplace recognition and achievements help increase employees' intrinsic drive.

With regard to job satisfaction, the results indicate that there is no significant difference regardless of the respondents' length of service ($p = .293$). However, with focus on age, it is found that there is a statistically significant difference ($p = .003$) across the three age groups (35-45, 46-55, 56-65). Markedly, employees aged 56-65 have the highest job satisfaction followed by the 46-55 group, and the 35-45 group. This implies that employees nearing retirement tend to exhibit higher job satisfaction due to greater job stability, seniority benefits, clear role understanding, and a strong sense of loyalty and organizational belonging, making them more resilient to change and workplace stress. On the contrary, younger ones (35-45 and 46-55) may still be at the height of building their careers, aiming for promotion, extending their tenure and permanence, and are navigating work-life balance issues, which may contribute negatively to their satisfaction with the job, particularly during the period of organizational change, when all these aspects are challenged. Likewise, a study by Kollmann et al. (2020) emphasized that job satisfaction varies depending on age, with older employees being primarily satisfied by their task contributions while younger employees are satisfied with monetary rewards, further postulating the difference in the aspects employees value to feel satisfied as they grow older. Thus, the policies to be restructured during privatization must concentrate carefully on offering equitable and lucrative career advancement opportunities for employees in the younger age group.

Moreover, when the employees are grouped according to job position ($p = .000$) and job grade ($p = .000$), significant differences are shown. Specifically, dealers had the lowest job satisfaction, while pit officers, shufflers, and sorters have high levels of job satisfaction. The significant variation in job satisfaction could be attributed to the nature of responsibilities and working conditions associated with each job position (Karatzas et al., 2023; Mohd Noor, 2020). To further expound, Dealers have increased stress risks as their role mainly focuses on repetitive and routine tasks that are typically limited to customer interaction, leading to decreased job satisfaction. On the other hand, Pit Officers and Shufflers differ, as their roles

are concentrated on supervising the operations and are more autonomous in nature; thus, their day-to-day tasks are varied and enriched. This highlights how critical it is to define and design job roles, as their duties and responsibilities impact the levels of employees' job satisfaction on a regular basis, and during the privatization. This aligns with the Job Embeddedness Theory, particularly the *sacrifice* dimension, as when the employees' perceived losses seem to be smaller than the gains (in this context, job satisfaction decreases due to specific job positions being monotonous and operations becoming unclear), it affects their decision to remain committed to the organization.

In terms of job grade, the findings show that there are significant differences in the employees' job satisfaction. Specifically, respondents whose Job Grade is 4 had the highest job satisfaction, while respondents belonging to Job Grades 8, 9, and 10 showed the lowest job satisfaction levels. These differences postulate that the differences among the employees' roles, levels of job security, degree of recognition, and involvement in the decision-making process as the privatization starts, significantly impact their job satisfaction levels. Specifically, employees in lower job grades (e.g., Job Grade 4) tend to have higher job security as their roles have lower demands and they have better labor protection. However, employees in middle grades (e.g., Job Grades 8, 9, 10) tend to have more responsibilities at work, and thus, they experience increased stress, role confusion, and insufficient rewards. On the contrary, employees whose job grades are higher (e.g., Job Grade 11) have reported increased job satisfaction, which may be attributed to the fact that their roles provide better control, leadership opportunities, and higher decision-making participation. Considerably, the result showing how employees from middle job grades are more likely to be impacted by job dissatisfaction is supported in Hu et al. (2023)'s study, which found that mid-level leaders, due to greater demands in their roles and significantly lesser job control, have lower well-being. Thus, it is important that the responsibilities of the employees are maintained and outlined with clarity, so as to ensure that their job satisfaction remains high (Tao & Campbell, 2020), more

critically during such significant changes like PAGCOR's ongoing privatization.

Moreover, the respondents' length of service was found to have no significant differences in working conditions ($p = .125$). This result underscores that the employees' perceptions regarding the challenges and changes in their working conditions are similar, regardless of their tenure. Regarding the workplace challenges (e.g., job security, career advancement, and working conditions) that the respondents experience, the results illustrated that there are significant differences in these factors when grouped demographically (e.g., age, length of service, job position, and job grade). In particular, respondents aged 46-55 and those who have been in service for 16-30 years were shown to have the highest concern with their career advancement, working conditions, and job security during privatization. This may be due to the fact that their responsibilities are higher, and because they are currently at the height of their career, unclear policies with regard to promotions and professional growth during the ongoing organizational changes, intensify their concern. This was further affirmed by Huang et al. (2020), whose study showed that older employees are more vulnerable to job insecurity due to possible job loss. The competitive and age-sensitive employment market in the country is also among the hurdles that contribute to this finding. However, employees who have been in service for thirty-one and above years and from ages 56-65 have been shown to have decreased levels of job insecurity, concern regarding career advancement, as well as the changing workplace conditions. Specifically, the findings are likely due to the aforementioned respondents being close to or in the age of retirement, having access to lucrative opportunities in tenure and retirement packages, and decreased career-growth expectations. Lastly, the employees whose ages are from 35-45 years have been found to have been more adept and open to the changes brought about by privatization, as their concerns are mainly focused on

maintaining their personal desires that converge with their job roles (Huang et al., 2020).

The job position also showed significant differences. Specifically, Dealers have been found to experience high levels of perceived workplace challenges, as the nature of their role is typically at the frontline and is entry-level, limiting their career advancement opportunities, and making them vulnerable to job restructuring during privatization. This was supported by Riedel et al. (2023), who found that employees in the frontline are indeed increasingly vulnerable due to higher job demands, which, in turn, affect their overall well-being and performance. On the contrary, pit officers have the lowest levels of perceived workplace challenges, as their role is concentrated on supervising daily operations. This gives them increased autonomy and deeper organizational embeddedness, as their role requires further experience that is not as susceptible to layoffs and to the changes brought about by privatization. In terms of job grades, it has been found that employees belonging to middle-level job grades (JG 7, 9, and 10) report high perceived workplace challenges, meaning that they experience job insecurity, decreased career advancement opportunities, and low working conditions, due to higher responsibilities, coupled with limited job control and lack of career certainty. On the other hand, employees whose job grades belong in levels four, five, and eleven have exhibited decreased perceived workplace challenges due to seniority-related stability, lower performance expectations, and familiarity with the organization. These findings coincided with the Lifespan Theory, which states that factors such as current career stage, perceived control over life outcomes, and social constraints are evaluated by individuals to adjust their goals respectively (Heckhausen et al., 2021; Hupkens et al., 2021). To sum, the results highlight how critical tenure, role positioning, and current career stage are on employees' responses to privatization, as these are the primary facets directly impacted by the prior mentioned transition.

Regular Employees' Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges When Grouped According to Gender

Table 3. Significant Difference between Motivation, Job Satisfaction, and Workplace Challenges When Grouped According to Gender

Variable	Groups	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
Intrinsic Motivation	Female	159.78	9706.5	.126
	Male	144.23		
Extrinsic Motivation	Female	154.14	10839.5	.550
	Male	148.04		
Job Satisfaction	Female	149.98	10766.0	.931
	Male	150.85		
Job Security Challenges	Female	146.85	10387.5	.535
	Male	152.97		
Career Advancement Challenges	Female	143.98	10040.5	.278
	Male	152.97		
Working Conditions Challenges	Female	140.24	9588.5	.089
	Male	157.43		

Table 3 presents the results to determine whether there are significant differences in motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges (e.g., job security, career advancement, and working conditions) of the employees undergoing privatization in government-owned casinos, when grouped according to gender. It has been found that there are no significant differences between male and female employees in terms of intrinsic motivation ($p = .126$), extrinsic motivation ($p = .550$), job satisfaction ($p = .931$) [albeit it is statistically comparable], job security challenges ($p = .535$), career advancement challenges ($p = .278$), and working conditions challenges ($p = .089$).

These indicate that gender does not significantly affect the respondents' motivation to stay, their satisfaction within their jobs, as well as the workplace challenges that they face during privatization. It suggests that male and female employees experience similar levels of job security, career advancement opportunities, recognition, and working conditions during the privatization process. This is parallel to Freder-

ick and Lazzara (2020)'s study, which examined whether the enjoyment, well-being, and job satisfaction of employees differ in gender, particularly among women. Their results showed that gender does not play a role in increasing job satisfaction and well-being; it is through leadership positions that it becomes relevant. Similarly, relevant research emphasized that the practice of gender equality and equity among organizations contribute to expanding diversity, productivity, innovation, and financial performance among employees; it requires a 'multi-faceted approach' from various administrative parts of organizations to foster an inclusive workplace and reduce gender-based wage gaps (Du, 2024; Nur Amelia et al., 2024). In summary, the findings further indicate that there are consistent organizational policies and role expectations across genders in the study prior and during the privatization process, reflecting equitable treatment and uniform exposure to employment opportunities, benefits, role expectations, promotions, uncertainties and workplace conditions.

The Respondents' Challenges and Its Relationship to Motivation to Stay and Job Satisfaction

Table 4. Significant Relationship of Respondents' Challenges to Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Statistical Treatment	Challenges		
		Job Security	Career Advancement	Working Conditions
Intrinsic Motivation	<i>r</i>	.035	.066	.041
	<i>p</i>	.543	.255	.475

Variable	Statistical Treatment	Challenges		
		Job Security	Career Advancement	Working Conditions
	<i>N</i>	300	300	300
Extrinsic Motivation	<i>r</i>	-.128*	-.080	-.091
	<i>p</i>	.027	.166	.114
	<i>N</i>	300	300	300
Job Satisfaction	<i>r</i>	-.239**	-.185**	-.207**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.001	.000
	<i>N</i>	300	300	300

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients assessing the relationship between employees' perceived challenges (job security, career advancements and working conditions) and three outcome variables: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and job satisfaction. Based on the correlation values and their significance levels, intrinsic motivation was not significantly related with any of the aforementioned challenges. However, extrinsic motivation has a statistically significant negative correlation with job security ($r = -.128$, $p = .027$). Furthermore, job satisfaction showed statistically significant negative correlations with all three challenge variables: job security ($r = -.239$, $p < .001$), career advancement ($r = -.185$, $p < .001$), and working conditions ($r = -.207$, $p < .001$).

The significant negative relationship between extrinsic motivation and job security implies that as employees' concerns about job security increase, their motivation driven by external rewards (e.g., pay, benefits, recognition) tends to decrease. This relationship may reflect that fears of losing one's job or instability in employment consequently reduce the perceived value or attainability of external rewards. In Job Embeddedness Theory, this result has exhibited the *sacrifice* dimension, where the employees assess the possible losses when they depart the organization, due to privatization. Additionally, the results are shown to be consistently associated with job satisfaction. It has been shown that there is a significant negative relationship between all three of the challenged variables of job security, career growth, and working environment, and job satisfaction. This implies that when employees encounter increasingly demanding situations at

work or their place of employment, their level of satisfaction at the workplace greatly declines. To further expound, job security correlates the most negatively with all the others ($r = -.239$) and thus, it is a significant factor that affects the well-being and morale of the employees as the process of privatization is carried out. Notably, this gives emphasis that perceived unproductive change, hindrance to progress, and dissatisfying workplace situations may conclusively reduce the employees' optimism about their occupation.

These findings align with recent research emphasizing that job insecurity is a significant predictor of decreased job satisfaction and motivation (Devyani & Meria, 2023), especially during organizational transitions such as privatization, and highlights the need for organizations to strengthen and maintain employee relations. Specifically, in an empirical study conducted in Hubei Province, China's state-run electric power and license chemical companies, it has been found that job insecurity impact all employees differently. Workers who possess higher optimism and shared strong psychological similarity with their supervisors tend to have higher job satisfaction, which helps decrease the negative effects of job insecurity on job satisfaction (Zheng et al., 2014). Similarly, job insecurity was shown to negatively impact employees' mental health and work attitudes, but personal and organizational resources help mediate it (Pires, 2025). The results also show how greatly *hygiene factors* and *motivation factors* of the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, when threatened and are changing with uncertainty, play a role in determining employee retention during PAGCOR's ongoing privatization.

Conclusions

To examine the impacts of privatization to the employees of government-owned casinos, the study explored their motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges. The study found that employees in government-owned casinos undergoing privatization are predominantly male, middle-aged, long-tenured, and concentrated in frontline, mid-level positions. This workforce profile heightens sensitivity to organizational change, particularly regarding job security, career advancement, and working conditions, and highlights the need to explore inclusive strategies. Employees of the government-owned casinos were found to have moderate intrinsic motivation mainly because of enriched relationships with colleagues and job-related tasks, as well as feelings of organizational pride. However, there were salient gaps in areas related to personal recognition and opportunities for professional growth. Consequently, extrinsic motivation was also found to be moderate among employees, which is typically rooted in job stability and financial security rather than performance incentives. On the other hand, the employees' job satisfaction has plummeted during the privatization process due to concerns regarding exclusive communication and critical decision-making, and a lack of transparency of the ongoing transition. In terms of workplace challenges, the unprecedented decrease in opportunities for promotion and professional growth, perceived favoritism, and ambiguous transition policies, were part of the factors that impacted the employees' perceived job security, career advancement opportunities, and declining working conditions.

Additionally, there are also significant differences in the employees' job grade, job position, length of service, and age. This postulates that job roles and current career stage play a greater role than demographics when it comes to employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges. Specifically, employees whose roles were mid-level and are currently at the peak of their careers experience heightened vulnerability and concern to possible job stagnation, increased workload pressures, and job role redundancy brought about by the ongoing privatization of PAGCOR.

Conversely, it is indicated that there is a strong negative relationship between the perceived workplace challenges (e.g., job security, career advancement, and working conditions) and job satisfaction. Similarly, extrinsic motivation is also impacted by the same aforementioned challenges. This shows that factors such as rewards, compensation, and benefits can significantly impact employees' job satisfaction, despite the presence of personal purpose and workplace collaboration. To sum up, the findings of the study underscore the necessity to promulgate transparent, inclusive, and enriched role restructuring in order to implement management strategies that cater to both the productivity of the organization and the well-being of the employees during privatization. Lastly, implementing a thoroughly revised career advancement framework for tenured employees, particularly those who have been in the organization for a long time and are at the middle of their careers, would aid in providing timely and tailored support that would help in the maintenance and betterment of organizational trust, engagement, and stability during the ongoing privatization of PAGCOR set to conclude in 2028.

Implications and Recommendations

The PAGCOR-led privatization of government-owned casinos, slated for completion in 2028, marks a significant organizational transition and comes with implications for employees' motivation to stay, job satisfaction, and workplace-related challenges. The results of the study emphasize the necessity to implement strategic and employee-focused management changes, as the increase in the employees' job insecurity, as well as uncertainties regarding compensation and definitive job roles, and detailed organizational culture restructuring, may impact the employees' motivation to stay. It is therefore recommended that the management and the administration, who closely work on the ongoing privatization, employ adaptive and effective strategies to ensure that the employees' age, length of service, job position, and job grade are considered. It is also necessary that employees whose tenure is long and are middle-aged be given specialized support

through updated training sessions, comprehensive early retirement options, reassignment, and/or promotion, and psychological readiness programs. Moreover, the motivation of the employees should be maintained by focusing on and refining intrinsic factors through the application of strengthened mentoring and recognition programs, as well as an enriched and meaningful work involvement. In terms of the extrinsic factors, the organization is recommended to apply performance-based incentives, streamlined career development plans, and accessible wellness packages.

Consequently, the employees' job satisfaction can be maintained during the privatization by establishing clear communication regarding the policy-related changes on job security, career advancement opportunities, in their working conditions, and access to resources, as well as ensuring there is continuity with the positive workplace practices in place before the transition. It is also recommended that comprehensive leadership training, structured promotion systems, and transparent succession planning be implemented. Moreover, middle-grade and mid-career employees warrant increased attention as their demographic was found to have been experiencing heightened job-related stress and job uncertainty, further emphasizing the need for targeted counseling programs, increased leadership opportunities, and structured career growth pathways. To build and maintain the trust of the employees, decrease uncertainty, and collectively encourage proactive employee participation, it is also necessary that clear communication, regular feedback systems, and inclusive discussions, such as town hall meetings and focus groups, are utilized during the privatization process. To add, centering consistent transparency, empathy, and continuity is recommended in constructing a change management framework, which can be supplemented by periodical assessments that focus on understanding the current organizational climate. Finally, future researchers are recommended to expand and conduct comparative, cross-cultural, and in-depth studies to examine, understand, and analyze the effects of privatization on employees' attitudes, behaviors, performance, and outcomes across the public-sector organizations in the Philippines.

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