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Research Article

Emotional Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Temporary Faculty in a Philippine State College

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the emotional challenges and coping strategies of temporary permanent faculty members in a state college in the Bicol Region, whose positions were opened for public application, placing them in a state of employment precarity. Anchored on Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, this qualitative case study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of how faculty members perceive, experience, and respond to job-related uncertainty. Five faculty members from diverse disciplines—Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Electrical Technology, and Agriculture—participated in semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. Through thematic analysis, key emotional responses were identified, including persistent anxiety, diminished self-worth, professional disillusionment, and fear of displacement. The analysis also revealed coping mechanisms rooted in relational, cognitive, and spiritual domains, such as leaning on familial and peer support, engaging in religious reflection, and reframing negative experiences with professional optimism. These findings illuminate how employment insecurity not only disrupts professional stability but also deeply impacts faculty well-being and institutional trust. The study suggests the urgent need for transparent and supportive communication protocols in higher education institutions to buffer the psychosocial toll of employment transitions.

Keywords: *Emotional challenges, Coping mechanism, Temporary permanent faculty, Case study, Higher education employment*

Introduction

Higher education institutions worldwide are currently navigating rapid policy reforms and institutional transitions that affect every facet of academic life. One critical component of

this change is the mandated enhancement of faculty qualifications. To meet the new standards, higher education institutions in the Philippines has employed a group of educators on temporary permanent appointment status

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(Gealone et al., 2023). Under Civil Service Commission (CSC) rules, this status applies to individuals who meet the educational, training, and experience qualifications for a permanent position but lack eligibility, typically in the form of civil service requirements (CSC, 2018).

While this stopgap strategy helps institutions maintain instructional continuity, it also generates emotional strain and professional uncertainty. Many of these faculty members are still in the process of completing their required master's degrees while facing the possibility of losing their positions once items are formally declared open to public application. This situation has been linked to elevated levels of job insecurity and psychological distress (Mohd Shakir & Zia, 2015).

Understanding the emotional consequences of such employment precarity requires a theoretical lens that captures both personal and contextual dimensions of stress. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping provides such a framework, positing that individuals experience stress when perceived environmental demands exceed their coping resources. The model emphasizes the role of cognitive appraisal which explains how individuals interpret stressors and the coping strategies they adopt to manage emotional responses. Within academic settings, this model has been applied to explore faculty responses to workload pressures, job insecurity, and institutional change (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Reevy & Deason, 2014).

Recent studies suggest that coping responses among higher education faculty vary based on institutional type, employment status, and personal motivation. Tanimoto et al. (2025) found that some faculty members experiencing job insecurity maintain psychological well-being through meaning-making and career purpose. Others, however, suffer from burnout and emotional exhaustion, especially in competitive fields like STEM (Bacci et al., 2024). Research by Klainot-Hess (2020) and Shin & Jung (2014) also highlights how performance-based systems, limited job control, and financial precarity shape faculty satisfaction and emotional health. Despite these insights,

much of the existing literature focuses on tenure-track or non-tenure-track faculty in developed contexts, leaving gaps in understanding how job insecurity unfolds in developing country institutions undergoing structural transitions.

The gap in the literature is particularly acute when considering the context of a state college transitioning to university status. Temporary permanent faculty in this setting are caught between institutional aspirations for excellence and the precarious nature of their appointments. They must balance the pressures of meeting evolving academic standards with the uncertainty of their career trajectories. Moreover, although research on stress and coping among temporary employees is emerging, little is known about how these educators at state college experience emotional distress and what coping mechanisms they deploy to sustain resilience during periods of rapid change and uncertainty.

To address these gaps, the present study explores on the types of emotional challenges experienced by temporary permanent faculty in a state college setting and examine the coping strategies they use to navigate this challenging transition. By focusing on this underresearched population in a unique institutional context, the study aims to provide insights that can inform targeted faculty development policies and support systems, thereby enhancing overall well-being and institutional resilience.

Statement of the Problem

This study examines the emotional challenges experienced by temporary permanent faculty members following the posting of their plantilla items, as well as to determine the coping mechanisms they employed in response to the situation. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What were the initial emotional reactions of the concerned faculty members upon learning that their item was posted?
2. What were the emotional and psychological impacts of the posting or publication of their item as temporary permanent faculty members?

3. What emotional setbacks, if any, did the faculty members experience during that period?
4. In what ways did these emotional setbacks affect their work performance as teachers?
5. Did the situation affect their relationship with their colleagues in the workplace?
6. Did the experience have an impact on their relationship with their family?
7. What activities or strategies did the faculty members engage in to lessen the emotional impact of their experience?
8. How did the faculty members cope with the situation and manage their emotional challenges?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore the emotional challenges and coping mechanisms of affected temporary permanent faculty members in a state college setting following the posting of their plantilla items. The case study approach allows for an in-depth understanding of individuals' lived experiences by focusing on both retrospective and current significant life events (Yin, 2012).

Data were collected through semi-structured, open-ended interviews, which provided participants the freedom to express their thoughts and feelings openly and in detail (Barr et al., 2017). The open-ended nature of the questions enabled a free-flowing and in-depth discussion, allowing participants to disclose meaningful insights that may not surface through more rigid interview formats. According to Hoffmann (2007), understanding the emotional labor and power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee enhances the depth and quality of the data gathered. This interaction contributes not only to richer individual narratives but also to the broader understanding of the research topic and the interview process itself.

The case study methodology was selected precisely because it offers a comprehensive view of the participants' experiences, providing space for them to share their stories authentically and without restriction. This aligns with the study's aim to gain nuanced insights into

how the affected faculty members navigated the emotional challenges associated with the institutional decision.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were five (5) temporary permanent faculty members at a state college whose plantilla items were posted or published. These faculty members were selected based on their direct experience with the situation being investigated.

Specifically, three (3) of the respondents were from the College of Education, each with four years of teaching experience, handling various subject areas including Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics. One (1) respondent was from the Institute of Technology, specializing in teaching electrical-related courses. The fifth (1) respondent was from the College of Agriculture, who had also served as a faculty member for four years within the said college.

Among the five respondents, three (3) experienced termination from their respective positions following the posting of their items. Subsequently, two (2) of them were re-hired as temporary permanent faculty members, while one (1) was eventually hired as a permanent faculty member. This purposive selection of respondents was deemed appropriate for the study to capture diverse experiences and perspectives from affected faculty members across different academic units of the institution.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument utilized in this study was a semi-structured interview. Data were gathered through face-to-face, one-on-one interviews with the respondents. This interview method allowed the researcher to explore the participants' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of their situation, consistent with the approach of qualitative research in the social sciences. As noted by Chesebro and Borisoff (2007), qualitative researchers are often more concerned with understanding meaning, perception, and discovery rather than conducting hypothesis testing.

The interviews were audio-recorded, with the consent of the respondents, to ensure accurate transcription of their responses. The re-

sponses were analyzed based on the participants' lived experiences, using their own words and expressions to capture the authenticity of their narratives.

Data Analysis

The data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Each interview was transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts were reviewed multiple times to ensure a deep understanding of the participants' narratives.

Thematic analysis was selected for its flexibility and its capacity to provide rich, detailed, and nuanced accounts of qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach allowed the researcher to identify recurring patterns and organize the data into coherent themes that captured the emotional challenges and coping strategies of temporary permanent faculty. Coding was initially conducted manually, with emerging codes grouped under broader thematic categories. The analysis was iterative, involving a back-and-forth process of refining codes and checking for consistency across transcripts.

To enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were employed. Member checking was conducted by sharing the initial thematic interpretations with selected participants, who confirmed the accuracy and resonance of the findings with their experiences. Peer debriefing was also done with a fellow qualitative researcher to minimize subjectivity and validate the consistency of the themes. While triangulation through multiple data sources was limited due to the case-specific nature of the study, the use of multiple participants across disciplines provided a degree of data source triangulation, contributing to the credibility of the findings.

Recognizing the interpretive nature of qualitative research, the researcher engaged in reflexive practice (Uştuk & Çomoğlu, 2021) throughout the research process. As a faculty

member within a similar institutional environment, the researcher acknowledged the potential influence of their positionality and insider perspective on the interpretation of the data. A reflexive journal was maintained to document personal assumptions, reactions, and decisions made during data collection and analysis. This practice helped mitigate bias and ensured that the voices of the participants remained central in the analytic process.

The use of thematic analysis within a case study framework, as described by Baxter and Jack (2008), enabled a rich and holistic exploration of the emotional experiences and coping mechanisms of faculty members in the context of institutional transition. The analysis illuminated the lived realities of these educators, providing insight into how they navigate professional uncertainty and psychological stress.

Results and Discussion

Emotional Reactions Upon Learning of the Posting

Upon learning that their faculty items were posted for public application, participants expressed a spectrum of strong emotional reactions, including betrayal (Respondent A), shock (Respondent B), denial (Respondent C), anger (Respondent D), and disappointment (Respondent E). These reactions reflect the immediate psychological impact of perceived job insecurity, interpreted here as a form of symbolic loss.

Drawing from Freud's psychoanalytic theory, a symbolic loss such as the loss of job stability can evoke intense affective responses, including depressive symptoms and relational detachment (Baumeister et al., 1998; Meltzer et al., 2010; Wege et al., 2017). The presence of both anger and acceptance within the same emotional episode, particularly as illustrated by Respondent C's narrative, highlights an internal conflict often overlooked in policy discussions surrounding contract-based academic appointments.

"I did not feel any resentment because I know that it's also my lapses why it happened. And when I learned that there is posting, so be it. Although, I had some regrets." (Respondent C)

While Respondent C frames their response as rational acceptance, the mention of "regrets" betrays a deeper ambivalence. This emotional layering suggests not only denial - a defense mechanism shielding the ego from anxiety or guilt (Cramer, 2015), but also self-blame, which may complicate recovery and adaptation. This finding is critical, as it reveals how institutional policy changes can inadvertently provoke complex self-evaluative responses that go beyond simple resignation or protest.

The findings resonate with existing literature indicating that transitional employment contexts frequently trigger multi-phase emotional reactions such as denial, anger, resignation that mirror grief processes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Sellar et al., 2018). However, this study adds a localized perspective by illustrating how cultural and institutional expectations in Philippine state colleges may intensify such emotional conflicts, particularly in regions where academic employment opportunities are limited.

A key limitation in interpreting these findings lies in the potential influence of self-presentation during interviews. Respondents may have underreported emotions like resentment or hopelessness to preserve professional dignity or avoid perceived vulnerability. Further research using longitudinal approaches could offer a more dynamic understanding of how these emotional responses evolve over time and in relation to institutional decisions.

Emotional Impact of the Posting as Temporary Permanent

The emotional toll of having their faculty items posted as temporary permanent appointments surfaced vividly in the narratives of participants. Thematic analysis revealed a cluster of affective responses which include low self-esteem, frustration, demoralization, feelings of discrimination, and regret. These emotions underscore the psychological distress associated with perceived professional instability and institutional marginalization.

"It shook my confidence for quite a bit, not really confidence in my ability but confidence of being me as part of the school. I was detached from the school." (Respondent A)

Respondent A's account reveals a critical dimension of the emotional experience: a rupture in professional identity and organizational belonging. In academic settings, where identity is often intertwined with institutional affiliation, the perception of being "detached" from one's academic home can result in profound emotional withdrawal.

"Seems that, it turned my world upside down." (Respondent B)

Respondent B's metaphor speaks to the disorientation and existential instability some participants experienced. The phrase suggests a sudden disruption to the perceived order of one's professional life, echoing themes of cognitive dissonance and emotional shock.

Respondent C added:

"I just felt bad because of my service."

This short but poignant statement reflects a mismatch between effort invested and institutional recognition received. It gestures toward the emotional consequences of perceived undervaluation—a well-documented source of distress on academic labor (Horwitz & Wakefield, 2007; Shin & Jung, 2014).

"My attitude towards work was very affected because my concentration was divided with work and thinking what will be the result on the posting of my item." (Respondent E)

Respondent E's account demonstrates how emotional distress can directly interfere with occupational performance. Such cognitive-emotional fragmentation is consistent with workplace stress theory, which links job insecurity to decreased motivation and attentional focus (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Reevy & Deason, 2014).

While the findings align with broader theories of stress and emotional labor, they also illuminate the unique affective dimensions of faculty life in transitional institutions. The compounded effects of ambiguous employment status, institutional silence, and personal sacrifice contribute to a climate of emotional precariousness. Importantly, this climate does not affect all individuals uniformly; emotional impact

is mediated by prior experiences, expectations, and coping resources.

That said, one limitation of this study is its reliance on retrospective self-reporting, which may not capture the evolving or cumulative nature of emotional experiences. Additionally, the study does not account for how factors such as gender, age, or length of service might shape differential emotional impacts. These aspects warrant deeper investigation in future research.

Emotional Setbacks Experienced During the Posting Period

The period following the posting of faculty items as temporary permanent was marked by significant emotional turbulence among the respondents. Thematic analysis surfaced a spectrum of emotional setbacks including shock, anger, pain, stress, worry, regret, disappointment, and helplessness which are often underpinned by a shared fear of job loss and uncertainty about future employment prospects.

"I am depressed knowing that my item will be posted and there is a chance of losing my job." (Respondent E)

Respondent E's candid admission of depression is notable not only for its emotional weight but also for its contrast with the more subdued responses of others. This divergence illustrates the varying intensities and manifestations of emotional distress across individuals, a reminder that job insecurity is not a monolithic experience.

The literature affirms the prevalence of these responses. Chadha (2021) and Buqo (2021) suggest that individuals facing personal or professional upheaval frequently experience emotional disturbances, even when outward appearances suggest composure. This tension between internal distress and external presentation was echoed by some participants who alluded to masking their true feelings in professional contexts. Such behavior may reflect a cultural or institutional pressure to appear resilient, particularly in hierarchical or bureaucratic settings.

This phenomenon aligns with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress and coping, where emotional responses to perceived loss

or threat are shaped by one's appraisal of the situation and available coping resources. The respondents' setbacks appear to stem not just from the fear of job loss, but from a deeper sense of professional invalidation. For many, the posting signaled not only uncertainty but also a perceived erosion of their legitimacy and belonging within the institution.

Interestingly, while most responses centered on distress, few participants described seeking institutional or peer support during this period. This absence raises critical questions about the role of the organization in managing faculty transitions. Was support unavailable, inaccessible, or simply unperceived by those affected? The lack of mention suggests that feelings of isolation may have compounded the psychological burden.

Moreover, it is important to note that the study did not explore how social identity factors such as gender, age, or tenure might shape the nature and severity of emotional challenges. These variables could interact with institutional dynamics in ways that exacerbate or buffer distress, pointing to the need for more intersectional analysis in future studies.

These findings underscore the urgency of institutional interventions that go beyond technical compliance with posting policies. Organizational transparency, accessible mental health support, and proactive communication strategies could help mitigate emotional fallout. Institutions must recognize that career instability, especially when imposed without dialogue, is not only an administrative issue but a deeply human one with lasting emotional consequences.

Impact of Emotional Setbacks on Teaching Performance

The emotional setbacks caused by the posting period had a tangible and detrimental impact on the teaching performance of respondents. Thematic analysis indicated emotional detachment, diminished motivation, and weakened commitment to instructional duties. Respondents described withdrawing from their roles — not due to lack of skill or capacity, but due to emotional exhaustion and demoralization stemming from institutional uncertainty.

Respondent B's reflections were particularly revealing:

*"I think I become selfish with that. It seems that I don't want to perform."
"I stuck to no employee-employer relationship. I don't bring school work at home anymore."*

These statements illustrate a shift from professional engagement to emotional self-protection. The adoption of strict work-life boundaries, in this case, may not signal healthy detachment but a defensive withdrawal, a psychological strategy to avoid further emotional harm. This reaction can be interpreted through the lens of displacement, wherein the individual redirects frustration from the source (e.g., the institution) to less risky domains (e.g., work output) (Baumeister et al., 1998). What is striking is the respondent's explicit acknowledgment of this behavior, indicating a degree of self-awareness yet a perceived lack of institutional pathways for redress or healing.

Respondent D's description further complicates the picture:

"I feel worthless. I feel that I don't deserve anything. So, my self-worth dropped also. I feel worthless in professional aspect."

This level of demoralization, bordering on identity erosion, points to the depth of impact that administrative decisions can have on educators' psychological and professional selves. It aligns with Clarke and Kissane's (2002) framing of demoralization syndrome, which involves not just sadness but a persistent sense of powerlessness and meaninglessness.

Notably, these experiences contradict the commonly held assumption that professionalism is a buffer against emotional vulnerability. Instead, the findings suggest that professional identity, when unsupported, becomes a site of fragility rather than resilience during institutional upheaval.

Respondent E confirmed how emotional distress impaired teaching efficacy:

"The feeling of disappointment and demoralization affect my daily activities as a teacher. My passion and drive in teaching

decreases and sometimes I cannot deliver my lesson well."

While emotional regulation is often expected of educators, these findings challenge the idea that teachers can or should compartmentalize personal experiences from pedagogical duties. The real-world implications are profound: emotional setbacks tied to administrative actions can ripple through classroom dynamics, affecting not only faculty but students' learning experiences.

This calls for a reevaluation of institutional accountability. Emotional fallout is not a personal failing of teachers but a systemic outcome when transparency, recognition, and support are absent. These findings advocate for the establishment of emotional and psychosocial support systems, not as remedial measures, but as integral components of organizational culture and care.

Moreover, future research could benefit from interrogating potential variations across factors such as gender, years in service, or departmental affiliation, variables that may intensify or buffer emotional fallout.

Impact on Relationships with Co-Workers

The fifth question explored whether the posting of the item as "temporary permanent" affected the respondents' interpersonal dynamics with their co-workers. Thematic analysis revealed a spectrum of experiences, from *professional resilience* to *emotional distancing* and *social withdrawal*, reflecting the nuanced impact of organizational decisions on workplace relationships.

Three respondents indicated that their relationships with co-workers remained relatively stable. They maintained professional decorum and continued fulfilling their instructional roles. However, a notable decline in participation in extracurricular and collaborative activities was observed. While these respondents did not report overt relational conflicts, the reduced enthusiasm can be seen as a form of passive disengagement — signaling silent protest, emotional fatigue, or diminished sense of belonging. This subtle withdrawal challenges the assumption that the absence of interpersonal conflict equates to emotional well-being.

On the other hand, two respondents disclosed that the posting episode strained their relationships with colleagues. Respondent A expressed discomfort with being asked about their well-being, noting:

"Somehow it did. Because personally I don't want people to ask me how am I, we're not okay and being asked how I am just puts me in a vulnerable situation."

This illustrates a self-imposed emotional boundary, which can be interpreted as a coping mechanism rooted in avoidance. According to Anastasides (2012), such emotional distancing is often employed by individuals who feel unsupported or scrutinized, allowing them to exert control over their emotional exposure in unsafe environments. While this may preserve psychological safety in the short term, it risks long-term relational isolation.

More concerning is Respondent D's account of feeling psychologically harmed by peers' remarks:

"I think in some workers, especially those persons who said things that are not good in my mental health during those times. I feel that they are not contented of what I've through for all those months."

This statement points to peer invalidation, where an individual's emotional struggles are minimized or dismissed, leading to deeper feelings of alienation. Research by Brown et al. (2020) underscores that individuals under psychological stress become more susceptible to the emotional weight of social interactions. Even neutral or ambiguous feedback may be interpreted negatively, particularly when trust or empathy is lacking.

These relational strains illuminate a critical contradiction: educational institutions often promote collegiality and collaboration, yet in times of individual crisis, emotional support among peers is not guaranteed. The findings raise a larger organizational issue—that interpersonal resilience does not emerge automatically in high-stress contexts but must be intentionally nurtured through institutional culture and leadership.

While some respondents demonstrated professional resilience, this does not negate the

emotional costs they bore privately. Others experienced relational ruptures that exacerbated their emotional setbacks, suggesting the need for deliberate peer support structures such as mentoring, team debriefings, or open-door counseling initiatives during organizational transitions.

In sum, the findings suggest that while some faculty maintained cordial relations, a significant subset experienced relational disruptions that compounded their distress. Fostering empathy and psychological safety in the workplace, especially during periods of systemic change, should be a strategic imperative, not just a moral ideal.

Impact on Family Relationship

When asked whether the experience of being posted as "temporary permanent" affected their family relationships, all respondents unanimously reported a positive transformation. Rather than fracturing familial ties, the ordeal became a catalyst for strengthened emotional bonds, with family members playing a pivotal role in buffering the stress and restoring emotional equilibrium.

This finding underscores the protective role of familial support, particularly in collectivist cultures such as in the Philippines, where family is traditionally viewed as the primary source of emotional and moral sustenance (Dimitrijević, 2014; Miralao, 1997; Ogormegbunem, 2014). Respondents shared that their families provided spaces of empathy that is listening without judgment, offering reassurance, and reinforcing their sense of worth and stability. Such interactions were instrumental in anchoring the respondents amid professional uncertainty and identity threat.

This aligns with Kawachi and Berkman's (2001) assertion that strong social ties, especially familial ones, not only reduce the risk of emotional deterioration but also enhance resilience by fostering a sense of shared responsibility and mutual care. One respondent reflected that the situation, while emotionally taxing, became a test of solidarity, enabling the family to function as an emotionally cohesive unit:

“Even though we had our own problems, that time we really talked, prayed, and supported each other.”

This narrative illustrates relational resilience, wherein adversity becomes a platform for collective growth and strengthened communication. Merz et al. (2009) highlight that the quality of familial interactions, rather than mere presence, determines the depth of emotional impact. In this case, families were not passive observers but active agents in the respondent’s coping journey, fostering emotional recalibration and a renewed sense of purpose.

However, this uniformly positive picture also invites critical reflection. While family support clearly served as a buffer, it may have also unintentionally masked the need for institutional support systems. The respondents’ reliance on personal networks, rather than organizational structures, suggests a potential gap in the workplace’s emotional and psychosocial scaffolding. Over-reliance on the family may also risk internalizing the notion that professional struggles are private matters to be managed personally, a mindset that could hinder advocacy for systemic change.

In sum, the experience not only revealed the emotional toll of professional uncertainty but also affirmed the transformative role of family as a wellspring of strength. These findings reinforce the argument that emotional resilience is rarely an individual trait but is co-constructed through social systems, with family emerging as a central pillar of support. Nonetheless, educational institutions must recognize the limits of familial coping and proactively create support mechanisms that share in this responsibility.

Coping Mechanisms to Lessen the Impact of the Situation

When asked about the activities or strategies they employed to mitigate the emotional distress brought on by the temporary permanent posting, respondents articulated a range of coping mechanisms that reflected both adaptive responses and temporary defense strategies. These responses underscore the capacity of individuals to seek psychological stability through intentional choices aimed at restoring

self-worth, maintaining motivation, and managing stress.

Two respondents chose to pursue graduate studies, interpreting the experience not solely as a setback but as an opportunity for professional development. This action aligns with Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of Motivation (1964), which asserts that individuals are more likely to pursue goals when they believe those goals will lead to desirable outcomes. By investing in academic advancement, respondents found a productive avenue for personal growth and long-term career preparation, transforming emotional adversity into professional empowerment.

Another two respondents sought alternative jobs, primarily as a means of financial and emotional stability. This coping response reflects the concept of problem-focused coping, a strategy aimed at managing the source of stress itself (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The act of working elsewhere helped alleviate the fear of job loss while reinforcing their sense of productivity and agency. It also illustrates the value of instrumental action in regaining control when primary work environments become sources of emotional strain.

Meanwhile, Respondent E described leisure travel via motorcycle as a personal form of emotional release. This form of leisure-based coping has been widely acknowledged in the literature as a way to cultivate psychological detachment from stressors, foster emotional balance, and increase life satisfaction (González Ramírez & Vanegas Farfano, 2013; Iwasaki, 2002). The freedom and novelty associated with travel offered not only distraction but also a sense of exploration, community, and personal rejuvenation.

In contrast, Respondent A adopted avoidance as an initial coping mechanism by disengaging from digital communication platforms that he perceived as emotionally toxic. This response mirrors Freudian defense mechanisms, particularly avoidance and withdrawal, which serve as short-term solutions to reduce immediate anxiety (Hershcovis et al., 2018). While avoidance may not resolve the underlying problem, it provided momentary relief and protected the respondent from further emotional depletion. Eventually, this avoidance

gave way to peer support, as the respondent preferred to connect with colleagues undergoing similar experiences — a transition from solitary to social coping, which is often more sustainable and emotionally validating.

Taken together, these coping strategies reflect the multi-dimensional nature of resilience, involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral adjustments to restore psychological well-being. Respondents employed both proactive (graduate studies, job-seeking) and palliative (hobbies, travel) methods, revealing that coping is not a singular path but a combination of strategies that evolve over time.

However, the findings also point to the individual burden of coping, suggesting that respondents largely relied on personal efforts rather than institutional support. This raises important implications for organizational responsibility: while individual resilience is commendable, institutions must recognize the emotional toll of ambiguous employment statuses and provide formal avenues for counseling, mentorship, and psychosocial support.

In conclusion, the participants' coping mechanisms illustrate a commendable degree of agency and adaptability. Yet, they also reveal a gap in systemic support, underscoring the need for organizational interventions that proactively assist employees in navigating transitions and professional uncertainties.

Coping Strategies and Resilience in Facing the Situation

Throughout the challenges brought on by the posting situation, the respondents consistently demonstrated resilience, which played a central role in their ability to manage adversity. Resilience is commonly understood as the ability to withstand, adapt, and recover from adversity, stress, or trauma (Werner & Smith, 2001). It is a dynamic process that involves overcoming hardships and emerging stronger. The respondents displayed this quality through their positive mindset, emotional strength, and acceptance of their circumstances, which allowed them to effectively cope with the emotionally taxing situation.

This ability to maintain a positive outlook despite adversity is in line with Froggatt's (1997) assertion that emotional strength and

the practice of acceptance are key components in overcoming difficult experiences. The respondents' stories underscored their commitment to managing their emotional states, confronting challenges with a sense of agency, and choosing to remain steadfast in the face of uncertainty.

A particularly prominent theme in the responses was the role of faith in coping with the emotional upheaval. For many respondents, faith in God emerged as the most significant coping strategy. This faith provided them with the strength to accept their reality, maintain hope, and trust in a higher purpose behind the challenging circumstances. This finding supports the concept of religious coping, a framework that highlights the importance of spirituality and religion in providing individuals with meaning, purpose, and hope during times of adversity (Peres et al., 2007). For the respondents, faith became a source of emotional and psychological stability, as they believed their struggles were part of a divine plan designed to teach valuable lessons or lead to eventual growth.

The respondents' resilience was not solely rooted in emotional strength but was also bolstered by their spiritual beliefs, which acted as a protective factor against the psychological toll of the situation. Their coping strategies were grounded in a blend of optimism, emotional endurance, and acceptance, all of which facilitated their adaptation to the uncertainty and distress they faced. Their ability to stay focused on a higher purpose, despite the lack of clear resolution regarding their professional future, speaks to the profound role of faith-based resilience in navigating complex and emotionally challenging experiences.

In summary, the respondents demonstrated how resilience, reinforced by faith, is a powerful means of coping with personal and professional adversity. These coping strategies allowed them to manage their emotional responses, adjust to their evolving circumstances, and ultimately preserve their psychological well-being. This finding highlights the significance of both individual psychological resilience and spiritual coping mechanisms in fostering emotional recovery during periods of uncertainty and stress.

Conclusion

This study revealed that temporary permanent faculty experienced profound emotional challenges including betrayal, disappointment, and demoralization stemming from the uncertainty of their employment status. These emotional challenges impacted not only their professional identity but also their motivation and performance. Despite this, the respondents demonstrated notable resilience, drawing strength from family support, faith, personal growth efforts, and adaptive coping strategies such as pursuing further education and engaging in leisure activities.

The findings highlight the critical need for higher education institutions to recognize and address the emotional well-being of faculty affected by organizational transitions. Supporting their mental health is not merely a matter of individual welfare, but a key component in sustaining faculty engagement, performance, and retention. Institutions should consider implementing formal psychosocial support systems, clear communication practices, and inclusive policies that reduce uncertainty and promote a sense of security.

Future research could explore institutional responses to job insecurity and how different types of support whether psychological, social, and organizational may mediate faculty well-being. Longitudinal studies might also examine the long-term effects of such transitions on faculty morale, identity, and retention in the teaching profession.

Recommendations

Several recommendations are proposed to support the emotional well-being and resilience of temporary permanent faculty members:

1. To reduce feelings of uncertainty and insecurity, it is essential to establish clear communication channels regarding the status of faculty positions. Faculty members should be kept informed about any changes or updates related to their employment, which would help reduce anxiety and build trust within the institution. Regular meetings between faculty members and administrative leaders could provide a platform for addressing concerns, offering guidance,

and fostering a supportive work environment.

2. Many respondents indicated that pursuing graduate studies or other professional development activities served as a coping mechanism. It is recommended that higher education institutions should continue to encourage and support faculty members in pursuing higher education or professional certifications. This could include providing financial support or flexible schedules to accommodate their academic goals.

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Declaration of Artificial Intelligence Use

This paper utilized Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered tools, specifically ChatGPT and DeepSeek, for language enhancement, grammar correction, clarity improvement, and formatting support. The content, findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this study remain the sole work and intellectual responsibility of the researcher.

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