

Track 08: Valorizzazione del capitale umano, comportamenti organizzativi e performance dei sistemi economici

BEHAVIOURAL CONSEQUENCES OF JOB INSECURITY AND PERCEIVED INSIDER STATUS FOR CONTINGENT WORKERS

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Contingent employment contracts are defined as work arrangements in which an individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment or one in which the minimum hours worked can vary in a non-systematic manner (Polivka et al., 1989:11). They have been widely conceived as an important mean of ensuring the full and efficient use of human resources in contemporary organizations (Capelli 1999; Guest et al., 2006). Hiring contingent workers allows a high degree of flexibility and variation in the workforce, and therefore allows meeting periods of peak of demand. Moreover, firms may be able to reduce employment and administrative costs by using contingent (and peripheral) workers to whom the benefits and the firm-specific training that are offered to permanent employees are not offered (Rogers, 1995).

Corresponding to the increased popularity of contingent work among firms, there has been a significant growth of studies investigating the effects of contingent work contracts on the organizational behavior of workers (recent reviews of the field are by Connelly et al., 2004; De Cuyper et al., 2008). Social exchange represents the most commonly applied theory by this literature and posits that workers' actions are contingent on rewarding reactions from others (Blau, 1964); social exchange processes are not only rational and explicit but also involve positive or negative feelings, which are internally rewarding or punishing (Lawler, et al., 1999; Lawler, 2001). Contingent workers may be assumed to have a less profitable exchange relationship with their firms when compared to permanent workers with the same job, due to the fact that firms do not commit to employ them in a relationship as stable as those of permanent workers (Hipple, 1998). The different temporal attachment of contingent workers, as defined by the

cited definition by Polivka and Nardone (1989), often also implies that contingent workers are more peripheral to the organization when compared to permanent workers since their shorter duration of employment relationship disincentives firms from investing in contingent workers' human capital. For this reason contingent workers are often given less benefits in terms of training, career and professional growth (Sherer, 1996; Rousseau, 1997; Ang et al., 2001; Liden et al., 2003; Van Dyne et al., 1998). Stable work relationships also allows greater possibility of social exchange, as individuals may expect that the other part of the exchange will fairly discharge his obligations in the long run (Holmes, 1981; Konovsky et al., 1994).

Researchers have drawn on social exchange theory (sometimes together with social comparison theory) to predict attitudes and behavior toward the organization among contingent workers, when compared to permanent employees. Nevertheless, relatively little is known about the relationship between work status and organizational behavior at work because results of the available empirical studies show contrasting findings. Contingent workers have been found having less positive outcomes at work, being more likely to call in sick for a shift, and having higher turnover and lower willing to contribute to the organization than permanent employees (Van Dyne et al., 1998), to be more likely to feel socially isolated than permanent employees, to have a weaker attachment to the organization and being less willing to engage in work than permanent employees (Beard et al., 1995; Gallagher et al., 2001; Rousseau, 1998). On the contrary, other studies found opposite results, revealing for temporary workers better attitudes toward organization and more positive behavior at work (McDonald et al., 2000; Feather et al., 2004; Galup *et al.*, 1997). Other research fail to show differences based on work status (Pearce, 1993; Tansky *et al.*, 1995).

Along with research design issues, one of the biggest flaws in research on contingent workers is that contingent work status is mainly operationalized as an "objective" dichotomous variable depending on the type of contract, while attitudes and behavior are likely to be influenced by the perception of being contingent by workers. For example, "permanent' employees who believe that their position is insecure may have job attitudes and behavior that are similar to most contingent workers" (Connelly et al., 2004:976). Our study, therefore, is focused on the effects of perceived job insecurity, rather than simply of the formal type of contract, on workers' attitudes and behavior.

Together with the job insecurity, and thus, subjective perception of the temporal attachment by the worker, we also focus our analysis on the perceived insider status (PIS) of the worker. As mentioned, contingent workers are often considered more peripheral to the organization as firms tend to not invest in their human capital. Non-standard work in general can differ from standard work not only in the temporal attachment of workers but also in their administrative attachment (Pfeffer et al., 1988; Ashford, 2007) which affects whether workers classify themselves as organizational members (Ashford, 2007:69). We, therefore, hypothesize that the perception of being an insider (versus being an outsider or a peripheral part of the organization) will impact on the relationship between work status and attitudes or behavior.

1. Theoretical rationale and hypotheses

Reviews of the research on the impact of contingent work status on workers' attitudes and behavior highlight the contrasting findings of empirical studies and call for more sophisticated research designs, in which other variables should be controlled (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Thus, we propose theoretical mechanisms that might explain contingent workers' behavior. Particularly, in the present study the focus is on job insecurity and PIS as the main intervening variables affecting the psychological relationship between contingent workers and their organization.

Job insecurity is the perceived threat of job loss that may originate because of the temporary nature of the job or because of an imminent bankruptcy or financial difficulties of the firm. Job insecurity regards an individual and psychological state in which workers may experience varying degree of perception of job insecurity, even if they are exposed to the same objective situation (Pearce, 1998; Greenhalgh et al., 1984; Hartley et al., 1991; Sverke et al., 2002). Within the existing literature on contingent work, work status has been identified as one of the most critical determinants of job insecurity (Kinnunen et al., 1994; De Witte et al., 2003; Sveke et al., 2000). More specifically, for Parker and colleagues (2002) job insecurity is exacerbated in temporary employment arrangements, because the

organization makes no promises of security in terms of continuation of the employment relationship and of the job conditions.

Perceived insider status (PIS) represents the extent to which and individual perceives him or herself as an insider within a particular organization (Stamper et al., 2002). In a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), the level of PIS may depend on the exchange relationship that occurs between organizations and employees, for example, with respect to the benefits in term of training and advancement opportunities that workers get from their organizations (Hipple, 1998; Stamper et al., 2002). Consistently, PIS has been found to be significantly related to the organizational support perceived by workers (Stamper et al., 2002). The different way in which an organization treats workers sends signals to certain employees that they have achieved insider status, influencing their perception of organizational membership.

While Stamper and Masterson (2002) do not find support for their hypothesis that PIS is influenced by actual inclusion as measured by tenure and hours worked per week, there are reasons to believe that the perceived insider status may be directly reflected by an employee's work status. The different treatment permanent employees and contingent workers often receive from organizations, in terms of benefits, promotion and training opportunities, may influence their level of PIS. The different treatments the organization offers to their employees leads to the perception that some employees are more valuable to the organization while others are more expendable, influencing the perception of insider and outsider status. Therefore, in a social exchange perspective, permanent workers will tend to perceive themselves as organizational insiders, for all benefits and favorable treatment they receive from the organization, while contingent workers will tend to perceive themselves as organizational outsiders, because of their exclusion from the most of organizational inducements. Consequently, permanent employees tend to perceive a higher level of insider status than contingent workers.

Hypothesis 1: Contingent work status is positively related to job insecurity.

Hypothesis 2: Contingent work status is negatively related to PIS.

1.1. Effects of job insecurity and PIS on organizational attitudes

Affective commitment and job satisfaction are some of the most studied attitudes in the research on contingent work (Connelly et al., 2004). Organizational commitment represents an affective link between employees and their organization (Cook et al., 1981; Mathieu et al., 1990; Meyer et al., 1997). It is based on a strong belief in the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to remain a member of the organization. Job satisfaction reveals an attitude which indicates a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or various facets of one's job (Locke, 1976). By virtue of this definition, job satisfaction may refer to specific facets of a job, so that an individual may be relatively satisfied with one aspect of his job and dissatisfied with other aspects (Spector, 1977).

Following a social exchange perspective, many authors suggest a less profitable exchange relationship for contingent workers with their firms, when compared to permanent workers, due to the greater benefits given to permanent workers in terms of career and professional growth (for example, Sherer, 1994, Rousseau 1997). Social exchange relationships are based on the promise of reciprocation (Gouldner, 1960) as the individual expects the other part of the exchange will fairly discharge his obligations in the long run (Holmes 1981; Konovsky et al., 1994). Traditionally, permanent employees are more likely to have a long-term perspective and consequently they tend to get more benefits from their organizations (Hipple, 1998). From these assumptions, the typical theoretical model that is drawn and widely shared in the contingent work literature predicts less positive organizational attitudes for contingent workers when compared to permanent employees. Studies using job insecurity as an independent variables follow the same line of reasoning. Considering the many observations on the harmful effects of job insecurity for workers (De Witte, 1999; Sverke et al., 2002), this literature suggests that job insecurity produces a negative effect on organizational attitudes. Particularly, perceived job insecurity may reflect the individual's perception that a firm has abrogated the psychological contract and, consequently, workers' loyalty should be affected (Romzek, 1985; Ashforth et al., 1989). According to this perspective, Steers (1977) found that individuals experiencing psychological contract violation were less committed to their organization because they lose faith in the de-

pendability of the organization. Other studies reveal that job insecurity should be negatively associated with measures of job satisfaction. Oldham and colleagues (1986) found that employees with lower perceptions of job security were less satisfied with their jobs than were their comparison referents. This finding is explained by Ashford and colleagues (1989) considering that job satisfaction is an affective response to job and task events. Insecure workers, generally, perceive negative events on their job, and this perception will be likely to have a negative effect on job satisfaction as the primary affective response to a job.

The effect of PIS on job satisfaction and affective commitment may be explained in terms of the inducements employees receive from their organization (Chen et al., 2007). Consequently, one of the reasons why employees regard themselves as organizational insiders is that they receive more inducements from their organization, in terms of training and promotion opportunities than do other employees. The inducements employees receive also reflect the quality of their employment relationship, which leads to job satisfaction and affective commitment (Chen et al., 2007).

Hypothesis 3a: Job insecurity is negatively related to affective commitment.

Hypothesis 3b: PIS is positively related to affective commitment.

Hypothesis 4a: Job insecurity is negatively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4b: PIS is positively related to job satisfaction.

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) indicates that high levels of PIS lead to more positive attitudes toward the organization. This suggests that as contingent workers perceive higher levels of PIS, their organizational attitudes meliorate, when compared to permanent employees. Consequently, the difference between contingent workers and permanent employees in terms of organizational attitudes decreases as the level of contingent workers' PIS increases. So, we assume that high levels of PIS attenuate the negative effect of contingent work status on affective commitment and on job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3c: PIS moderates the relationship between contingent work status and affective commitment, such that the negative effects of contingent work status become weaker as the PIS increases.

Hypothesis 4c: PIS moderates the relationship between contingent work status and job satisfaction, such that the negative effects of contingent work status become weaker as the PIS increases.

1.2. Effects of job insecurity and PIS on organizational behavior

Workers' behavior is a significant issue in the literature on contingent work (Connelly et al., 2004; De Cuyper et al., 2008). Particularly, among contingent workers' behavior, our focus is on both, extra-role and in-role behavior. We operationalized extra-role behavior referring to the construct of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) defined as individual behavior which is discretionary and is not directly recognized by the formal reward system (Organ, 1988). OCB is typically considered as extra-role behavior because it is not specified in advance by role prescriptions and it is not a source of punitive consequences when not performed by job incumbents (Van Dyne et al., 1998).

Researchers considered many specific dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior, each of which is relevant to a particular research question (Van Dyne et al., 1994). In the present study, our focus is on two specific dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior, helping and voice (Van Dyne et al., 1995; Van Dyne et al., 1998). Helping behavior are considered as promotive behavior, that emphasizes cooperation and positive interpersonal relationships (Van Dyne et al., 1998). Helping behavior, for example, refers to helping others with their work, even when it is not required explicitly by the job. Voice behavior is considered as challenging behavior that emphasizes change-oriented ideas. Voice behavior, for example, refers to making innovative suggestions for change and recommending modifications to standard procedures. They are significant in a dynamic organization's environment, where new ideas facilitate continuous improvement (Nemeth et al., 1989).

Studies finding a negative effect of work status and job insecurity on OCB (e.g. Van Dyne et al., 1998) argue that, in a social exchange perspective, permanent employees are more likely to develop a social exchange relationship with their employers than contingent workers. Accordingly, permanent workers tend to exert extra effort and perform non-required behavior, because they trust that their employers will appreciate the contributions and reciprocate at same time in the future (Stamper et al., 2001). On the other hand, a study finding a positive impact of job insecurity on OCB argues that contingent workers on short-term contracts might then perform

more OCB in the expectation that their willingness to do so would enhance their image as valued employees, thereby increasing their chances of being made permanent within their organization (Feather et al., 2004:82). In-role behavior is the behavior required from organization and it represent the basis of permanent and ongoing job performance (Katz, 1964). In contrast with extra-role behavior, if employees fail to perform required behavior, they do not receive organizational rewards and they may lose their jobs. Ang and Slaughter (2001) and Marler and colleagues (2002) suggest that permanent employees exhibit higher levels of in-role behavior than their contingent colleagues. They explain this difference considering that in-role behavior are often affected by workers' attitudes, and these, in turn, may be influenced by the treatment employees receive from the organization. This is consistent with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964).

In the current study we suggest a social exchange relationship between workers and employers based on a inducements and contributions exchange. Accordingly, we assume that the inducements employees receive reduce the perception of job insecurity and, consequently, meliorate the organizational behavior.

Considering the behavioral consequences of PIS, the most studied relationship in previous research is with discretionary behavior in the workplace, as OCB and deviant workplace behavior (Orr et al., 1989; Robinson et al., 1995; Stamper et al., 2002). Particularly, individuals who perceive themselves as organizational insiders are likely to develop a sense of belonging and, thus, they feel the responsibilities of citizenship. This means that high levels of PIS are associated to more OCB, based, for example, on altruism or employee behavior directed at helping others in the organization.

There are reasons to believe that the perception of insider status is positively associated to in-role behavior, because of a higher level of job involvement for employees. Individuals who perceive themselves as insider to the organization are likely to feel more responsibilities for their work. So, they tend to devote more time and energy to fulfill the demands of their job. Based on this reasoning, we would expect that employees who experience higher levels of PIS generally exhibit more positive in-role behavior.

Hypothesis 5: Job insecurity is negatively related to

a) help dimension of OCB.

b) voice dimension of OCB.

c) in-role behavior.

Hypothesis 6: PIS is positively related to

a) help dimension of OCB.

b) voice dimension of OCB.

c) in-role behavior.

Workers experiencing high levels of PIS may also value differently their contribution and the contribution of the organization to the social exchange on which the employment relationship is based and, consequently, we would expect that high levels of PIS may attenuate the negative impact of contingent work status on OCB and in-role behavior. The difference between contingent and permanent workers in terms of extra-role and in-role behavior, indeed, decreases as the level of contingent workers' PIS increases.

Hypothesis 7: PIS moderates the relationship between contingent work status and

a) help dimension of OCB,

b) voice dimension of OCB,

c) in-role behavior,

such that the negative effects of contingent work status become weaker as the PIS increases.

2. Method

2.1. Organizational context

Survey data were collected during October and November 2008 in a plant of a company processing and marketing tomato-based products, canned legumes and pasta, fruit juices and other related products. The company is located in Campania Region in the South of Italy, where at the time of the survey unemployment rate was 10.9% versus an Italian average of 6.1% (ISTAT, 2008). In the year of the study the company employed 480 permanent employees and over 1,500 seasonal workers, mainly hired during the period of processing of tomatoes which ends in September. No seasonal workers worked in the plant during the data collection period. Production takes place in five different plants but data were collected only in

one site which is the biggest, oldest, and the one that also hosts the managerial and commercial headquarters of the company. The food processing market is a mature market; moreover the company focuses on “private-label” products (commercial trademarks for large-scale retailers) and, therefore, its business offers small margins: organizational efficiency, high production volumes, automation, specialization, and advanced technological processes are the key to the company’s success in the highly competitive private label sector.

2.2. *Sample and procedure*

The survey was hand-collected by a research assistant in several days and shifts at the plant during a period of three weeks. Workers were asked to complete a questionnaire that included items measuring employee attitudes as well as demographic information. Supervisors completed questionnaires designed to measure the behavior of the workers and questionnaires were matched using a system of codes in order to protect the privacy of respondents. A total of 237 workers' questionnaires were returned (82.6% response rate) while we received supervisor ratings for 223 workers (79.6% response rate). All questionnaires were completed during normal working hours and all respondents were assured of confidentiality. Responses to all items were assessed on five-point scales ranging from “completely disagree” (1) to “completely agree” (5). As questionnaires were administered in Italian, existing scales were translated from English and then back-translated to check the reliability of the translation using the procedure suggested by Brislin (1970)

Among the respondents 74.5 % were permanent workers and 25.5 % were contingent workers. Among the contingent workers, 34 had temporary contracts, 1 had a contract for a specific project, and 18 had internship contracts. Males represent 75% of the sample. On average, workers were 39 years old and had been employed by the company for 10 years.

2.3. *Dependent Variables*

Affective commitment. Affective commitment to the organization was measured using Meyer and Allen's (1997) six-items scale. An example of the items used to assess affective commitment is "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization". Cronbach's alpha was 0.85.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using Spector's (1985) work itself satisfaction scale. This scale is a four items sub-scale of Spector's (1985) thirty-six-items job satisfaction scale. An example of the items used to assess work itself satisfaction is "I like doing the things I do at work". Cronbach's alpha was 0.80.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and in-role behavior. To measure OCB and in-role behavior, workers' direct supervisors were asked to assess each worker's behavior using Van Dyne and LePine's (1998) seventeen-items scale. This scale consists of three sub-scales, voice dimension of six items, help dimension of seven items, and in-role dimension of four items. Examples of the items used to assess help, voice, and in-role dimension are: "This particular co-worker volunteers to do things for this work group", "This particular co-worker develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this work group", and "This particular co-worker fulfills the responsibilities specified in his/her job description". Cronbach alphas were: 0.96 for the help dimension, 0.95 for the voice dimension and 0.95 for the in-role dimension.

2.4. *Independent Variables*

Perceived insider status (PIS). PIS was measured using Stamper and Masterson's (2002) six-items scale. An example of the items used is "I feel very much a part of my work organization". Cronbach's alpha was 0.93.

Job insecurity. Job insecurity was measured using De Witte's (2000) four-item scale. An example of the items used to assess job insecurity is "I feel insecure about the future of my job". Cronbach's alpha was 0.89.

2.5. *Control variables*

Perceived organizational support (POS). POS was measured using Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli and Lynch's (1997) eight-item scale. An example of the items used to assess POS is "My organization cares about my opinions". Cronbach's alpha was 0.93.

Social interaction between permanent and contingent workers. Social interaction was measured using Broschak and Davis-Blake's (2006) two items. Respondents were asked how frequently they interacted socially with workers having a different type of contract (e.g., informal interaction at lunch and on breaks). An example of the item is "How frequently do you interact socially with contingent (permanent) workers from your department while at work (e.g., on breaks, lunch)?"

Demographic factors. Past research has demonstrated that individual attitudes and behavior at work may be affected by demographic and situational factors (Mowday et al., 1982); accordingly, age, gender, education, and tenure were included in the statistical analysis as control variables.

3. Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations for contingent workers and permanent employees are shown in Table 1.

We used Ordinary Least Squared (OLS) regressions to test our hypotheses. All variables were standardized. In Table 2 we report two regression models: in the first the dependent variable is job insecurity. Results show that, as we hypothesized in H1, controlling for gender, education, tenure, and POS, having a contingent contract influences the perception of job insecurity ($\beta=0.53$, $p\leq 0.01$). In the second regression model the dependent variable is PIS; its results show that H2, stating a negative effect of contingent work status on PIS, is not supported ($\beta=0.07$, $p\geq 0.05$).

The first four columns of Table 3 report four regression models using affective commitment as the dependent variable. Model 1 includes only control variables (gender, education, tenure, and POS) and shows that POS is highly associated with affective commitment. In model 2 we added the variable job insecurity which resulted as negatively correlated to affective commitment ($\beta= -0.14$, $p\leq 0.10$), thus supporting H3a but only at the 0.10 level. Model 3 shows that also PIS is positively associated with affective commitment ($\beta= 0.67$, $p\leq 0.01$), thus supporting H3b. In model 4 we tested H3c which stated that PIS moderates the relationship between contingent work status and affective commitment. According to Baron and Kenny

(1986) if the moderator is a continuous variable and the independent a dichotomy, and the moderation effect can be thought as linear, then the statistical strategy to test the moderation involves the use of an interaction term in the regression models. The coefficient of this interaction term is not significant ($\beta = -0.01$, $p \geq 0.05$), thus, H3c is not supported. Results show

TABLE 1: Means, Standard deviations, and correlations

	n	mean	sd	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Age	209	38.68	9.50	-0.17*	0.53**	0.44**	0.10	-0.26**	-0.54**	-0.33**	0.05	0.12.	-0.01	-0.07	0.03	0.06
2. Gender±	214	0.28	0.45		-0.09	-0.14*	-0.12.	0.02	0.12.	0.11.	-0.05	-0.12.	-0.04	-0.06	-0.08	-0.09
3. Tenure (years)	196	10.2	14.86			0.24**	0.04	-0.16*	-0.32**	-0.19**	0.05	0.12.	0.02	-0.16*	-0.10	-0.05
4. Education years	237	7.57	3.04				-0.02	-0.12	-0.26**	-0.09	-0.01	-0.04	-0.09	-0.14*	-0.09	-0.09
5. POS	224	3.27	0.90					-0.15*	-0.15*	-0.51**	0.82**	0.62**	0.66**	-0.18*	0.17*	0.25**
6. Social interaction with workers with diff. contr.	215	3.10	1.38						0.07	0.06	-0.03	-0.01	-0.06	0.23**	0.20**	0.19**
7. Contingent work status	212	0.25	0.44							0.58**	-0.12*	-0.17*	-0.02	-0.06	-0.13	-0.12
8. Job insecurity	220	2.53	1.08								-0.48**	-0.42**	-0.32**	-0.05	-0.15*	-0.14
9. PIS	224	3.72	0.89									0.73**	0.68**	0.21**	0.22**	0.26**
10. Affective commitment	224	3.62	0.89										0.57**	0.24**	0.30**	0.34**
11. Satisfaction work itself	222	3.89	0.84											0.14	0.16*	0.19*
12. OCB help	223	3.64	0.96												0.90**	0.80**
13. OCB voice	223	3.59	0.96													0.83**
14. In-role behavior	222	3.96	0.91													

Signif. codes' 0.001 '***' 0.01; ± Male=0; Female=1.

TABLE 2 Standardized OLS coefficients (standard errors) for the dependent variables Job Insecurity and Perceived Insider Status

	Job Insecurity	PIS
Intercept	0.04 (0.05)	0.01 (0.04)
Gender	0.00 (0.05)	0.03 (0.04)
Education (years)	0.00 (0.05)	0.02 (0.04)
Tenure	-0.01 (0.05)	0.02 (0.04)
POS	-0.47*** (0.05)	0.79*** (0.05)
Contingent Work Status	0.53*** (0.05)	0.07 (0.06)
Job Insecurity		-0.13* (0.06)
n	207	207
R-squared	0.55	0.69
Adjusted R-squared	0.54	0.68

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

that PIS is the strongest predictor of affective commitment among the two independent variables of interest here ($\beta = 0.67, p \leq 0.01$).

The second half of Table 3 reports four regression models using as the dependent variable the other attitude in the study, satisfaction for the work itself. Model 1 includes only control variables: gender, education, tenure, and POS. As expected POS is positively and significantly related to satisfaction. In model 2 we introduced job insecurity ($\beta = 0.03, p \geq 0.05$) that do not appear to be related to satisfaction for the work itself and, thus, H4a is not supported. In model 3 we consider the effect of PIS which does significantly affect the satisfaction for the work itself ($\beta = 0.43, p \leq 0.01$), thus, H4b is supported. Model 4 shows that PIS does not moderate the relationship between contingent work status and satisfaction for the work itself ($\beta = 0.06, p \geq 0.05$), thus, H4c is not supported.

In Table 4 are reported 12 regression models in which the dependent variables are two supervisor-rated dimensions of OCB help and voice and the supervisor-rated appropriateness of in-role behavior. The control variables used are age, gender, tenure, and social interaction with workers with a different contract and they are shown in model 1 for each of the three behavioral dependent variables. The hypotheses H5a, H5b, and H5c state the existence of a negative direct relationship between job insecurity and behavior. As shown in the model 2 for each dependent variable none of this group of hypotheses found support. Specifically job insecurity does not

TABLE 3 Standardized OLS coefficients (standard errors) for the dependent variable Affective Commitment and Job Satisfaction

	Affective Commitment				Satisfaction for the work itself			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	0.04 (0.06)	0.04 (0.06)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)
Gender	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)
Education (years)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)
Tenure (years)	0.10 (0.06)	0.08 (0.06)	0.07 (0.05)	0.07 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	0.04 (0.06)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)
POS	0.63*** (0.06)	0.55*** (0.07)	0.02 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)	0.7*** (0.05)	0.69*** (0.06)	0.35*** (0.09)	0.38*** (0.09)
Contingent work status		-0.01 (0.07)	-0.05 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.07)		0.09 (0.07)	0.05 (0.07)	0.06 (0.07)
Job insecurity		-0.14 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.07)	-0.05 (0.07)		-0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)
PIS			0.67*** (0.08)	0.67*** (0.09)			0.43*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.09)
Contingent w.s.: PIS				-0.01 (0.05)				0.06 (0.05)
n	200	199	199	199	200	199	199	199
R-squared	0.41	0.43	0.57	0.57	0.48	0.48	0.52	0.54
Adj_R-squared	0.40	0.41	0.55	0.55	0.47	0.46	0.52	0.53
Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1								

TABLE 4 Standardized OLS coefficients (standard errors) for the dependent variables help and voice dimensions of OCB and in-role behavior

	OCB help				OCB Voice				In-role behavior			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	0.01 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)	0.05 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	0.05 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)
Age	0.00 (0.1)	-0.13 (0.11)	-0.11 (0.11)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.11 (0.1)	-0.02 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	0.13 (0.1)	0.05 (0.12)	0.09 (0.11)	0.09 (0.11)
Gender	-0.11 (0.09)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)
Tenure	-0.13 (0.09)	-0.14 (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.16 (0.08)	-0.14 (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.16 (0.09)	-0.17 (0.09)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.1 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)	-0.13 (0.09)
Social interaction with workers with diff. contr.	0.24** (0.09)	0.23** (0.09)	0.21* (0.09)	0.17* (0.08)	0.24** (0.09)	0.21* (0.09)	0.20* (0.09)	0.15 (0.09)	0.24** (0.09)	0.23* (0.09)	0.2* (0.09)	0.16 (0.09)
Contingent Work Status		-0.21 (0.12)	-0.27* (0.12)	-0.24* (0.12)		-0.15 (0.12)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.16 (0.12)		-0.08 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.13)	-0.12 (0.12)
Job Insecurity		-0.02 (0.11)	0.13 (0.12)	0.12 (0.12)		-0.13 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.13)	-0.04 (0.12)		-0.09 (0.11)	0.08 (0.13)	0.07 (0.12)
PIS			0.24** (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)			0.20* (0.09)	0.15 (0.09)			0.29** (0.09)	0.24* (0.09)
Contingent w.s.: PIS				0.21** (0.07)				0.22** (0.07)				0.23** (0.07)
n	161	161	160	160	161	161	160	160	160	160	159	159
R-squared	0.08	0.11	0.15	0.2	0.07	0.11	0.14	0.19	0.07	0.09	0.15	0.20
Adjusted R-squared	0.05	0.07	0.11	0.15	0.05	0.08	0.1	0.14	0.05	0.05	0.11	0.16
Signif. codes:	0 '****' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1											

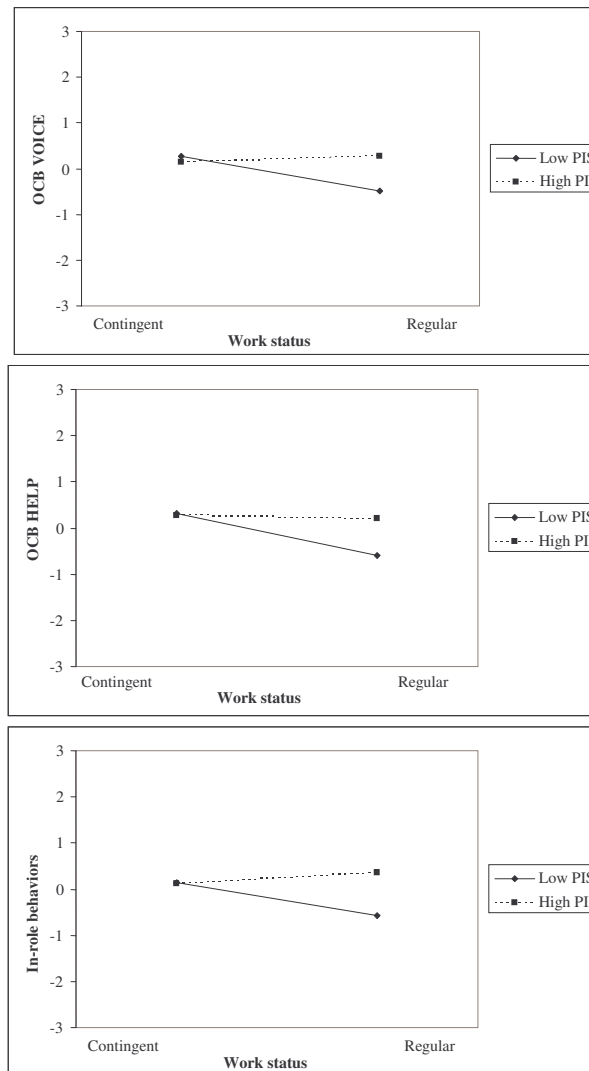
have a significant impact on the help dimension of OCB ($\beta = -0.02, p \geq 0.05$) as stated in H5a, on the voice dimension of OCB ($\beta = -0.13, p \geq 0.05$) as stated in H5b, and on in-role behavior ($\beta = -0.09, p \geq 0.05$), as stated by H5c. The H6 group of hypotheses states the existence of a direct positive effect of PIS on behavior and is tested by model 3 for each dependent variable. Specifically, H6a hypothesize a direct and positive effect of PIS on OCB help behavior and found support in our data ($\beta = 0.24, p \leq 0.01$). H6b hypothesize a direct and positive effect of PIS on OCB voice behavior and found support too ($\beta = 0.20, p \leq 0.05$). Finally, H6c hypothesize a direct and positive effect of PIS on in-role behavior and found support in our data as shown in the last column of Table 4 ($\beta = 0.29, p \leq 0.01$). In the H7 group of hypotheses we state that PIS moderates the negative effect of contingent work status on the three types of behavior considered (as illustrated in Figure 1). The hypotheses are supported for all the three dependent variables: as the model 4 show the interaction term among contingent work status and PIS has an effect on the help dimension of OCB ($\beta = 0.21, p \leq 0.01$), on the voice dimension of OCB ($\beta = 0.22, p \leq 0.01$), and on in-role behavior ($\beta = 0.23, p \leq 0.01$).

4. Discussion

In this study we address the conflicting findings of previous research on the effect of contingent work status on organizational attitudes and behavior by identifying two variables, job insecurity and PIS, which may intervene in the relationships between work status and its behavioral consequences. Job insecurity is the perceived threat of job loss that may originate because of the temporary nature of the job or because of an imminent bankruptcy or financial difficulties of the firm. PIS represents the extent to which an individual perceives him or herself as an insider within a particular organization.

The insecurity of the job as it is perceived by the worker does not depend solely on the work status, as it results from the employment contract, but also on other individual, organizational, and contextual factors. For example, many workers with a minority status, based on race or gender, may perceive job insecurity, concerning the waning career opportunities and declining salary development. For these workers the perception of job

FIGURE 1 Plots of interaction



insecurity does not depend on the formal employment contract but on their membership to a minority group. Because of the perception of job insecurity, these workers may feel marginalized and thus not feel as much like insiders as those employees in the majority groups (Stamper et al., 2002). We

hypothesize that this perceived insecurity is valued by the employee when judging his/her social exchange with her organization and the hypothesis found support only when affective commitment is at stake and not when job satisfaction, or when behavioral variables are examined. We also hypothesize that the perception of being an insider to the organization has a direct effect on organizational attitudes and behavior and a moderating effect on the negative relationship between contingent work status and organizational attitudes and behavior. Our results show support for the group of hypotheses 7 on the moderating effect of PIS on the studied behavioral variables. Hypotheses H3c and H4c, which consider the moderating effects on attitudes, are not supported.

Consistently with previous research, job insecurity is considered to be a classic work stressor with harmful effects for all employees. A worker who bears these harmful effects will also perceive his/her exchange with the organization as less favorable and, therefore, he is likely to show worse attitudes and behavior. As contingent work status is associated with job insecurity, this leads to the expectation of adverse results among contingent workers. But although strongly associated as shown by the support found for H1 and by a bivariate correlation of 0.58 ($p \leq 0.01$), having a contingent work status and having an insecure job are two separated constructs and one can be without the other. For example, the feeling of insecurity for the fear to loss the work can also be a problem for permanent employees (Ashford et al., 2007). We therefore hypothesize that job insecurity, rather than work status, might explain contingent workers' attitudes and behavior. We found a significant relationship only in place for the affective commitment to the organization while we did not find evidence of an effect of job insecurity on job satisfaction and workers' behavior.

Regarding PIS, we did not find support for H2, which states that contingent work status is negatively correlated to PIS. A previous study (Stamper et al., 2002) has found that PIS is not significantly related to "objective" measures of inclusion, such as tenure and hours worked per week. Accordingly, our results show that there is no support for actual inclusion in the organization leading to PIS, also if actual inclusion is measured as contingent work status. This finding supports the idea that it is possible that a contingent worker feels as an insider or that a permanent employee feels as an outsider.

We also hypothesize that PIS intervenes on the relationship between work status and outcome variables, moderating the negative impact of being a contingent worker. We found evidence of this moderating effect of PIS for all the three organizational behavior we studied while we did not find support to the hypotheses on attitudes (affective commitment and job satisfaction). Thus the group of hypotheses 7 is supported while hypotheses H3c and H4c are not.

On what concern factors influencing affective commitment, results show that job insecurity has a negative effect on affective commitment, as expected by H3a. We also found support for a positive effect of PIS on affective commitment, as expected by H3b, but PIS does not moderate the relationship between contingent work status and affective commitment. Compared to job insecurity, PIS explains a bigger part of the variance in affective commitment (Δ adjusted R-squared = 0.14). When the affective component of the attachment of workers to the organization is examined, the more perceptual variable has a more important role compared to work status. This emotional attachment, which is the base of the affective commitment, is mainly driven from how much a worker feels part of the organization and this feeling is only very weakly related to the contractual relationship.

A second attitude we examined is job satisfaction. Job insecurity does not appear to influence job satisfaction, disconfirming the hypothesis H4a. As expected by H4b, instead, we find evidence of a direct and positive relation between PIS and job satisfaction. Moreover we did not find evidence of a moderating role of PIS in the relationship between work status and job satisfaction. This finding shows the key role of PIS in influencing job satisfaction, independently of the contractual arrangement. The effect of PIS on job satisfaction may be explained in terms of the inducements employees receive from their organization (Chen et al., 2007). One of the reasons why employees regard themselves as organizational insiders is that they receive more inducements from their organization, in terms of training and promotion opportunities than do other employees, which leads to job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2007). In general, the contractual arrangement seems irrelevant to job satisfaction, at least when only satisfaction for the work itself is considered.

On what concern factors influencing workers' behavior, our results do not recognize the presence of significant effects of job insecurity. We find

that for all the three behavioral variables (OCB help, OCB voice, in-role behavior), PIS has a direct effect on behavior and, at the same time, it moderates the effect of contingent work status. Workers who perceive themselves as organizational insiders tend to develop a sense of belonging and, thus, they feel the responsibilities of citizenship (Stamper et al., 2002).

4.1. Theoretical implications

Overall, two main conclusions come out from our analysis: the first is that job insecurity does not seem to have a significant effect on behavior and it has a weak negative effect on the affective commitment to the organization; the second is that PIS moderates the negative effect of work status on behavior and it could be an effective instrument in managing a contingent workforce.

On what concerns the effect of job insecurity, our results are consistent with previous studies on the effects of both work status and job insecurity, some of which have reported negative effects, while others reported positive effects, and others reported no significant effects at all. Our results may be explained by the fact that job insecurity could influence attitudes and behavior through two different and opposite theoretical mechanisms: one consistent with social exchange theory and the other consistent with the theories of motivational processes such as expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). Social exchange theory is the most adopted theoretical framework in the research on contingent work (Connelly et al., 2004) and it underpins our hypotheses on the effects of job insecurity (H3a, H4a, and H7 a,b, and c). This theory predicts a negative effect of job insecurity on both attitudes and behavior because the insecurity of the job is generally valued negatively by the employees in their exchange with the organization. But a second and opposite effect is predicted by expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) and pulls the effect of job insecurity on attitudes and behavior in the opposite direction. If a worker values positively continuing to work for the company and believes that the company will continue to hire him/her in case of a good performance, this worker will have a high motivation on the job (Vroom, 1964; Wheeler et al., 2001). This motivation will have a direct impact on both in-role and extra-role behavior as judged by the supervisor and it may also have a weaker impact on attitudes. The level of individual motivation

in an expectancy theory framework is influenced by two conditions: 1) how attractive is the job in the subjective evaluation of the worker and how difficult is finding an alternative job; 2) how likely the worker evaluates the possibility that the company renews the contract. The fact that these two conditions greatly vary according to the type of contingent work under study and according to contextual factors of the research setting may be a reason of the conflicting findings of previous research and of the weak role of job insecurity in our study. We suggest that the relative strengths of social exchange processes and motivational processes produce three different types of results: 1) when extrinsic motivation is low job insecurity has a negative effect on attitudes and behavior, since the social exchange mechanism is stronger; 2) in cases where the type of contingent work and other contextual factors create conditions for medium levels of motivation, the effect of extrinsic motivation compensates the effects of social exchange, therefore producing a non-significant overall effect of job insecurity; and, 3) when there are conditions for high motivation of workers to keep their current job, the positive effect of the motivation is stronger than the negative effect of an unfavorable social exchange, so that the positive effect is the one resulting from data analyses. Our research setting presents conditions that may be favorable to a medium level of workers' motivation to keep the current job: the content and the compensation of most of the positions are not highly attractive but alternative jobs are relatively difficult to find; interviews with HR managers revealed that about 40% of their contingent workers (not considering seasonal workers) become permanent employees and that firing permanent employees is extremely rare. In a research setting with conditions for medium motivation, we find some evidence of a negative impact of job insecurity on affective commitment (H3a is significant at the 0.10 level) but we did not find support for an impact on behavior. This result is consistent with the arguments that the overall effect of job insecurity depends on both social exchange processes and motivational processes: in fact, motivation to keep the job may be assumed to have a stronger impact on behavior than on affective commitment to the organization. Future research should be designed in order to collect empirical data allowing identifying the different effects of job insecurity and individual extrinsic motivation on workers' attitudes and behavior.

The second main conclusion of the study concerns the moderation role of PIS on the relationship between work status and behavior which suggests

the importance of managing contingent workers' perceptions of insider status. Considering that organization can sustain high levels of PIS even for contingent workers as it emerges from H2 (PIS does not significantly depend on work status), our results may have interesting practice implications for the management of contingent workers. Moreover, the recognized role of the subjective perception of workers in influencing organizational behavior outcomes reveals the importance of human resource policies to improve workers' perceptions of insider status and a high sense of certainty on the work. All employees, contingent and permanent, may have a perception of inclusion to the organization and a high level of job security, as a result of better treatment from employers in terms of fair procedures and practices (Masterson et al., 2000; Stamper et al., 2002).

4.2. Managerial implications

The importance of PIS emerges clearly from our results. As it emerges from our study, workers can perceive themselves as insiders to the organization even though they have a temporary contract. Therefore, organizations may adopt policies increasing the level of PIS of contingent workers in order to improve their behavior. One way of doing so could be paying attention to contingent workers' perception of organizational justice (Stamper et al., 2002). Fair treatment by the organization represents a signal to employees of their value for the organization to which they belong. A wide range of organizational politics and procedures are shown to affect employees' perceptions of fairness from the organization. These politics may include participative decision making, perceived pay equity and leadership style (Mowday et al., 1982). For example, leaders who fairly treat all employees, without considering their formal employment contract, encouraging them to participate in setting performance goals, providing employees with feedback about job performance, reward good performance, or help employees to correct poor performance (through training) are likely to make those employees feel more valued as members of the organization (Hutchinson et al., 1996), leading to an increase of their PIS. According to Stamper and Masterson (2002) fair politics and organizational actions enhancing positive effects of favorable job conditions are strongly related to the employees' perceived organizational support and this, in turn, has a

positive effect on the perception of insider status. Other authors consider the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995) as a relevant antecedent of workers' PIS (Pfeffer et al., 1988; Tsui et al., 1995). According to this perspective, the organizational fulfillment of obligations and an exchange relationship based on the notion of reciprocity between employees and their organization positively affect employees' perception of insider status.

4.3. Strengths and limitations

There are a number of limitations to our study. First, the study relied on cross-sectional data, thus raising concerns about the causality of relationships between the variables of interest. Future studies that include other types of research designs based on longitudinal designs will establish more firmly the causal relations implied in the present study. Another limitation stems from the sample, which included all categories of workers found in one firm of food service industry. Future research design should also rely on samples that are homogeneous in the type of job but with higher variability in contextual factors.

Despite some limitations, this research contributes to existing knowledge on contingent workers' organizational attitudes. Although many organizational behavior variables and theories are considered in the literature on contingent work, there are few theoretical studies on the concepts of job insecurity and perceived insider status, and little empirical research on the effects of these variable on of contingent worker's organizational behavior (for a review, Connelly et al., 2004; De Cuyper et al., 2008). This study is one of the few empirical tests of these variables in the context of contingent work. Depending on the behavioral dependent variable of interest, job insecurity and PIS have effects both theoretically and statistically distinguishable from work status.

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