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An Analysis on the Impact of COVID-19 on Employee Work from Home Stress Behavior and Stress Coping Mechanisms of Different Service Industries in National Capital Region

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on employee work from home stress behavior and the stress coping mechanisms of different industries in Metro Manila. Work from Home Set Up is getting wider nowadays, not just locally but also globally. Work from Home is achieved in various ways and practices such as by having a business at home and by use of the Internet. As business adapt to a changing global environment, opportunities for non-traditional employment abound. Business owners and employees can benefit from the flexibility of Work from Home or Home-Based job task. The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges and impact of COVID-19 on Employee Work from Home Stress Behavior and Coping Mechanisms of different industries in Metro Manila. The opportunities and information that a certain company provides and to assess and evaluate those to be able to know the implications it will bring to the work from home setup.

I. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, COVID-19, a novel corona virus had vigorously spread around the world and was declared as 'Pandemic' on March 11th 2020 by World Health Organization (WHO). The virus first emerged in China and is now considered as one of the major global health threats. By 30th January, 2020, the virus had spread to 147 countries, killed more than7800, and affected hundreds of thousands of people in a short time (Gostin, et al.,2020). The virus has mortality rate of 1-2% with other genetic variants of the virus leading to 4-6% mortality in areas like New York, Spain and Northern Italy (Szabo, 2020). The deadly virus has strongly influenced the people by increasing fear, frustration, stress and anxiety. It is documented that pandemics have huge impact, for example, the Avian and pandemic Influenza in 2004, impacted the United States, Australia and the world with its disastrous impact (Taylor, et al., 2008). ThisCovid-19pandemichascreateda crisis in all aspect so four lives. In late July and early August of 2020 up to the present, the Philippines has been perceived as the worst performer in COVID prevention and economic recovery in East Asia and the Pacific, with the largest number of cases, largest percentage of active cases, lowest percentage of recovery rates, the highest COVID deaths per million population, and one of the countries in ASEAN experiencing negative growth in the first quarter and strong economic collapse in the second quarter of 2020. Thus, the expectation is that the Philippine economy will be the hardest hit in East Asia and the Pacific.

As expected, COVID cases kept going up from more than daily new cases of 1.000 to2,000reaching 3,000 to 7,000 daily at this time of writing (Sept. 5, 2020). The Philippines cases surpassed that of Indonesia in early August, making the Philippines the worst performer in COVID reduction in the whole East Asia and the Pacific. The low economic confidence of firms and lack of assurance that the public health situation will improve further convinced many firms to shut down or scale back operations there by laying off workers. Many government agencies and firms found their worker infected with COVID and had to close shop for several days or weeks. It was clear that the COVID and economic situation faced serious obstacles and problems. Because of fast rising cases, the health and medical sector and workers pleaded for a two-week lockdown in NCR and surrounding provinces (Aug. 4-18) –called Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine

(MECQ) for them to take a breather and help the government recalibrate its anti-COVID strategies. Unfortunately, the COVID cases still kept rising during MECQ because of the government's inability to do adequate contact tracing and isolating mild and asymptomatic cases in isolation facilities. When the economy opened up again under GCQ in Aug. 19, the daily new cases were still very high, ranging from 2,000 to 7,000 per day. The outbreak of COVID-19in the current timetabled to a crisis situation and made a major switch in the regular working conditions worldwide correlated with high public uncertainty (Kanupriya, 2020). In addition to the stress associated with Covid-19 disease, media speculations have caused this psychological disturbance more severe.

As businesses adapt to a changing global environment, opportunities for non-traditional employment abound. Business owners and employees can benefit from the flexibility of Work from Home or Home-Based job tasks. Work from Home has a unique set of advantages. Flexible scheduling can allow employees to work varying shifts and hours. Work from Home can allow workers to stay in contact with a particular field to keep their skills, the ease of travel and accessibility allows individuals to work from home. The challenges of Work from Home may vary from the practices of the company. Each company differs from the other in terms of their time management, clients, and even the workplace. These companies also differ in terms of providing opportunities to the employees. The companies have their own criteria for hiring applicants, salary rates, and working arrangements. With that, the employees are being able to have clarifications and understand the challenges and opportunities in choosing to work at home. Various companies have specialization in terms of training online. With the use of the Internet, the employees that are working at home are committed to their clients online with desired time schedules and comfortable working place. The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges and impact of corvid-19 on Employee Work from Home Stress Behavior and Coping Mechanisms of different industries in Metro Manila. The opportunities and information that a certain company provides and to assess and evaluate those to be able to know the implications it will bring to the work from home setup.

The study wanted that employee professional and their company becomes more aware and sensitive to the risk and difficulties which they may face in the future. This study also proved to be useful in providing private company methods to reduce work from home job stress and subsequent job dissatisfaction experienced by workers during the work from home setup.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses mixed research methods. In data collection, it will be used for the quantitative type and interviews for the qualitative type. There is a need to collect quantitative data to establish objective results on how participants value the tools introduced. Qualitative data is also needed to validate the data collected from the questionnaire which provides a multi-perspective approach in identifying and solving problems that may arise from the research. Both types of data are compensatory and necessary and should be utilized for a better understanding of the research topic. The integration of the two data in the form of cross-validation ensures that the respondents are consistent with their evaluation of the introduced tool. Furthermore, to explore insights for validation purposes, focus group discussions with selected respondents were conducted using well-structured question transcripts that allowed respondents to voice their perceptions by asking open-ended questions.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	360	43%
Female	480	57%
Total	**840**	**100**
Educational Attainment	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
College Undergraduate	90	11%
College Graduate	650	77%
Postgraduate	80	10%
PhD Graduate	20	2%
Total	**840**	**100**
Age Bracket	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
18-22 Years Old	40	5%
23-27 Years Old	370	44%
28-32 Years Old	240	29%
33-37 Years Old	120	14%
38-42 Years Old	40	5%
43 Years and Above	30	4%
Total	**840**	**100**

The research data shows the frequency of respondents based on their demographic profile. The first is gender with a total of 840 respondents. The data shows that 57 percent of the respondents are women who study. The second is the

frequency of respondents' educational facilities. Data shows that 77 percent of respondents are college graduates. The third is the frequency profile of the age group. The data shows that 44 percent of the study respondents are in the age group of 23-27 years. Fourth is the frequency of the respondent's salary group. The data shows that 25 percent of respondents have a monthly salary bracket of more than 32,000 pesos per month followed by 24 percent of respondents with a monthly salary bracket of 22,000-26,999 per month. The fifth is the frequency of service period according to the respondent's profession. The data shows that 46 percent of respondents are in the group 6-11 years, while 45 percent of respondents are in the group 1-5 years according to their profession. The sixth is the length of service given by the respondents in their current company. The data shows that 75% of the respondents are in the range of 1-5 years of service given by the respondents at the company where they currently work.

TABLE. 2

Longevity of Work from Home Setup Experience by Employees During the Pandemic

Longevity of Work From home setup	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 Month	90	11%
1-3months	70	8%
4-6months	60	7%
7-9months	20	3%
10-12months	170	20%
More Than 1 Year	430	51%
Total	**840**	**100**

Table 2 shows the frequency of the respondents based on their longevity of work from home set up the experience of the respondents during the pandemic. The data shows that 51 percent of the respondents of the study experienced work-from-home setup for more than a year.

TABLE. 3

Kind Of Industry Currently Employed by The Respondents During the Work from Home Set-Up

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Wholesale and trade	40	5
Bpo/Information/Communication	409	48
Financial/Banking/Insurance	110	13
Real estate And Construction	31	4
Professional and Scientific	50	6
Technical activities	20	2
Accommodation and Food	90	11
Services	0	0
Administrative and support	70	8
Service activities	23	3
Law and public administration	0	0
Education	0	0
Total	**840**	**100**

Table 3 shows the frequency of the respondents based on their currently employed by the respondents during the work from home setup. The data shows that 48 percent of the respondents of the study are in the industry of BPO, Information Technology, and communication followed by the industries of financial, banking, and insurance with a percent of13 percent. The industries indicated in the study are derived from the top 12 industries in the Philippines from the study made by Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation last 2019.

TABLE 4.1

Factors That Create Work from Home Stress on Job Satisfaction

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Salary	2.4	Seldom
Loan facilities at the institution	2.1	Seldom
Inequality of work standards	2.3	Seldom
Unfair rewards	2.2	Seldom
Work volume	2.6	Seldom
Personal growth from work from home	2.6	Seldom
Lack of promotion	2.5	Seldom
Poor management	2.4	Seldom
Overall mean	**2.4**	**Seldom**

Table 4.1 shows that the respondents perceive low stress factor that creates work from home stress on job satisfaction. On the eight sub categories the work volume and personal growth from work from home set up had the highest mean of both 2.6. Overall, the respondents experienced low work from home stress level on their job satisfaction during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.4.

TABLE 4.2

Factors That Create Work from Home Stress on Job Productivity

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Improper training of work from home setup	2.1	SELDOM
Out of data tools/Equipment	2.2	SELDOM
Ignoring employees' input	2.1	SELDOM
Poor Procedures	2.3	SELDOM
Lack of support by subordinates	2.2	SELDOM
Lack of feedback by subordinates	2.2	SELDOM
Deadlines	2.5	SELDOM
Job security	2.3	SELDOM
Time	2.3	SELDOM
OVERALL MEAN	**2.08**	**SELDOM**

Table 4.2 shows that the respondents perceive low stress factor that creates work from home stress on job productivity. On the nine sub categories the deadlines had the highest mean of 2.5. Overall, the respondents experienced low work from home stress level on their job productivity during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.08.

TABLE 4.3

Factors That Create Work from Homes Tress on Interpersonal Relationship

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Misunderstanding of co-workers	2.2	SELDOM
Office/Corporate Politics	2.2	SELDOM
Corporate Mismanagement	2.3	SELDOM
Misjudgment of ideas	2.3	SELDOM
Ineffective Communication	2.5	SELDOM
Lack of Control over Individual's Emotions	2.3	SELDOM
Poor Feedback	2.2	SELDOM
Role Conflict	2.3	SELDOM
Overall Mean	**2.3**	**SELDOM**

Table 4.3 shows that the respondents perceive low stress factor that creates work from home stress on interpersonal relationship. On the eight subcategories the ineffective communication had the highest mean of 2.5. Overall, the respondents experienced low work from home stress level on their inter-personal relationship during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.3.

TABLE 5.1

Impact of Work from Home Stress on Job Productivity

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Low Productivity	2.4	SELDOM
Online Absenteeism	1.9	SELDOM
Not Resourceful	2.1	SELDOM
Uncooperative	2.2	SELDOM
Inability To Make Outpointed	2.2	SELDOM
Overall Mean	**2.2**	**SELDOM**

Table 5.1 shows that the respondents perceive low impact of work from home stress on job productivity. On the five sub categories the low productivity had the highest mean of 2.5. Overall, the respondents experienced low impact of work from home stress level on their job productivity during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.2.

TABLE 5.2

Impact of Work from Home Stress on Job Satisfaction

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Losing Interest to Online Work	2.1	SELDOM
Don't like the work at all	1.9	SELDOM
Hard to start doing the task	2.2	SELDOM
Loosing Eagerness on doing the Job Task	2.1	SELDOM
Not happy on the job task	2	SELDOM
Overall Mean	**2.1**	**SELDOM**

Table 5.2 shows that the respondents perceive low impact of work from home stress on job satisfaction. On the five sub categories the hard to start doing the task impact had the highest mean of 2.2. Overall, the respondents experienced low impact of work from home stress level on their job satisfaction during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.1.

TABLE 5.3

Impact of Work from Home Stress on Interpersonal Relationship

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
No longer fun at all to work with co-workers	2.1	SELDOM
Can work alone without the help of others	2.4	SELDOM
Loose Interest dealing with co-workers	2	SELDOM
Easily get irritated with copeers during work from home setup	2	SELDOM
Easily getting mad during the work from homeset Up	1.9	NEVER
Overall Mean	**2.1**	**SELDOM**

Table 5.3 shows that the respondents perceive low impact of work from home stress on interpersonal relationship. On the five sub categories they can work alone without the help of others had the highest mean of 2.4. Overall, the respondents experienced low impact of work from home stress level on their job satisfaction during the COVID-19 Pandemic with a mean of 2.1.

TABLE 6:

Coping Mechanisms Offered by Company during Work from Home Setup to Reduce Stress

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
Online Counseling	2.2	SELDOM
Weekly Telecommunicating	2.7	SELDOM
Online Training Seminars for Career Upgrade	2.5	SELDOM
Giving up to date tools, equipment and allowances	2.6	SELDOM
Fair distribution of work load	2.5	SELDOM
Overall mean	**2.5**	**SELDOM**

Table 6 shows the coping mechanisms offered by the company to their employees to reduce work from home stress as perceived by the respondents on the study. On the five subcategories the weekly telecommunicating had the highest mean of 2.7. Overall, the respondents experienced seldom or low coping strategy made by companies to reduce their work from home stress level during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

TABLE.7

Relationship Between the Demographic Profile of The Respondents and The Causes of Work from Home Stress Setup During the Pandemic

Variable	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	0.37	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Gender	0.01	Accept the Null Hypothesis	Significant
Educational Attainment	0.11	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Salary	0.66	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service by Profession	0.18	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service in the Company	0.64	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

Table 7 presents the relationship of demographic profile on the causes of work from home stress set up during the pandemic. The study observed that the demographic profile in terms of age, educational attainment, salary, years of service by profession, and years of service in the company the employees are currently employed has no significant

relationship on the causes of work from home stress during the pandemic.

TABLE. 8

Relationship Between the Demographic Profile of The Respondents and The Impact of Work from Home Stress Setup During the Pandemic

Variable	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	0.12	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Gender	0.10	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	0.70	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Salary	0.44	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service by Profession	0.61	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service in the Company	0.22	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

Table 8 presents the relationship of demographic profile on the impact of work from home stress set up during the pandemic. The study observed that the demographic profile in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, salary, years of service by profession, and years of service in the company the employees are currently employed has no significant relationship on the impact of work from home stress during the pandemic. The data shows that the demographic profile categories of the respondents had no impact on their general stress during the work from home setup.

TABLE.9

Relationship Between the Demographic Profile of The Respondents and The Work from Home Stress Coping Mechanisms Created by Different Industries During the Pandemic

Variable	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	0.98	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Gender	0.01	Accept the Null Hypothesis	Significant
Educational Attainment	0.29	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Salary	0.49	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service by Profession	0.62	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant
Years of Service in the Company	0.81	Failed to Reject the Null Hypothesis	Not Significant

Table 9 presents the relationship of demographic profile on the work from home stress coping mechanisms created by different industries during the pandemic. The study observed that the demographic profile in terms of age, educational attainment, salary, years of service by profession, and years of service in the company the employees are currently employed has no significant relationship on the impact of work from home stress during the pandemic. The data shows that the demographic profile categories of the respondents had no impact on their general stress during the work from home set up. Only the gender category on the demographic profile has a significant relationship on the work from home stress coping mechanisms created by different industries during the pandemic because its p-value 0.01is less than 0.05.

TABLE.10

Connection Between the Type of Industry the Employee Currently Works and Its Reason for Having a Stress from Working from Home

p-value	Decision	Interpretation
0.02	Accept the Null Hypothesis	Significant

Table 10 presents the connection between the type of industry the employee currently works and its reason for having a stress from working from home. The study observed that the different industry the employeesarecurrentlybelongsandemployedhasasignificantrelationship on its reason for having a stress from working from home. The data shows that the type of industry an employee is currently working also affects the level of work from home stress. The study suggests that no matter how good the work from home set up by an employee during the pandemic it will still affect the stress level on the work assignments on the industry an employee is currently working. It will also show the that even there is no work from home setup due to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, employees still experience stress due to the type of industry they are currently working even from working on their houses or going back to their offices.

Table. 11

Qualitative Assessment Towards the Work from Home Setup

3.1 Benefits of Work from Home Setup During the Pandemic

THEMES	Benefits of Work from Home Set-up
AXIALCODING	Multi Activities can be done while working Time Management Safe from COVID-19 More time to Family

3.2 Disadvantages of Work from Home Setup During the Pandemic

THEMES	Common Issues and Concerns
AXIALCODING	Additional Bills to Pay Internet Connection Inferiorities Destructions like noises and no social interactions Cannot monitor the actual work rendered by peers and subordinates. Lack of communication on doing tasks

3.3 Benefits of the Work from Home Setup during theCOVID-19 Pandemic

On the first question, the majority of respondents answered they can do multi activities that can be done inside the house like household activities while doing the job. Others said because of work from home set up they can have a good time management and can have a family bonding for their loved ones. And lastly, the majority of the respondents said because of the work from home set up it was the safest way to be done in order not to be infected by the COVID-19 virus.

3.4 Disadvantages of the Work from Home Setup during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Respondents answered having a lack of resources, a high-stress environment, and additional expenses to be paid like internet and electricity bills are the primary disadvantages of the workfromhomesetupduringtheCOVID-19Pandemic.Others also said they cannot focus on their work because of some destruction like animal noises, cars, low internet connection or children playing outside while doing their work that they cannot concentrate on the tasks the company given to them on that particular time period. And lastly, the other burden of work from home setup was the difficulty of communicating with their colleagues and superiors in terms of the instructions and giving workload assignments to everyone.

IV. CONCLUSION

The analysis of data observed that the demographic profile in terms of age, educational attainment, salary, years of service by profession, and years of service in the company the employees are currently employed have no significant relationship with the causes of work from home stress during the pandemic. Only the gender category on the demographic profile has a significant relationship with the causes of work from home stress during the pandemic because its p-value of 0.01 is less than 0.05. On the other hand, in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, salary, years of service by profession, and years of service in the company the employees are currently employed has no significant relationship on the impact of work from home stress during the pandemic. The data shows that the demographic profile categories of the respondents had no impact on their general stress during the work from home setup. In terms of the impact on their general stress during the work from home set up. Only the gender category on the demographic profile has a significant relationship with the work from home stress coping mechanisms created by different industries during the pandemic because its p-value of 0.01 is less than 0.05. And lastly, the study observed that the different industry the employees currently belong to and are employed has a significant relationship with their reason for having a stress from working from home. The data shows that the type of industry an employee is currently working in also affects the level of work from home stress.

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