Stress Experiences: Effects and Coping Mechanisms of the Employees during the Work from Home Arrangement

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Abstract— This study aimed to determine the stress experienced as perceived by themselves, the effects, and coping mechanisms by the employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office V during the Work from Home arrangement for Fiscal Year 2021. The descriptive correlational method was employed in this study. Survey and in-depth interview were utilized to gather the needed data from one hundred technical and fifty clerical employees with permanent job positions. The main research instrument used to gather the needed data was a checklist questionnaire collaborated with an interview schedule. The gathered data were subjected to analysis and interpretation with the use of appropriate statistical tools and measures. This study revealed that the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived by themselves along with health, work safety, and well-being were described as sometimes. In terms of the employees' coping mechanism, it is recommended that the "Wellness Plan" include activities that may provide physical fitness. Employees be trained in the use of digital technology and other digital infrastructure. Being connected with friends and family to avoid getting depressed, and reading good books are recommended.

Keywords— coping mechanism, employees, public works and highways, stress, work from home

I. INTRODUCTION

An epidemiological catastrophe has swept the whole world with an infectious disease known as Corona Virus or COVID-19. The outbreak of this disease was declared by the World Health Organization, WHO (2020) worldwide. The WHO has expressed that it has caused an immense effect on Organizations, Institutions, and much more among individuals from all walks of life. Organizations from private, and government Institutions initiated programs and measures to mitigate the spread of this disease by demonstrating leadership to improve the physical environment of the workplace. These emergency measures conducted by many countries were geared towards the welfare of their employees. Emerald Open Research (2020).

According to the Economic Cooperation and Development (ECD)(2020), the negative impact of COVID-19 on the economic sector has decreased employees' productivity. The economic outlook resulted in a great financial crisis, among workers who were quarantined. They suffered from social exclusion associated with the stigma of being isolated and discriminated. Faced with this situation, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) provided social support to the workers, and employees through Memorandum Circular 06, s. 2020. Under this Circular Memorandum, Government Heads of Bureaus and Agencies, Local Government and Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations, State Universities, and Colleges adopt a flexible WFH arrangement. The CSC is mandated to establish rules and regulations in the implementation of the WFH arrangement. Further, under CSC Circular No. 18 s. 2020, agencies located in areas under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) may adopt WFH while a skeleton workforce may be allowed among agencies with critical essential services. To manage the performance of employees working from home, agencies may adopt a performance standard to guide them in the delivery of assigned tasks such as the use of a point system.

Along with Educational Institutions, the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) have launched modular learning and virtual tele-learning modalities. These approaches limit face-to-face interaction to address the threat of Covid-19 to the learners. The effects of Corona Virus to individuals encompass socio-demographic factors like sex, age, education, and the perception of physical health and vulnerability. Covid-19 is a stressor to most people because of the onset of psychological stress. The high rate of morbidity caused by the outbreak of the pandemic led to more adults who suffered from depression and stress. Bonde et al (2020) opined that

females are more prone to stress and other mental health disorders than males. It is believed that males are physically and psychologically strong. The individual's perception of their physical health if poor is also associated with higher stress and other chronic diseases. Stress is a person's natural response to something which he or she cannot cope with. The outbreak of Covid 19, increased the rate of psychological stress because of many individual's perceptions of their security and safety.

Based on the stressful effect of COVID-19, Brooks et al. (2020) proposed some coping mechanisms or plans to mitigate the impact of stress on Organizations, Institutions, and individuals. An organizational plan is proposed based on the following recommendations. Optimize communication and transparency. Coordinate with HR professionals. Employers should involve employees in organizational operations, provide transparent information, and avoid communication overload. These are crucial to reduce employee's uncertainty and their level of stress. Training is also essential during and after the pandemic. It is considered a protective factor against stress and other mental health issues. Furthermore, organizations should develop policies and regulations to reinforce a flexible work-from-home arrangement, that will address the necessary positive behaviors that will minimize if not prevent stress.

According to Pascual (2020), there were many changes implemented in the Philippines during the pandemic. The most affected area when Covid-19 hit the world was the workforce. In the Philippines, health workers and other frontliners from government agencies worked with their physical presence. He stressed that in terms of WFH effectiveness practicality and psychological outcomes, these could only be attained by providing the necessary resources. Tele infrastructure and training/orientation be provided to the workers to achieve a successful outcome and productivity.

Paula and Abadilla (2020) analyzed work-from-home arrangements in the Philippine setting. They disclosed the fundamental characteristics of employees required to work from home. These are: (1) employees (2) An actual work engagement with a company or an organization on specific tasks (3) Worked performed outside the company's physical premises (4) Electronic Communication with the employer. There are support measures for WFH to generate productivity and result accomplishment while away from the main office. The

work from home environment is crucial for safe guarding employees' health, safety and wellbeing. Remaining at home is critical for everyone's physical health protection. In the Philippine WFH setting, the negative social economic consequences should be looked into for proper intervention.

It is in this context that the Researcher endeavors to look into stress experienced by the employees of DPWH Regional Office V. Amid Covid 19, employees expressed anxiety and helplessness with the fear of their safety from the Pandemic. Foremost in their minds was the safety and protection of their families. Many female employees were afraid of this life-threatening experience. When WFH was mandated, there was more confusion and some said they had adjustments to do with the new work arrangement and the required policies to do their tasks. They also lack technological knowledge of the use of computers. This situation intensified their work stress. The employees were also apprehensive of their lack of facilities like tables, chairs, and Internet connection in their homes. These were the realities faced by them in WFH. From this backdrop, this study looked into the stress experienced by the DPWH Regional Office and its effect on them. It is in this end view that the Researcher conducted this study.

Generally, this study aimed to determine the stress experienced, effects and coping mechanisms by the employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office V during the work from home arrangement, for Fiscal Year 2021. Specifically, it aimed to (1) determine the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived by themselves along health, work safety, and wellbeing; (2) identify the effects of stress experienced by the employees during the work from home in terms of Physical, Social, and Productivity; and (3) find out the coping mechanism of the employees to stress experienced during work from home.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study aimed to determine the level of stress experienced, effects and coping mechanisms by the employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office V during the work from home arrangement for Fiscal Year 2021. The descriptive method of research was employed in this study. Survey with a checklist questionnaire and an in-depth interview were utilized as research tools to gather the needed data. Similarly, the respondents of this study were 100

technical and 50 clerical employees of the DPWH Regional Office V. The technical employees comprise the engineer, architect, draftsman and engineering aide. The clerical employees were those who render support service to the different division of the DPWH. The statistical tools used to interpret and analyze the gathered data were frequency count percentage, and weighted mean.

The Sample

In choosing the respondents of the study, records of technical and clerical employees with permanent positions were categorized by the researcher with the permission and help of the HRM Officer. The technical employees were classified as engineers, architects, draftsmen, and engineering aides. The clerical employees were those whose job description and functions were to provide support services in terms of

encoding and record keeping to the administrative department. They also attended to the needs of the clients on following up documents. There were more than two hundred technical employees and one hundred clerical employees. The targeted sampled respondents were only one hundred technical and fifty clerical permanent employees.

These identified employees were included in random sampling to get the primary needed sources of data of one hundred technical and fifty clerical employees in this study. To get these targeted sample, the fish bowl method was used. This method was done by using rolled sheets of paper placed in a bowl. Some rolled sheets were marked X. Employees who got the rolled sheets with marked X were chosen as sampled respondents of the study. Those who got blank rolled sheet of paper were excluded.

Table 1. The Respondents

Employees	f	%
Technical	100	67
Clerical	50	33
Total	150	100

Table 1 presents the respondents of the study. There were 100 or 67% permanent technical employees and 50 or 33% permanent clerical employees taken as respondents of the study.

The Instrument

The study utilized a checklist questionnaire and an unstructured interview schedule to gather the needed data of the study. The questionnaire was an adaptation from Institute for Work and Health (IWH) website, a not-for-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. There was three (3) parts of the questionnaire. Part I covered the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, nature of work job, length of service and monthly income. The second part focused on the level of stress experienced by the respondents along: health, work safety and well-being. Part III contained the effects of stress experienced along physical, social and productivity and coping mechanisms of the employees during WFH.

An unstructured interview schedule was utilized to guide the researcher in gathering narrative data along the effects of stress experienced by the employees during the work from home in terms of physical, social, productivity, and the coping mechanisms of the employees during work from home.

A dry run of the checklist questionnaire was conducted on October 27, 2022 among 15 technical employees and 15 clerical employees who were not chosen as respondents of the study. This activity was done to establish reliability and validity and also the adaptability of the research instrument.

After the dry run questions in the checklist questionnaire that were unclear and difficult to understand were revised and improved upon approval of the researcher's adviser. The final research instrument was administered to the respondents on November 7, 2022. During the retrieval of the questionnaire, the in-depth interview among the identified respondents was conducted.

Data Collection Procedures

During the initial part of the study, a letter of intent was sent to the Regional Director of the DPWH ROV. Permission was requested to conduct this study and administer the checklist questionnaire and conduct an interview schedule for the sampled respondents of the study. Upon the approval of the Regional Director of the DPWH RO V, the Researcher consulted the Human Resource Management Officer and requested records of the employees who were chosen as respondents of the study. The respondents were assured that their answers

to the checklist questionnaire and interview schedule were treated with strict confidentiality.

After a week, the research questionnaire was retrieved and the informal interview was conducted. They were interviewed based on their availability. The respondents' narratives were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed.

Data Analysis Procedures

The weighted mean was used to determine the level of stress experienced by the employees along health, safety, well-being. Also, a qualitative narrative description of the effects of stress experienced by the employees and their coping mechanisms during work from home in terms of physical, social and productivity.

Questions along the three variables were asked through informal interview based on their language preference.

Verbatim answers were considered in order to capture the meaning to them of the three variables. Thematic analysis was done to identify the coping mechanisms of the employees during work from home.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of stress experienced by the employees

This section revealed the level of stress experienced by the employees as they perceived along health, work safety, and well-being. The data were shown in tables 2A to 2C.

Health. Table 2A reflects the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived by themselves along health. It shows that sleep was affected because of the unfinished work and got a weighted mean of 2.28, described as sometimes. This was followed by the following indicators of their level of stress and the corresponding weighted mean ratings.

Frequent headaches caused by long hours of work in the computer with a weighted mean 2.23, and during work from home screen time affected the appetite with a weighted mean of 1.89. Feeling tied to the computer, with a weighted mean 2.01 not getting enough exercise with 1.89, struggling to separate work and home life with 1.95 and low morale due to lack of communication and clear instruction with a mean of 1.69. These experiences or indicators and the obtained weighted mean described the level of stress along of the health of the respondents as sometimes.

Table 2A. Level of Stress Experienced by the Respondents along Health

Indicators	WM	Description
Sleep is getting affected because of unfinished work.	2.28	Sometimes
Frequent headaches because the tasks demand long hours of work on the computer.	2.23	Sometimes
Eye strain causes by focusing on a digital screen for a long period.	2.73	Very often
During work from home, screen time affects my appetite.	1.89	Sometimes
Sitting for a long period causes back pain and neck pain.	2.90	Very often
I feel tied to my computer to a greater extent than when at my workplace.	2.01	Sometimes
I do not get enough exercise when I am not at my workplace.	1.89	Sometimes
I find it difficult to focus on my work when alone.	1.25	Rarely
Struggling to separate work and home life.	1.95	Sometimes
Low morale because of lack of communication and clear instruction.	1.69	Sometimes
Overall weighted mean	2.08	Sometimes

The respondents also disclosed that they suffered eye strain by focusing on the digital screen which got a weighted mean rating of 2.73 and neck and back pain caused by long hours of sitting with a weighted mean 2.90. These were both described as very often. When alone, difficult to work with a weighted mean of 1.25 described as rarely.

The overall weighted mean of 2.08, described as 'sometimes' indicated the level of stress of the employees along health. These results mean that the respondents' level of stress ranged from physical, emotional and psychological. Although they experienced physical pain, struggled to separate work from life and low morale these were experienced as 'sometimes' which mean temporary in nature. These

experiences are caused by the new experience of work from at home rather than at the office environment. These findings imply that their level of stress which has affected their health could be resolved and lessened if they would find ways to adjust and be flexible in their work from home arrangement. The respondents may also be monitored by their employer to address their health needs. These results find support in the study of Hardiman et al. (2020) among medical professional. The respondents were divided on their level of stress

experienced with WFH. Others viewed their experiences which also caused them physical pain and emotional distress which according to them could be resolved through relaxation activities and other healthful engagements to improve their health status.

Work Safety. Table 2B shows the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived of themselves along work safety.

Table 2B. Level of Stress Experienced by the Respondents on Work Safety

Indicators	WM	Description
The physical conditions in my home do not afford a good working environment (table, chair, light, good monitor, etc.)	2.11	Sometimes
The work I do from home is not as interesting as the work I do at my workplace.	1.93	Sometimes
Inability to work better because of neighborhood activity.	1.80	Sometimes
Irrational fear of computer viruses.	1.93	Sometimes
Afraid not to distinguish between email and text scams.	1.79	Sometimes
I get disturbed by other people in my home.	2.03	Sometimes
Worrying about the initial costs for the home office setup (Wi-Fi, electricity).	2.23	Sometimes
Internet dependency.	2.52	Very often
Worrying about the data or documents that I do not have access to at home to do my work.	2.59	Very often
Working alone is a tough job especially when no one monitors my performance.	1.86	Sometimes
Overall weighted mean	2.08	Sometimes

Based on the result, the employees experienced a level of stress along with work safety. Particularly, they worried about the data or documents that cannot access at home and got a weighted mean of 2.59, internet dependency with a weighted mean of 2.52. These were described as very often.

Other indicators that were rated and described as sometimes were worrying about the cost of the initial installation of electricity, Wi-Fi for the home office got a weighted mean of 2.23, followed by the physical condition in the home does not afford a good working environment (lack of table, chair, light and good monitor) with 2.11. The respondents were also disturbed by other people at home got a mean of 2.03. The work done at home is not as interesting as the work done at the workplace and the irrational fear of computer viruses both got a mean of 1.93. A few respondents claimed that working alone is a tough job especially when no one monitors their performance got a mean of 1.86, and inability to work better because of neighborhood activities with a mean of 1.80. These stressors got a

mean rating described as sometimes. The overall weighted mean on the level of stress experienced by the employee along work safety was 2.08 described as sometimes.

These findings mean that the employees were concerned about the situation in their working environment at home. The lack of facilities like table, chair, internet connection caused stress. Other concerns of their work safety during Work from Home were the fear of the computer virus, internet dependency and lack of access at home of data and documents they need to facilitate their work. These results mean that the employees' level of stress was not only caused by the safety of the physical condition of their home office and the lack of technological facilities.

Their safety is also associated with the distress in working alone with no one to monitor, to communicate and support them during Work from Home. Another thing that caused their stress along work safety is an attitude of being bothered of inadequacies of the

physical technological infrastructure. Instead, they should find ways to solve these concerns. It is implied that the employees should be resourceful and foster a positive attitude towards WFH. The employees need to be motivated and oriented on the work processes, schedule and other concerns about work from home. These may lessen their stress along work safety.

Singh and Kumar (2020) study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Working Culture along IT Professionals, support the finding of this study. The results of the author's study showed that nearly half of the respondents indicated that prolonged Work from Home led to stress because they were not safe and ready from the change of Work from Home arrangement. The lack of facilities and a safe working home environment caused stress. This may be due to their failure to adjust to the new temporary set of WFH. However, these can be resolved by a change of attitude in facing a new work-

set up. They need the motivation of the employer. It is implied that the employees need to be oriented and understand that WFH is mandated and implemented worldwide. This will lessen their temporary work safety stress caused by WFH arrangement.

Well-being. Table 2C shows the level of stress experienced by the employees along well-being. Based on the data, the employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways Region V experienced level of stress along well-being. It is interesting to note that the respondents experienced level of stress as perceived by themselves obtained weighted mean rating of all indicators which were all described as 'sometimes'. These were as follows: had a hard time thinking of my career in this pandemic crisis got a mean rating of 2.47, followed by bothered by COVID-19 news with a weighted mean of 2.45.

Table 2C. Level of Stress Experienced by the Respondents on Well-being

Indicators	WM	Description
Doing household chores instead of office tasks.	2.15	Sometimes
Unbalanced diet/irregular eating routine.	1.89	Sometimes
Bothered by becoming easily annoyed or irritable.	1.88	Sometimes
Bothered by worrying too much about different things.	2.11	Sometimes
Feeling lonely or feeling isolated.	1.82	Sometimes
Feeling stressed because of work from home set up.	1.81	Sometimes
Feeling anxious because of the lockdown.	2.32	Sometimes
Have a hard time thinking of my career in this pandemic crisis.	2.47	Sometimes
Bothered by Covid-19 news.	2.45	Sometimes
Had an anxiety attack (suddenly feeling fear or panic).	1.82	Sometimes
Overall weighted mean	2.07	Sometimes

Other indicators were feeling anxious because of the lockdown got 2.32 and doing household chores instead of office tasks with a mean of 2.15. Bothered by worrying too much about different things with a mean of 2.11. It also includes unbalanced diet and irregular eatingroutine got a mean of 1.89. The employees were also bothered by becoming easily annoyed or irritated got a mean of 1.88, had an anxiety attack of fear and panic and feeling lonely and isolated both rated with 1.82. The last was feeling stressed because of the Work from Home got a mean of 1.81. The overall weighted mean of 2.07 denote that the employees' level of stress along well-being and all its indicators are described as sometimes. These results mean that the employee's experiences that caused their level of stress along wellbeing were mostly along what they feel and think about themselves, and their personal life's concerns.

These personal circumstances were brought about by the Work from Home arrangement. They perceived many things that may happen because of the not so positive attitude about WFH. They worried about eating habits anxiety, apprehensions and thoughts of many things that caused their stress and affected their well-being. It is implied from these results that there is a need to have a balance between life and work roles in order to meet the challenges brought about by the Work from Home. Further these findings may discourage employees from engaging in worrying so much about many unrealistic things. Instead, they should face the situation and adjust to it. One's well-being is a product of the mind. It connotes that those employees need to think of positive things that may happen to them.

Effects of stress experienced by the employees of DPWH during the work from home

This section reveals the effects of stress experienced by the employees in terms of physical, social and productivity.

A. Physical

This is about how the employees felt about being back to onsite work after WFH. Their physical presence and the stress they experienced in meeting their co-workers, officers and friends. The threat of COVID-19 is still felt by the employees physically. Based on the informal interview with the identified informants, there are two opposing views shared. To give an example, one employee said that:

Namundo ako ta para sakuya, mas pabor an work from home ta less sa gastos. May pangingidit ta syempre may Covid pa nan nahadlok man ako na mahawaan. Sa nature kan trabaho ko na pang onsite, na ugma man ako ta maka field na ako nan makaka inspect na ako kan actual project mi buda mababagat ko man an mga ka trabaho ko sa project site. [I felt sad because I am still in favor in working from home. The fear was there because the Covid is still around us.] Her narrative pointed out that while said pandemic might still affect the health condition of the employee, the necessity of working face-to-face together with the company among their personnel were also equally important.

Other employees shared that while work-from-home became their 'comfort zone' they admitted that they were not productive at home for they became physically stagnant which affected their overall physical health. As one of them said that:

Dae ako masyado nag paparahiwag, less and exercise ko kaito kaya san nag onsite na, gari na dara ko ang budlay kan lawas ko. [I was not moving that much; I have less exercise that is why when onsite work was implemented my body was so weak.]

While the informant was aware that the immune system should be prioritized, her answer indicates the negative effect of the work-from-home scheme on the physical well-being of the personnel. Another employee said that physical and mental stress levels were high when

An nagsabay sabay ang trabaho sa harong nan ang mga kaipuhan na isubmit na reports sa trabaho naka stress. Pag nawawaraan ki internet nan madalas ang pag brownout, so kaipuhan ko mag duman sa office para mag pa approve kan documents kaso wara ki transportation nan kaipuhan mo makakuwa ki LOE para makalaog ka sa ibang province. [The bulk of work at home together with the paper works that need to be submitted were stressful. The poor internet connection and power interruption at home prompted me to go to the office for the approval of documents but there was no transportation and LOE must be secured first to enter other province/s.]

Hence, her sentiments about the overlapping household chores coupled with the demand of work in the office affected her physical and mental well-being. Also, one employee mentioned that she had difficulty waking up early since she was used to waking up late during the pandemic. Her body clock was changed due to overthinking at night what was the worst-case scenario that might happen when onsite work is implemented.

In summary, some of the employees felt sad about going back to onsite work. They were in favor of WFH because it was less expensive. However, others expressed their excitement to be back to onsite work because they could do their fieldwork and also meet their co-workers. Many were still not comfortable being back to their former office because they were still afraid to be infected with the COVID-19 virus. A few female employees said they felt weak and lacked of energy to be back in the office because of another adjustment to be done. The employee's responses to how they felt and the effect of returning to their onsite work environment could mean that they were not assured of the threat of COVID-19. The physical environment shows that it is not completely free of the virus. Hence, they still felt not so happy because of their apprehension of COVID-19, which caused them fear and stress that they might get infected. This result may imply that since they seem not ready yet for onsite work, management could have oriented them and help them have a mindset of the protocols to be followed. This could lessen and prepare they're on how to face the situation on return to their former work environment.

These results find support in the study conducted by Deraman et al (2020). The author's findings revealed this among the sampled respondents interviewed who returned to onsite work. They proposed an onsite work plan. This work plan includes engagement and activities which are physically healthful. Employers need to orient workers on work safety and promote their well-being.

B. Social

Social pertains to how the employees establish social relationship with co-employees, their superior officers, and friends at the onsite office. It discloses the type of interaction and the stress experienced in carrying out conversations and other forms of social interaction.

According to some informants, while they missed their colleagues and excited to meet them, the apprehension of probably being infected by others affected the way they socialized during the pandemic and even when duties were already face-to-face. One shared that

Dawa close kami, maiwas muna talaga ta baad carrier sinda kan virus nan mahawaan ako, pati pamilya ko madadamay pa. [Even though we are close, I need to distance myself for perhaps they are carrier of the virus and my family gets infected].

Her social distancing with others was affected due to fear of being contaminated not only by the persona but most importantly to protect the family against the virus. The said protocol is implemented worldwide through the mandate of the central government in collaboration with the different agencies.

Another employee said that she distanced herself from others especially if she is not feeling well. Her action is indeed protocol during the pandemic so as to avoid easy transfer of the virus through physical contact with others. Also, the strict implementation of social distancing even riding a motorcycle, wearing a face mask and face shield 'which are suffocating', securing LOE, using alcohol, and complete vaccination were among the parameters considered between and among the employees before social interaction is done.

Additionally, one of the frontline employees shared that fear of facing the clientele was really challenging when:

… an client na naga follow up nin documents, yaon su pangangamba na baad may virus ini ta di ko man aram kung sain sya hali nan kung sino sino naka interact niya laya irme ako nag aalcohol.[the client is following up the documents, there was a fear that I might get infected for I do not know where he/she came from and the different persons he/she interact with therefore I always spray alcohol].

Her feeling of anxiety of being in the frontline service who are interacting socially and physically with the clientele's alcohol became one of her protections against

the virus. That is why production of alcohol heightened due to high demand in different workplaces.

To sum up, both groups of technical and clerical employees expressed how happy they were to go back to their former office site. The majority said that they missed each other were and excited to be together but they were apprehensive and fearful of being contaminated with the COVID-19 Virus. They agreed and understood that they have to observe COVID-19 protocol in their onsite office for their own good. They said each one is concerned about safety from the virus. Moreover, they manifested concern for each other's welfare. Many answered that when an employee is coughing and sneezing, he/she should stop interacting with co-workers and friends, not only because they might think they have been infected with Covid-19 but because flu is contagious. Majority said it is needed to keep social distancing and even partitions are installed in the workplace to avoid the spread of the virus. However, some said being isolated is only temporary and it is to be followed. The respondents said that social relationships did not change. It was still the same usual camaraderie they had before pandemic. There was mutual concern for each other's welfare which means that when they return to onsite work this harmonious relationship grew fonder because of the absence of each one. However, the employees were still fearful of being infected of the virus, which indicate that these was still the apprehension of the threat of the virus which spares no one. So, there is a need to follow health protocols. The employees understood that in spite of their good social relationship, they have accepted social distancing as the need arises.

Ahmed (2020) affirmed the findings of this study. In a semi- structured interview with organizations like ADP, this organization has initiated plan for social behavior changes post COVID-19, for employees who will return to onsite work. The following were recommended for social engagement activities to foster harmonious or good relationship of employees: (1) promote organization culture; (2) enhance relationship building; (3) better collaboration of trust building; and (4) enhance motivation enthusiasm of employees in their daily work routine.

C. Productivity

Productivity pertains to the quantity and quality of work performance of employees after returning to onsite work. The employees experienced stress performing their task because there is still the threat of COVID-19.

They were still following closely the protocols and its effect on their work performance. Based on the answers of the informants, their work productivity was affected due to virus anxiety. One of them shared that:

Nag cramming ako ta natambak ang trabaho. Na stress ako ta kadakol back log nan ang iba na mga boss na ma pirma, dae pa naga laog. [I was cramming due to pile of work. I was stressed for I have lots of back logs and other bosses who were going to sign were not yet reporting].

The back logs in the workplace are the manifestation of poor productivity based on the narrative of the employee. According to her, this was because when employees were infected works were suspended.

In general, many of the employees shared their thoughts and reactions about their work arrangement when the onsite work resumed. One employee said, "I don't feel yet if I am safe from the virus and this made me less productive". Those employees were still doubtful and apprehensive of their safety. They were cramming in doing their work due to backlogs. Majority were affected in doing their assigned tasks because they were not comfortable wearing masks and face shield. They said they cannot breathe well and affected their vision.

Those whose job assignment were to visit projects were also affected by riding in public transportation seeing passengers without face mask. This made them fearful and stressed that they might be infected with the virus. Some said that they still preferred WFH for they are with their families. According to others, onsite work assignments that need the technical expertise like installing machines and repair of infrastructures need face- to- face work. However, they reiterated that health protocols should be followed especially avoiding interaction and to practice social distancing. The employees said that they find it difficult to concentrate in completing their assigned tasks, they need to really concentrate in doing their work because it is their responsibility. While in the office they are also concerned with their own health and well-being.

The employees had expressed their preference for WFH for reasons of safety and being with their families. However, they are aware of work assignments like technical repairs and other infrastructures that necessitates the face-to-face presence of designated employees. These mean that the employees knew their responsibilities and the services they need to deliver to the clients. They need to be concerned with the quality of their job performance. This indicate that in spite of their work onsite they were concerned about their safety from the virus.

The World Economic Forum (WEF)support the results of the study. It investigated the work productivity of employees from sampled companies during post Covid-19. The findings revealed that workers had undergone reskilling and retraining which resulted to increased productivity.

Management had created new jobs. The needs of the workers in terms of family and social needs were provided by management through motivation and encouragement, mutual trust, cooperation and good human relations among workers.

Coping Mechanism of the employees to stress experienced during work- from- home

This section tackles the coping mechanisms or strategies employed by the respondents to ease out their stress during work from home.

They needed ways to be able to unleash their physical pain, emotional anxiety, depression and other forms of social confusions.

a. Wellness Plan

This plan focuses on a routinely schedule of activities whose objectives are to promote good health and total well-being of the employees during WFH. This also lessens and minimize stress.

6:00 – 6:30 AM	Breakfast
7:00 – 8:00	Daily exercise/Physical activities
8:00 – 11:30	Task to be accomplished
1:00 – 5:00 PM	Task to be done
5:00 – 6:00	Relaxation
7:00 – 8:00	Dinner
8:00 – 9:00	Connecting with co-workers/family through video calls
10:00	Nap time

In terms of coping with stress associated to health, the employee's crafted a 'wellness plan' in order to have a balance between work and life. Some expressed concern for eating healthful food and during proper meal time. The majority turned to listening to music to calm themselves and have a good mood in WFH. One sports minded employee said "physical activity like gardening, sports, massage and yoga, strengthen my physique, and improve my mental health". To avoid eye strain because of too much exposure to computer, some read good books. Majority valued good sleep for a better health. Almost all of the employees focused on their work. But almost everyone expressed that they turned to God to give them strength to be able to withstand their confusion and stress during those trying times WFH experience.

b. Strengthening Relationships

This term entails one's making relationship with people they value. To cope with stress, some respondents reiterated that they balanced work and life at home. Some said, they felt better and able to cope with stress by calling relatives, friends and peers and asked them problems with WFH and how they were able to cope with them, from friendly interactions and camaraderie. Others called friends and relatives abroad constantly to ease out feelings that they are not alone. Since parents are with their families especially with their children, they became closer and strengthen care and loving relationship which grew fonder.

c. Time Management

An essential component of WFH is budgeting time to attain a balance between work and life at home. When asked about how the employees manage their time, many said that that they sometimes find difficulty in budgeting time. However, they prepared a daily schedule for work and the task to be accomplished daily. Others said that this schedule prevents them from having backlogs of work. Some posted on a board the urgent task and the deadline for submission. Managing time according to them necessitates proper organization of things to be done. There is always time for everything to be done during WFH.

d. Making Connection and Establishing Relationships

Although the employees work on their own pace and time yet they connect with their boss or manager for consultation and about tasks for clarification. This is necessary for a smooth performance of their work. Some said that by connecting with their managers, they became less aloof with them and establish a good personal and work relationships. Some also expressed that connecting with friends and relatives abroad gave them an assurance that they are not forgotten during the pandemic. Talking to them via phone calls deepen their relationships and lessen their stress.

e. Getting Rid of Social Media to Avoid Overthinking

This pertains to overload of information from social media. There is a need to filter whether the information social media is true or fake. The employees experienced intense stress when they read about death and other morbid information about the pandemic.

They reiterated that to cope and get rid of social media overload information, they consulted their boss and other friends whose opinion gave them clarification about whether the news is fake or true. In due time, many said they learned to analyze the veracity or authenticity of information from social media to avoid stress.

The results of these narratives on the coping mechanisms of the employees on the stress experienced during work from home echoed that of Jon (2019) study. Jon's study claimed that the employers have to assess the problems and concerns of the workers. The employer's knowledge of the employees' situation, during WFH may enable them to assist the employees in coping with stress and problems related to their wellbeing during WFH. It was recommended that management or employers conduct a staff development training for employees. They are oriented on the policies and culture of the business organization. The employer's responsibilities to the employees and their families be addressed, to gain the trust and cooperation of the workers.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concluded that the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived by themselves were along health, work safety and well-being. The effects of stress experienced by the employers during onsite work in terms of physical were: Some felt sad and favored WFH because it is less expensive. While they were excited to visit their field work projects, they still felt unsafe because of the Covid Virus. Along social relationship, majority were happy to meet co-workers, yet they had limited interaction because of their fear of the threat of Covid-19. On productivity, majority reiterated that they were not safe from Corona Virus. This apprehension made them less productive. Wearing

masks and face shields affected their breathing and visions. They crammed in doing backlogs in their assigned tasks. The coping mechanisms of employees along health were: majority utilized a wellness plan to attain a balance between work and life. They engaged in physical activity such as gardening, sports and yoga. They ate healthful foods. The employees expressed being 'problem focused'. They stayed connected with their Boss to help from open-emails and interpret communication. Employees interacted with families and friends through social media. They turned to trusted persons for advice when they are depressed.

It was recommended that the level of stress experienced by the employees as perceived by themselves as "sometimes" be improved by engaging in physical and mental activities such as gardening, sports, massage and yoga. Monthly income of the employees be maintained; however, it is recommended that as needs arise, they may be given emergency allowance for hospitalization of their family members. In terms of work safety, technical employees like the ICT may collaborate and assist non-technical employees in the use of computers like opening e-mail and interpreting information from social media. In terms of physical, employees be oriented on how to be adjusted in returning to onsite work so that their apprehension on the threat of Covid Virus be eased out. It is recommended that they undergo staff training and psychological debriefing. Along social relationship, the employee's limited interaction could be alleviated by tele- conversation. It is recommended that the employees maintain their harmonious social relationship through focusing on more positive outlook during the pandemic period. In terms of productivity, it is recommended that employees to become productive be more "work focused" by working on backlog task. This could be done by having a work plan and time schedule for specific tasks to be accomplished. In terms of the employees coping mechanism, it is recommended that the "Wellness Plan" may include activities that may provide physical fitness like playing basketball, yoga and gardening. Employees be trained on the use of digital technology and other digital infrastructure. Being connected with friends and family in order to avoid getting depressed, reading good books and the bible are recommended.

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