From Office Desks to Home Set-ups:
Filipino Workers' Transition during COVID-19

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Abstract

The COVID 19 epidemic has wreaked havoc on economies worldwide, forcing the Philippines into lockdown for almost a year and a half. This compelled commercial and public sector employers to adopt strategic work-from-home (WFH) arrangements to guarantee productive and dignified work during the epidemic. This study looks into the situation of teleworkers in the Philippines in light of the following variables: (1) WFH frequency, (2) physical work area, (3) social context, and (5) amenability to WFH. A piloted, self-constructed questionnaire was used to poll 363 WFH respondents situated in Metro Manila. The approach is exploratory and does not use triangulation. Teleworkers have sophisticated technology and use tools like Email, Zoom, Viber, and Messenger to communicate. The most popular WFH schedules are five times a week, daily, and twice a week. Because many people live in tiny dwellings, the most frequent WFH set-up is in the bedroom rather than the living room. In

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a social environment, no teleworker lives alone. Moreover, half live with 2-4 people, then 5-7 people, and finally one person. They also don't have in-laws, live with a senior, and just a handful have a housekeeper. Teleworkers are generally open to WFH, especially those without children or elderly relatives. This research advises governments and companies to examine their WFH arrangements.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic rapidly accelerated, resulting in worldwide lockdown measures. Immediate effects on various sectors, enterprises, and workers were evident in the Philippines. Following the World Health Organization's (WHO) declaration of COVID-19 as a worldwide pandemic, Metro Manila was immediately placed under tight Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (CNN Philippines, 2020). To slow down the virus transmission, face-to-face contact is indispensable, avoiding or at least lessening person-to-person (WHO, 2020). Under ECQ, only the "essential sectors" or businesses and institutions considered critical to running the economy were allowed to operate. These sectors include accredited construction activities, airline and aircraft maintenance, capital markets, energy, food, medicine and essential products manufacturing, funeral and embalming services, logistics and transport of essential goods, humanitarian and relief assistance, media, telecommunications, and utilities (COVID-19 Guidelines, 2020). Businesses and establishments in other sectors were instructed to reduce work and/or operating hours, adjust to partial operations, and adopt work-from-home (WFH) arrangements to continue their operations. The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2020) accounts that adopting the WFH set-up was more feasible for medium-sized and large firms. Unfortunately, small firms had to either shift to partial operations or close down their businesses (ILO, 2020), resulting in more than 390,000 small businesses being temporarily stopped while about one million more were forced to operate with a skeletal workforce (De Vera, 2020).

The need to find a way to transition and secure long-term sustainability while maintaining social distancing and other safety measures urged WFH set-up to become one of the most preeminent strategies in ensuring productive employment and decent work during the pandemic (ILO, 2020).WFH came from the concept of "telecommuting" or "telework," which simply means performing work outside traditional offices or work settings wherever the worker chooses (Parris, 2018; Kurland & Bailey, 2000). Alternative workplaces include designated sites, executive suites, coffee shops, homes, or anywhere with a reliable internet source (Spinuzzi, 2012). This is not a novel situation in the Philippines. Many companies have had the prerogative to assign their employees to work anywhere they deem fit, even before the COVID-19 pandemic (Villaraza & Angangco, 2020). In fact, remote work has become very prominent that the country legislated the Republic Act No. 11165 or the "Telecommuting Act" last 2019, ensuring (1) Fair Treatment for remote workers according to the current labor standards, and (2) Data Privacy for the protection of personal information of both employers and employees (Villaraza & Angangco, 2020).

Today, the Philippines has so far the most extended quarantine period globally, forcing several companies and government offices, and agencies to shift to the WFH work set-up so that they can continue to operate despite the pandemic. Besides the pandemic factor, many consider WFH set-up beyond work continuity and could be a possible solution to an environmental crisis like pollution and the reduction of energy consumption (Fu *et al.*, 2012). Incidentally, rapid technological advancements such as collaborative technology and video conferencing tools made communication easier for teleworkers regardless of their geographical location (Hart, 2019; ILS, year; Moeckel, 2017;).

A WFH set-up may look different from one organization to another. For example, some have WFH arrangements only on a day or a few days per week. On the other hand, completely remote jobs require an indefinite WFH arrangement for their employees (Hart, 2019). Managing the corporate culture is vital in companies. As a response to the WFH trend, organizations have learned to handle the workforce remotely by refining the organizational cultures to make them more

facilitative (Reynolds, 2017). Understanding the different working conditions of homeworkers, in relation to physical, economic, and emotional aspects, will be beneficial in developing and improving the work-life balance of homeworkers, not only as they respond to the current pandemic but also as they perceive the future of work.

The purpose of this research is to provide an overview of the usual scenario of homeworkers as they perform their work tasks and if they are amenable to the work-from-home arrangement. Specifically, this study will survey the homeworkers' work occurrence, physical work area, social situations while working, and the role of technological advances.

Methodology and Framework

An online survey was conducted to a limited number of WFH workers in Metro Manila, 363 respondents in total, using a piloted and self-constructed questionnaire. Figure 1 below shows the Integrative Framework of the factors affecting the WFH Frequency of teleworkers. The nature of the method is exploratory, and there was no triangulation. Afterward, descriptive statistics were used in describing the basic features of the data in the study and presented in tabulated form.

Figure 1. Integrative Framework of Factors Affecting WFH Frequency of Homeworkers
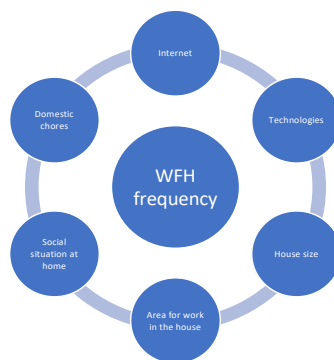
Since this study used only one method to collect the data, a reliability test is imperative for validation. Table 1 below evaluates the reliability of the instruments used in the study in terms of their adaptability, efficiency, and non-monetary factors.

Table 1. Reliability of Instruments used in the study

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Adaptability	0.658	10
Efficiency	0.770	17
Non-monetary	0.875	9

Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.90 means that the questionnaire has an excellent internal consistency. While having a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.80 but less than 0.90 indicates good internal consistency of the questionnaire. When the value falls between 0.70 and 0.80, it is still acceptable. Values lower than 0.70 are already questionable. Cronbach's alpha was not derived for Compensation and Career Promotion since these represent a single statement only in the questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

A total of 363 WFH respondents indicated the industry they belong to. In Table 2, you will find a summary of the findings.

Table 2. Number of Respondents by Industry

Industry	Respondents	Percent(%)	Industry	Respondents	Percent(%)
Agriculture	6	1.7	Hotels and Restaurants	13	3.6
Audit and Finance	2	.6	Information Technology	31	8.5
Banking	1	.3	Media and Broadcasting	7	1.9
Business Process Outsourcing	32	8.8	Mining and Quarrying	3	.8
Community, Social, and Personal Service	10	2.8	Non-Food Manufacturing	11	3.0
Conglomerate	2	.6	Pharmaceutical	4	1.1
Construction	9	2.5	Publishing	2	.6
Consulting Services	44	12.1	Real Estate, Rending, and Business Activities	13	3.6
Education Services	38	10.5	Religious	3	.8
Electricity, Gas, and Water	5	1.4	Social Development	1	.3
Electronics	3	.8	Telecommunication	5	1.4
Energy	6	1.7	Trading and Services	1	.3
Financial Intermediation	34	9.4	Transportation, Storage, and Communication	12	3.3
Food Manufacturing	15	4.1	Wholesale and Retail	17	4.7
Government	15	4.1	Health and Social Work	18	5.0
Health and Social Work	18	5.0	**TOTAL**	**363**	**100**

Consulting services is the top industry represented with 12 %. Consultants are specialists in a specific subject area or field. They can work with multiple enterprises such as law firms, healthcare practices, government organizations, academic institutions, engineering firms, and other businesses (Mandelbaum, 2019). According to Kaplan (2020), the consulting industry is afflicted by a stagnant business model that is decreasingly suited, if not ill-suited, for today's innovation-driven digital world. The eminence of the Consulting industry has further worsened because it was heavily hit by the pandemic, incurring a 19% loss in market value (Patil, 2020).

Nonetheless, the consulting industry reshaped its business strategy to recover from the impact and adapt to the post-pandemic reality. Patil (2020) listed four best practices that possibly improved the market value of the consulting industry, namely: (1) better crisis management, (2) enhanced agility in inspection and adaptation, (3) accelerated pace of digitalization, and (4) leveraged innovation to revamp strategies. Although there are several losses within the global consulting industry, clients still invest in large firms with massive advantages during periods of economic upheaval, making the Consultancy industry the top industry in this study (Consultancy Org, 2020).

Next to the Consulting services is the Education sector at 10.5%. The pandemic increased the gaps in the Education sector globally (Onyema *et al.*, 2020). For instance, the shift in teaching from the school building to online learning resulted in a decline in terms of the quality of education due to learning curve adjustments (Lund *et al.*, 2020). On another note, four out of five survey respondents came from the private sector (refer to Table 3 below).

Table 3. Number of Respondents by Industry

Sector	Respondents	Percent (%)
Private	296	81.5
Public	67	18.5
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Information and Communication Technologies (Internet Connectivity)

Nowadays, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) change how people work, making WFH arrangements easier (Hardill

& Green, 2003). However, employers should still consider that not all employees can effectively do WFH despite wanting to do so. In the Philippines, for instance, internet connections can often be slow and problematic. Ochave (2020) recorded that only three out of 100 Filipinos have a fixed broadband subscription, showing limited Internet access nationwide. Furthermore, a sizable proportion of Filipinos have little to no understanding of using a computer efficiently (Good Things Foundation, 2016). Besides, employees also struggle financially. Some employers require them to finance their own computer set-up on top of the Internet and electricity bills they incurred while working from home (Ochave, 2020). Given all these limitations, it is essential to consider these scenarios while carefully planning possible WFH arrangements.

Selecting the appropriate tools and equipment and maximizing technology features can improve WFH set-ups (Doust, 2020). At best, technology must serve as a communication channel for monitoring and evaluating employee performance and as a means to acquire task information (Nansen *et al.*, 2010; Olson and Primps, 1984). The following tables show the list of internet providers (Table 4), and their connectivity strength (Table 5), and applications (Table 4) that teleworkers are using to perform their tasks.

Table 4. Number of Respondents per Technology Used

Technology	Respondents	Percentage (%)
PLDT	163	44.9
Smart	13	3.6
SUN	2	0.6
Sky	34	9.4
Converge	81	22.3
Globe	111	30.6
Other Internet Service Providers	16	4.4
FB	82	22.6
Messenger	216	59.5
Viber	224	61.7
Whatsapp	60	16.5
Telegram	26	7.2
Email	313	86.2
Other Messaging Platforms	111	30.6
Cisco Webex Meeting	46	12.7
Zoom	292	80.4
GoTo Meeting	10	2.8
Google Hangout Meet	98	27.0
Team Viewer	18	5.0
Adobe Connect	4	1.1
Blue Jeans Meet	4	1.1
Cisco Jabber	3	0.8
Skype	66	18.2
Discord	7	1.9
Webex	53	14.6
Global Meet Collaboration	1	0.3
Fuze	2	0.6
Ez Talks	1	0.3
Uber Conference	1	0.3
Zoho Meeting	3	0.8
Microsoft Teams	161	44.4
Other Video Conferencing Platforms	15	4.1

Working patterns have been revolutionized by the emergence of new technologies, enabling employees to work anywhere (Oakman *et al,* 2020). The table above indicates that the respondents have a robust technology with a wide array of remote work technologies. Email is the most used communication platform during the WFH setting with 86%. This is followed by Zoom at 80%, Viber at 61.7%, and Messenger at 59.5%. It can be observed that most of these platforms are used as a communication channel to track and remind work-related concerns. These findings also follow the findings of Nansen et al. (2010), who assert that technology becomes more valuable if it incorporates apps for tracking and reminding work schedules of deadlines and pending task assignments.

Due to the little to no presence of face-to-face interaction with co-workers and supervisors, WFH requires excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, that are more advanced compared to that of the office-based set-up (Howington, 2013; Deners, 2014; Lusinski, 2020). Therefore, a teleworker must relay messages through practical means such as email, video call, voice call, email, etc. However, technology-mediated communication has several setbacks. For instance, email and text messages usually lack non-verbal and social cues such as body language, connection, control, emotion, empathy, and feedback. This can breed misunderstandings since the information is open to many interpretations (Deners, 2014; Ko, 2020). Deners (2014) suggested that teleworkers should learn basic troubleshooting of a computer, network, or email issues. Nonetheless, one who wishes to become a virtual team player can willingly seek help from his colleagues and superiors whenever necessary (Howington, 2013).

Furthermore, Table 5 shows a total of 363 respondents indicating the strength of their Internet connection. The Internet connection speed in the Philippines is among the lowest in the region (Barreiro, 2017). Conversely, almost four out of five of the respondents reported that they have a strong Internet connection. In any case, because the poll was done online, the speed of the Internet connection may have impacted how respondents answered the questions.

Table 5. Number of Respondents by Strength of Internet Connection

Internet Connection	Respondents	Percent (%)
Strong	289	79.6
Weak	74	20.4
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Frequency of WFH Schedule

On another note, Table 6 below shows how frequently teleworkers work in a week. The most common schedule is five times a week with almost 30%. This is followed by Daily at 27% and twice a week at 14.3%.

Table 6. Number of Respondents by Frequency of WFH Schedule

WFH Schedule	Respondents	Percent (%)
2 times a week	52	14.3
3 times a week	40	11.0
4 times a week	16	4.4
5 times a week	108	29.8
6 times a week	1	.3
Daily	97	26.7
Once a week	8	2.2
Others	41	11.3
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Remarkably, a study by Song and Gao (2019) showed that WFH affects employees' subjective well-being. One of their findings states that more female employees, especially those with no child responsibilities, become less happy and more stressed as they work during weekends and holidays. On the other hand, the well-being of fathers who work during weekdays is more negatively affected (Song & Gao, 2019).

Physical Work Area

One of the advantages of WFH includes personal comfort. Teleworkers can have different workstation set-ups depending on their personal preferences and agreed WFH arrangements. Some employees work from their couch, others create an ergonomic set-up for their back, while some prefer a virtual home office (Crosbie & Moore, 2004). Several studies suggest that homeworkers should have a dedicated home office that is desirable (Crosbie & Moore, 2004; Morris, n.d;

Nansen *et al.*, 2010). However, setting up a home office comes with physical and infrastructural demands (Aczel *et al.*, 2021). Whichever it is, the main goal is to set up a space conducive to safe and productive work (Subramanian *et al.*, 2020).

Table 7 below shows the most common work areas that employees use while working from home.

Table 7. Number of Respondents by WFH Location

WFH Location	Respondents	Percent (%)
Bedroom	223	66.4
Living room	172	51.2
Garden	5	1.5
Dining room	76	22.6
Kitchen	22	6.5
Garage	5	1.5
Porch Lanai	17	5.1
Backyard	2	0.6
House Library/Reading room	16	4.8
Entertainment room	4	1.2
Others	10	3.0

Some studies suggest not to work in places used for rest, such as in the bedroom, to separate the notion of work and leisure (Doust, 2020; Morris, n.d.). However, the survey revealed that teleworkers usually perform paid tasks in their bedrooms, living rooms, and dining rooms (refer to Table 7 above). The most common area for the WFH set-up is in their bedrooms, with almost two-thirds (66.4%) of the respondents. In this case, the teleworker needs to establish physical boundaries between his work and home life. Additionally, Lufkin (2021) reports that some remote workers only have the option of working from bed since they cannot avail a complete workstation set-up. For this situation, however, experts gave ergonomic advice that it is essential to vary one's posture and to support the different parts of the body wherever possible (Lufkin, 2021).

Next to the bedroom is the living room at 51.2%. Some homeworkers opted to set up their home office in their living rooms by simply having a desk and a chair in a small corner (Modsy, 2017). However, one of the problems that might arise from this set-up is a lack of privacy and noise when the homeworker is not living alone (Stephenson & Mintzer, n.d.).

Overall, there is no separate room serving as their office since the respondents live in relatively small houses. The most common house area is in the range of 21 to 50 square meters with 26% (refer to Table 8 below). This is followed by 51 to 80 square meters and 81 to 110 square meters with 17% each.

Table 8. Number of Respondents by House Area

House Area	Respondents	Percent (%)
101- 150 square meters	45	12.4
151-200 square meters	29	8.0
21-50 square meters	96	26.4
51- 80 square meters	63	17.4
81- 110 square meters	63	17.4
Less than 20 square meters	19	5.2
More than 200 square meters	47	12.9
More than 500 square meters	1	0.3
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Further consideration of house ownership revealed that seven out of ten respondents own their house, while one out five percent is currently renting while working from home (refer to Table 9 below). The high number of those owning houses may be attributed to the proliferation of condominiums in the city.

Table 9. Number of Respondents by House Ownership

Ownership	Respondents	Percent (%)
Company housing	1	0.3
Living in a relative's house	20	5.5
Own	259	71.3
Renting	83	22.9
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Social Situation at Home

Many employees prefer working from home to concentrate on a project since it is a commonly peaceful and quiet environment away from office stress and noise (Venkatraman *et al.*, 1999). While WFH enables support from families and friends, the latter can also become a source of distraction. For instance, failure to adequately address family issues and conflicts at home might negatively affect the productivity of homeworkers (Kurland & Bailey, 2000). During this pandemic, WFH

can also take its toll on the workers' mental and emotional health. Thus, it is imperative to have careful consideration and analysis of social situations at home. Tables 10 through 16 show the living condition of homeworkers concerning the number and kind of people they live with under the same roof.

Table 10. Number of Respondents by No. of People Living With

No. of People Living With	Respondents	Percent (%)
1 person	31	8.5
11 - 13 persons	2	.6
2 - 4 persons	193	53.2
5 - 7 persons	97	26.7
8 - 10 persons	17	4.7
None	23	6.3
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Inference may be drawn that none of them lives alone in their residence. Moreover, half of those who answered the survey said they shared a home with two to four other people. This is followed by 5 to 7 persons with 27% and one person with 9%.

Table 11. Number of Respondents by Number of Children

Number of Children	Respondents	Percent (%)
1 child	60	16.5
2 children	32	8.8
3 children	4	1.1
4 children	1	.3
5 children	1	.3
None	265	73.0
Total	**363**	**100.0**

According to Table 11, the vast majority of respondents do not have children. The percent of respondents with one child is 17%, while those with two children are 9%. In contrast, Crosbie and Moore (2004) observed that employees who have very young children are the most affected by social disturbance at home. One way of managing this disturbance is setting a regular schedule for the children to balance work-life and childcare demands. By preparing small activities that children can do independently or asking adult family members (i.e., spouse, grandparents, nannies, etc.) to watch and take care of the kids are few feasible strategies that can be implemented. At the same time, the homeworkers simultaneously attend to their work tasks (Connley, 2020).

Aside from these, providing needs and services to children, not necessarily the children of homeworkers, could impact the latter's work performance. Table 12 below shows that one out of five respondents reported tutoring kids in their household. This is not necessarily their child but could be their siblings or cousins. This activity could affect their productivity and performance, especially if such is done in conflict with the work shift.

Table 12. Number of Respondents by Tutoring

Tutoring	Respondents	Percent (%)
No	291	80.2
Yes	72	19.8
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Moreover, almost 8% of the respondents reported living with their in-laws while working from home (refer to Table 13). This is crucial as in the Philippines, and the spouses usually have some frictions with their in-laws. In fact, in-laws in the Philippines tend to be more involved in the married lives of their children due to an ownership type of culture (The Asian Parent, n.d.), and such conditions have a potentially massive effect on the emotional and mental health of the homeworkers.

Table 13. Number of Respondents by Living with In-Laws

Living with In-Laws	Respondents	Percent (%)
No	335	92.3
Yes	28	7.7
Total	**363**	**100.0**

More specifically, living with and caring for elderlies could also affect the homeworkers' paid work performance, especially if the seniors are sick. More than half of those polled do not live with a senior adult. The percent of respondents who live with one elderly is 25%, while those with two are 18% (refer to Table 14). Conversely, some employees find WFH favorable as it provides them the opportunity to take care of family members, especially their elderly, while working simultaneously (Nakrošienė et al, 2019). WFH set-up gives them the flexibility they need to continue their career while accomplishing their caretaking responsibilities to their dependents (Morris, n.d.).

Table 14. Number of Respondents by Number of Senior Citizens

Number of Senior Citizens	Respondents	Percent (%)
1	89	24.5
2	65	17.9
3	7	1.9
4	1	.3
More than 4	1	.3
None	200	55.1
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Many of them experience physical and emotional struggles in recognizing the boundaries between work and home (Eddleston & Mulki, 2017; Marsh & Musson, 2008; Tietze & Musson, 2010; Venkatraman *et al.*, 1999). WFH alters the relationship between work and non-work (i.e., family, leisure, etc.) domains of the WFH employees (Halford, 2006; Olson & Primps, 1984); habits and norms formed when working from home become embedded and associated with family matters.

Aside from the above, home distractions also legitimately exist, and among those are household chores. Tables 15 and 16 describe the presence or absence of household helpers and how it impacts the productivity and performance of homeworkers.

Table 15. Number of Respondents by Doing of House Chores

House Chores	Respondents	Percent (%)
Missing	1	0.3
No	35	9.6
Yes	327	90.1
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Table 15 confirms that most respondents reported still performing household chores while working from home. These added house chores could negatively impact paid work performance, especially when they conflict with work schedules. Specifically, part-week, part-year, and shift schedules increase the hours spent on domestic chores, and that, unlike office-based arrangements, hours of home-based work do not significantly reduce time spent on domestic chores (Silver & Goldscheider, 1994). Furthermore, women struggle to attend to their

house or domestic work simultaneously and paid work (Wheatley, 2012). Another problem related to this blurred boundary is that WFH workers often anticipate paid work tasks throughout the day due to "flexible" scheduling. For instance, WFH employees need to attend to their work even during bedtime hours when the boss calls them up for urgent and vital tasks. Venkatraman *et al.* (1999) claim that this significantly affects their sleep patterns and rest quality. Therefore, the healthy integration of work to home/family can be more harmful than good in this sense.

To avoid the concentrated domestic work mentioned above, employing a household helper might lessen the load. However, the survey results (refer to Table 16) revealed that only one out of five respondents indicated a household helper while working from home. This means that they are highly concentrated on household work since many do not have a household helper.

Table 16A. Number of Respondents by Having a Household Helper

Household Helper	Respondents	Percent (%)
No	291	80.2
Yes	72	19.8
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Amenability to WFH Arrangement

Dingel and Neiman (2020) found in their research that 37% of the jobs in the U.S. can completely adapt to a WFH set-up. While it does not apply to all tasks, WFH opens doors to work opportunities, not limited by certain factors such as age and gender (Ammons & Markham, 2004). And many employees are embracing this kind of work arrangement. For instance, the Lenovo global study found that 87% of employees are more than willing to adapt to WFH if their employers require it (Abad, 2020).

Table 16B. Number of Respondents by Agreement on the Statement

All paid tasks can be done at home	Respondents	Percent (%)
Strongly Disagree	9	2.5
Disagree	42	11.6
Somewhat Disagree	44	12.1
Neutral	20	5.5
Somewhat Agree	63	17.4
Agree	95	26.2
Strongly Disagree	90	24.8
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Table 16 showed that almost seven out of ten respondents reported that all of their paid tasks could be done at home. While one out of four disagreed that all of their tasks could be done at home. Furthermore, nearly three-quarters of respondents believed working at WFH is more convenient than working at the official site (refer to Table 17 below). This is consistent with many studies claiming that employees prefer the WFH arrangement (Routely, 2020). In general, the WFH provides a sense of comfort for many homeworkers (Hampton, 2017). Specifically, men with no child responsibility also prefer WFH due to fewer distractions than a central office and more leisure time. (Olson & Primps, 1984).

Table 17. Number of Respondents by Agreement on the Statement

Working at home is generally a lot more convenient for me than working at the official site	Respondents	Percent (%)
Strongly Disagree	5	1.4
Disagree	33	9.1
Somewhat Disagree	27	7.4
Neutral	32	8.8
Somewhat Agree	75	20.7
Agree	88	24.2
Strongly Agree	103	28.4
Total	**363**	**100.0**

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study described the usual condition of Filipino homeworkers and determined their amenability to the WFH set-up. Specifically, this research was able to survey the homeworkers' work frequency of schedules, physical work area, social situations while working, and the role of technological advances as they perform their work tasks.

The respondents have a robust technology with a wide array of remote work technologies. Email is the most used communication platform during the WFH setting with 86%. This is followed by Zoom at 80%, Viber at 61.7%, and Messenger at 59.5%. It can be observed that most of these platforms are used as a communication channel to track and remind work-related concerns.

On another note, the most common schedule teleworkers have five times a week with almost 30%. This is followed by Daily at 27% and twice a week at 14.3%. Remarkably, WFH affects the subjective well-being of employees.

The respondents are living in relatively small houses, of which many of them own homes. The most common area for the WFH set-up is at bedroom, with almost two-thirds of the respondents. The living room follows this at 51.2% and the dining room at 23%. In this case, the teleworker needs to establish physical boundaries between his work and home life.

In terms of WFH social condition, none of them live alone in their house. More than half of the respondents live with 2 to 4 persons, followed by those living with 5 to 7 persons and those living with a person in the house. The majority of the respondents do not have children. Most of them do not have any in-laws in their dwellings, and more than half of them do not live with a senior citizen. Almost one out of five of them reported that they have a household helper while working from home. The majority of the respondents said that they are still performing household chores while working from home. It can be inferred that these social situations remarkably affected the overall mental and emotional well-being of teleworkers.

Finally, almost three out of four respondents agreed that WFH is more convenient than working at the official site. Almost one out of five respondents reported that they have a household helper while working from home. This is consistent with many studies claiming that employees prefer and are amenable to the WFH arrangement.

The Telecommuting Act mandates the DOLE to conduct a study about implementing the telecommuting law to craft the implementing rules

and regulations. DOLE has yet to perform one or release its study results to the public as of this writing. This humble study recommends that businesses and the public sector can continue having that work arrangement but on a selective basis such that (1) the tasks can be done at home, (2) the worker finds WFH fine, (3) internet connectivity is robust, (4) companies to invest more in remote work technologies, (5) employees have enough spaces at home for them to work, and (6) employees are not prone to distractions while working remotely.

Another point to consider regarding WFH arrangements is the issue on the right to disconnect of employees. The right to disconnect refers to the "right of workers to disconnect from their work duties and to not receive or answer any work-related electronic mails, calls, or messages outside of normal working hours" (LiCas News, 2021). This is still pending with the Philippine Congress but there is an urgency to address this issue as this affects the mental health and the overall well-being of workers while they are on WFH arrangements.

Future studies might be interesting to find out the best WFH dynamics – 100% WFH or a combination of work site and WFH. This future study could include more variables and more respondents from different places in the Philippines.

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