

Resilience in the Face of Life Adversity: Self-Coping Mechanisms During Post-Pandemic Recovery of Selected Offshore Employees

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the resilience of selected employees' post-pandemic recovery. Specifically, the study sought to answer questions on how the participants dealt with life difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and what are the self-coping mechanisms of selected employees during post-pandemic recovery. To attain the primary data of this study, the researcher utilized the phenomenological method of research through conversations and interviews with open-ended questions. The phenomenological approach helped in describing the lived experiences of an individual and focuses on studying the phenomena that have impacted an individual.

This research found that there are positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the various aspects of life of the participants. Not all participants view it negatively, as others look at it as a challenge and a life lesson. Participants have their coping strategies during the pandemic as they have different impacts on the situation. Negative responses stem from the significant changes in their lives before and during the pandemic, including the inability to socialize with others, particularly with friends and coworkers, because of community restrictions on leaving their homes; anxiety about the future and when they can leave; daily news on social media about reported mortality; and the fear of losing their jobs at any time due to low demand for their services and lower revenue for the company. As they spend the majority of their time at home, they have seen positive results from the COVID-19 pandemic as well, including new opportunities, promotions, the experience of working from home and in a hybrid setup, learning more about their hobbies, finding new ideas that have been shared on social media, and more time with their loved ones.

Because they have varying effects on the situation at hand, each participant has their coping mechanisms during the pandemic. Coping mechanisms included engaging in hobbies, concentrating on work, identifying opportunities, watching videos, seeking out family support, conversing with others, following online trends, hosting online celebrations, taking time off work, solemnizing through prayer, concentrating on oneself, reading books that inspire motivation, allocating tasks appropriately, and communicating openly and honestly with others.

Keywords: COVID-19, Coping mechanisms, Community restrictions, New opportunities, Online trends

Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

When COVID-19 surfaced worldwide, researchers from different scientific fields and disciplines faced new challenges. 'The black swan' describes, the 'grey swan' event of this period, which is the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, which not only has entailed far-reaching consequences but also has revealed or exacerbated problems that already had been present in communities. The pandemic illustrates the duality of social dynamics associated with unpredictable events. First, an unexpected event occurs (the COVID-19 pandemic), which then leads to many other unpredictable consequences (e.g. changes in the reality of everyday life). Thus, unexpected pandemic changes occur at many levels of human existence (Kubacka et al., 2021).

COVID-19 has swept the globe and impacted each life in various and similar ways. The rapid rate of change, the urgency with which work must be completed, and the fear of making errors when attempting to pick up new abilities quickly, the degree of fear and anxiety that so many people experienced at this time, as well as the efforts not to allow it to affect work, and kindness from loved ones, friends, and coworkers, was crucial. (Health Service Executive, 2021). Concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic caught the researcher's attention, driving the study. While rapid changes occurred everywhere, diverse effects were felt in people's lives. Thus, the purpose of the study is to identify the personal experiences of the selected individuals.

Living through a pandemic is a remarkable experience that comes perhaps just once in a lifetime. Everyone had their own distinct life experiences. Wherein, this study also aims to record a certain moment in the experience of people working during the period, between March 2020 to August 2022, when the individual experienced the early stages of a pandemic and went through the post-pandemic phase.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis on one's personal life will be of focus of the study hence, sharing personal experience could draw out the aspects of life such as physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and psychological. Together, they represent the dynamic human experience of well-being or wholeness which will be assessed while the individuals are in the midst of the crisis.

Quarantines that limited travel and social connections were part of the first worldwide response to the pandemic. These limitations also affected a variety of job types and people's earning capacities, which had a major negative economic impact worldwide. Along with individual financial difficulties, there was a notable rise in anxiety and sadness, particularly among people with risk factors and pre-existing health conditions. Families also expressed a great deal of concern throughout the pandemic about necessities and access to housing, food, and medical care. Due to their inability to attend important occasions like weddings, birthday celebrations, and graduations, families expressed feeling emotionally impacted by the pandemic and alienated. Additionally, when family members were unable to interact with someone who was sick, vulnerable, and dying, they felt helpless ("American Journal of Qualitative Research," 2023).

People can act by pointing out experiences, adversities, and uncertainties after recalling traumatic situations through storytelling. This raises awareness and comprehension of the situation at hand. Thus, rephrasing experiences and reverting to a "normal" condition can begin with storytelling. Stories offer researchers insights into how people perceive their life experiences, with language reflecting following reality and behaviors.

Statement of the Problem

The study determined the lived experience of selected AMS employees through the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

How did the participants deal with life difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

What are the self-coping mechanisms of selected employees during post- pandemic recovery?

Assumption

There will be an identified impact on the life of the selected individual's post- pandemic crisis. The participants who personally experienced COVID-19 were negatively impacted to the extent that life was already difficult. Furthermore, overcoming the difficulties caused by the pandemic stemmed from people's innate ability to bounce back from any situation, regardless of their experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, they were even more resilient through self-coping mechanisms to reduce anxiety.

Theoretical Framework

The descriptive phenomenological method is the research approach that has been used in this study to understand and describe the lived experiences of the participants. This method aimed to capture the essence of those experiences from the participants' perspectives, emphasizing their subjective interpretations. A specific approach was created by Amedeo Giorgi, the theory's principal creator. This approach by Giorgi, Amedeo, et.al, (2017), has a detailed phenomenological psychological analysis of the data conducted within the framework of the phenomenological psychological reduction once the raw data has been received. Descriptive techniques attempt to meticulously describe the experiences being lived through. Having presented the raw data and its analysis, it has fully explicated the procedure that had gone through that resulted in the data presented.

Reading the participant-provided written descriptions through to the finish is the first step. To provide a thorough analysis, one must understand the conclusion of the lived experience stated.

While the normal natural attitude is sufficient for the first step, the rest of the analysis requires that the researcher assumes the attitude of the phenomenological psychological (or scientific) reduction. This means that the objects that emerge within the description are taken to be phenomena or simply objects that present themselves to the consciousness of the experiencer but the notion that such objects exist in the way that they present themselves is not acknowledged. They are always understood to be present in the consciousness of the experiencer. This attitude is usually described by saying that the positing of the existence of the given object, which is usually performed within the natural attitude, is withheld. The assumption of this attitude establishes the phenomenological psychological perspective.

Since descriptions can be lengthy, they have to be broken into parts so that proper analyses of the descriptions can be done. Since phenomenological analyses are concerned with the discrimination of meanings the separation of the parts of a unified description is based upon meanings, and each part is called a meaning unit and it is determined by a careful rereading of the description to distinguish parts from a phenomenological psychological perspective. As the researcher rereads the description, every time he experiences a relatively significant difference in meaning he marks the place where the difference is perceived, and he continues to read. The sense of the meaning itself is not specified nor interrogated. That is done in subsequent steps. Here the differences are merely noted. It is important to realize that all of the meanings constituted in the analysis are interdependent which means that they cannot exist alone. Husserl calls such parts 'moments of a structure' precisely because of their interdependency.

Once the meaning units are determined the task of the next step is to transform the meanings contained in the description in phenomenologically, and psychologically sensitive ways. Thus, the attitude to achieve this task requires one to not only be in the attitude of the phenomenological psychological (scientific) reduction but also to be sensitive to the psychological meaning of what is being expressed. This task often necessitates that the original expressions of the participants be changed so that the psychological meaning of what the participants expressed can be more directly apprehended. The transformations that take place have a dual function: not only are they meant to express the meanings more directly concerning the psychology of learning (in this case), but they are also meant to generalize the meanings so that integration with other descriptions that may be very different becomes more feasible. The last step is to get the general structure of the experience. This is done by reviewing all the transformations written in the second column in order to determine the essential ones.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This research utilized a qualitative method that aimed at discussing the personal experience of selected offshore AMS employees working from March 2020 up to date. The participants were a group of professionals who work for an account or company in a different country. Offshore teams work remotely and collaborate with the company's core team using digital technologies.

The selected offshore employees of AMS have been interviewed through a face-to-face interview or virtual interview. The instrument used in the study was semi-structured questionnaires validated by the subject matter experts. The research was accomplished during the semestral timeline set by the University.

Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial to the following:

Employees. Participation in this study can empower employees by allowing them to share their experiences and perspectives which can increase their self-awareness and comprehension of their situation. Participants may also gain insights into broader social, economic, or cultural issues through their involvement, increasing their awareness and understanding of the context in which they live. Ultimately, the study's findings may lead to positive changes in policies, practices, or company initiatives that directly enhance the quality of life for participants.

Human Resources Department. This study will help the Human Resource Department to know the lived experience of their workforce. This will serve as a reference to the motivation of employees as well as on employee engagement which will help them identify what keeps the employee in the institution despite of the unforeseen situation experience. HR can create programs that boost morale and productivity by having a better understanding of the elements that affect employee engagement and satisfaction. The advantages of a varied workplace can be clarified by research, which can help HR create inclusive policies that foster creativity and worker satisfaction.

Institution. By evaluating the employees' life and work experience, this study will be advantageous to the company. It will assist them in identifying potential efficient work arrangements that may be utilized to scale up and/or modify methods of working to be applied to its staff. Findings can also point out areas where operations, instruction, or service delivery need to be improved, which will boost productivity and effectiveness all around. More so, this study can identify trends and challenges in the institution's environment, aiding in long-term strategic planning and goal setting.

Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) Industry. The majority of research participants will be from this industry, and employees will share their personal experiences during the epidemic, which may

serve as a reference for earlier data from the same sector.

Future Researchers. This study is intended to be useful to future researchers digesting the workforce experience amidst the COVID-19 crisis by identifying personal-related challenges that could be a reference to future research. The findings may also inspire future researchers to explore innovative topics, applications, or solutions related to the subject matter. Future researchers can improve their analytical abilities by critically evaluating the study's methods, findings, and implications.

Psychology Professionals. To explore perceived quality of life during the COVID 19 pandemic, how the participants cope up during the COVID 19 pandemic crisis and continue to upscale into the future trends of the industry. This study can also provide valuable insights into research design, methodologies, and data analysis techniques, aiding future researchers in refining their approaches.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter highlights the key concepts from related literature and studies that were infused into the form of substance of this study which is, otherwise, conceptualized herein as the framework of the study. Likewise, a synthesis of related literature and studies was presented in this chapter.

Living with COVID-19 Pandemic Experience

Individuals expressed both negative feelings of being rejected at the beginning of the outbreak and positive feelings of getting high-quality treatment once they were in the hospital. An explanation for the shift in people's emotions could be found in the government's swift action initiatives to improve Wuhan's medical care capability, which led to the majority of patients receiving proper care. (Liu et al., 2021).

Most nations implemented strict emergency lockdown protocols in response to COVID-19 to stop the virus's spread. As a result, educational institutions decided that it was essential for their staff members to work from home and that arrangements should be created for online instruction. The biggest obstacle was finding a quick online solution for in-person lectures, tutorials, face-to-face classes, and other teaching and learning activities. This placed a tremendous burden on the university's information technology (IT) departments in particular. Universities have encountered several challenges while offering remote education, including technical ones like bad internet connectivity, overburdened university servers, frequent program crashes, and privacy concerns with online apps. (Biswakarma, 2021).

Educating personnel about COVID-19 was another crucial aspect of pandemic management. The management expressed how important this education was for reassuring employees and boosting morale. Support team members remarked on how open staff members were to receive the information and instruction given, demonstrating a great commitment to both safeguard locals and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission (Yau et al., 2021).

Thirty percent of workers indicated both had gone worse, while just ten percent reported improvements in their jobs and thirteen percent in their personal lives. While required short-term work was significantly linked to a perceived negative impact, work from home, particularly for the first time, was highly connected with a felt good influence on work life. There was a strong correlation found between perceived unfavorable influence in private life and younger age, living alone, reduced leisure time, and changes in the number of caregiving responsibilities (Tusl et al., 2021).

“As in the case of temporal disorientation, the social, political, and epistemic disorientations of the COVID-19 crisis all have momentous effects. Converging studies show that the social shift effected by

the pandemic (e.g. social distancing measures) has pernicious effects on our physical and mental health, ranging from disruptions in sleep patterns to recurring suicidal ideation. Political polarization has been shown to have persistent effects on economic activity and health because it moves both individuals and institutions away from optimal choices or policies. And, unsurprisingly, the belief in conspiracy theories is a major predictor of the type of behavior (e.g., mask-wearing compliance) individuals will display during the pandemic. But although the multiplicity of disorientations paints an uninviting picture, there might be light at the end of the tunnel. As with temporal disorientation, establishing clear landmarks and drawing readable boundaries are promising ways to remediate the negative effects of disorientation—i.e. to help people in the individual and collective navigation of the uncharted. Studies have shown that in countries in which there is reliance on public experts, clear leadership, and a consistent message, is delivered, there was an increased trust in government during the pandemic and no noticeable increase in conspiracist ideation; even the effects on mental health of the lockdown were dovetailed by an increased sense of community” (Velasco, 2021).

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic's fatal effects, quick and extreme government measures to restrict social interactions are required to stop the virus's spread and prevent strain on the healthcare system. A few of these government initiatives included encouraging non-essential companies and organizations to temporarily close, as well as urging them to permit employees whose jobs can be done remotely to work from home. However, not all businesses and government agencies found the move from office-based to remote working to be easy or seamless, particularly for people with little prior teleworking experience. Among the reasons for the difficulty in making this transition were the following ones: Organizational culture; management resistance; the lack of appropriate IT tools and devices; cumbersome paper-based processes; lack of skills and training resources to support teams switching to teleworking; lack of internal health and safety guidelines for the home office; labor legislation in which teleworking employees don't have the same rights and protections as workers working in the office; and data security concerns and privacy issues ("International Labour Organization," 2020).

Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on the Mental Well-being of Employees

While roughly 10% indicated improvements in work and 13% in private life, about 30% of employees said that the professional and personal lives of German and Swiss employees had gotten worse. Work from home, especially if it was done for the first time, was strongly related to a felt positive influence on work life, but mandatory short-term work was substantially connected with a perceived negative impact. In terms of personal life, the perceived negative impact was highly correlated with younger age, living alone, having less free time, and having fewer caregiving responsibilities. On the other hand, reported favorable effects on private life were linked to living with a spouse or family, part-time employment increases in free time, and taking on more caregiving responsibilities (Tušl et al., 2021).

Twenty-five percent (25%) of the respondents to the researcher's survey during the initial stages of the pandemic in the Philippines expressed moderate-to- severe anxiety, and one-sixth experienced moderate-to-severe depression and psychological effects. The factors found can be utilized to create psychological support plans that work (Teen et al., 2020).

McKinsey surveyed more than 800 US-based employees on a wide variety of topics related to employee experience. They found that employees working remotely see more positive effects on their daily work like they are more engaged and have a stronger sense of well-being than those in nonremote jobs with little flexibility do. Parents working from home appear to be faring better than those who are more isolated. Fathers working remotely seem much more positive about the experience than mothers

(Emmett et al., 2020).

Many people sought to increase their resilience through a constructive outlook by seizing the chance to gain new skills in light of the changed working environment that dragged them. However, despite the resiliency, worries about the long-term effects and whether this level of adaptability can be sustained. The "resilience decreasing a little" was a common feeling (McGlinchey et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, being a student, having little faith in physicians, being unhappy with health information, spending a lot of time each day looking up health information, and family concerns members getting COVID-19, being shunned, and needless concerns about COVID-19 were connected to poor mental health. Physical signs and a low opinion of one's health were linked to poor mental health in the nation (Tee et al., 2021).

“COVID-19 has had a significant impact on employment in the Philippines: A majority of employees reported their job was suspended, hours and pay reduced, or they were forced to take unpaid leave. Only 37% of employees could report that COVID-19 had no impact on their jobs; a total of 6 out of 10 families lost income; Over 60% of those affected began working from home. However, nearly 70% of employees reported they were able to be equally or more productive during the crisis – 21% of women and 14% of men reported being more productive. Overall, 4 in 10 adults felt pressure to do more household work and childcare. Increased time spent on cleaning was reported by 77% of women and 72% of men. Importantly, 48% of women and 39% of men reported a negative impact on their mental well-being due to COVID-19, and 4 in 10 respondents reported a negative impact on their physical well-being” (“Investing in Women,” 2020).

Organizational-Level Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak

Employers and employees have been put through a stress test by the COVID-19 pandemic's force majeure. It has demonstrated where more funding is required to boost connections or upskill personnel. Additionally, it has helped to build stronger employer-employee and manager-employee relationships, reducing the risk of labor market failures. The COVID-19 pandemic has dismantled societal and psychological obstacles to telework. It has compelled both businesses and employees to get beyond their initial reservations about working remotely (Grzegorzczak et al., 2021).

“The majority of firms have adopted the hybrid work paradigm as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on workplace arrangements. In this regard, it influenced how employees dealt with the sudden changes while attempting to adjust to them despite being prohibited from reporting to work. Different organizations have various interpretations of the term "hybrid." Some employees might come into the workplace every other day or a few days a week. Other businesses might just need sporadic face-to-face meetings, possibly taking place once every three months in a central area. In any case, research demonstrates that many businesses struggle to integrate a virtual workforce” (Mitchell, 2021).

Beginning in mid-March 2020, the Government of the Philippines enforced strict community quarantine laws to limit the spread of COVID-19. More movement and business activity were allowed over time. Upon the implementation of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) status throughout most of the country in April 2020, many businesses were forbidden from operating, a strict house quarantine was enforced, and only a restricted number of essential economic activities were permitted. Restrictions started to loosen in May 2020, and by July 2020, more enterprises were allowed to operate in all 17 of the country's areas that were either under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) or Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ). However, a spike in confirmed cases in July 2020 led to the temporary reintroduction of stricter community quarantines in major cities. The National Capital Region

and a few other areas remained under GCQ, while the rest of the country was placed under MGCQ in November 2020. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has updated and controlled the classification of commercial activities and operating hours authorized in various community quarantine areas, gradually loosening constraints over time (“World Bank,” 2021).

According to the World Bank (2021), although slower than in July, modifications of employment on the vast margin went down in November. In November 2020, there was a slight improvement from July 2020, when almost one in two businesses reported operating with fewer personnel; 38 percent of businesses reported making the same change between July and November. The majority of these advancements came from companies that use ICT for food services. Businesses in the manufacturing (45%) and agriculture (42%) sectors were more likely to have cut employees than those in the services sector (37%). Only 3 percent of enterprises employed new workers, led by financial services and the ICT industry, suggesting that the recovery in employment has been limited.

In all of the organizations where nurses experienced organizational learning, interaction was the method of organizational learning that was most frequently seen. Nurses indicated that emails, staff meetings, and huddles were how their leaders communicated with them about COVID-19. The mechanism that was least frequently seen was collective reflection. Several nurses said that communication on organizational changes was mainly done in a top-down manner, with little chance for group discussions regarding the good and bad aspects of those changes (Lyman et al., 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the human resource management (HRM) landscape extremely difficult. Managers must act swiftly to address "unknown unknowns" while assisting employees in adjusting to and navigating significant changes in the workplace and society at large. Employees who used to work exclusively or mostly from within the physical walls of their company, for instance, now have to swiftly adapt to remote work settings. Even those who may be accustomed to working remotely are now faced with special difficulties because they are unable to look for alternate workspaces (such as cafés, libraries, or coworking spaces) outside of their homes due to shelter-in-place orders and the closure of non-essential businesses. This has probably made it harder to "unplug" from the demands of work and further restricted the division between the work and personal domains (Carnevale, & Hatak, 2020).

An organization must be prepared to withstand the possible harm caused by a prolonged crisis, such as the COVID-19 epidemic. An organization's ability to maintain its finances and operations may suffer significantly during a protracted crisis. Spending increased during the COVID-19 crisis's initial phase, but savings more than made up for it. Overall, it is anticipated that 2020 will have a financial outcome that is roughly 4 million more favorable than the original budget. It is anticipated that, if catch-up can occur in February 2021 or during the 2021–2022 school year, the COVID-19 situation will have a limited long-term financial impact (Halman & Huisman, 2021).

Work Arrangement during the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to research conducted in Pangasinan government offices, the Alternative Work Arrangement has been implemented in agencies in compliance with the policy's provisions. The majority of workers have made use of flexible work schedules, and organizations have implemented oversight procedures like report submission. Additionally, all of the relevant agencies set minimum health standards, which are always followed. PPEs and communication standards were provided, but just to the bare minimum. Consequently, an analysis of the Alternate Work Arrangement policy demonstrates that the policy has been successful in guaranteeing

that government agencies have put in place their guidelines for its implementation to lessen the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their employees and to enable them to adapt and carry on with their business as usual (Pacaul et al., 2020).

Before the outbreak, many people only dreamed of “Work from Home”, but such a technique was deemed impractical for densely crowded places like Hong Kong. The main reason for this is that working from home demands a peaceful, designated area, which can be difficult for people with small homes. Hong Kong is undoubtedly famous for having tiny homes, in which the average living space per person was only 161 sq ft. in 2018 (Task Force on Land Supply 2018), which is about 25% lower than Tokyo and 60% lower than Singapore. Over the years, there has been a belief throughout the city that workers need to be physically present in the office to carry out the job. Now that the pandemic has forced a trial run for WFH in the city, for many, it is their first time working remotely, and to a large extent it is proving to be successful. Therefore, a unique opportunity to assess the possibility of having WFH as one of the future working models for such a densely populated city has a high impact (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021).

About 25% of the researchers said that their work efficiency was higher during the pandemic-related lockdown period, compared to 47% who felt that their productivity had deteriorated. Based on their own experiences, 70% of the researchers believe that if they could work more from home during the lockdown, they would be either similarly (41%) or more efficient (29%) than they were before. Relatively speaking to the 47% who said the same during the lockdown, the remaining 30% believed that working from home would result in a decline in job efficiency following the lockdown. From these values, experts estimate that some of the difficulties of their work efficiency were peculiar to the pandemic lockdown. These challenges might have included learning new techniques for teaching online or having a hard time adjusting to the new way of living. Additionally, we discovered that various facets of research are supported differently by working from home and the office. It should come as no surprise that activities involving coworkers or team members are more suited for the office, but concentrated attention tasks, like writing on paper or doing data analysis, are better (Aczel et al., 2021).

In addition to lowering infection exposure and related health risks, the deployment of WFH during this pandemic has been found to present difficulties, including service delivery delays, the need for extra resources and training, and the need for infrastructure, software, and IT purchases to support WFH. Although it can be difficult to manage teams when working from home, technology tools like Teams and Zoom, which are online meeting platforms, have shown to be useful in facilitating project team meetings. It was discovered in India that several workers found working from home to be stressful because their homes were uncomfortable, noisy, and unsuited for extended periods of productive work (Afriant et al., 2022).

Before the pandemic, just 8% of employees with remote work capabilities worked from home full-time, and roughly one-third had a hybrid work schedule. After the pandemic struck, the great majority of workers with remote capabilities were compelled to work from home in some capacity; by May 2020, up to 70% of them worked only from home. By February 2022, the majority of remote-capable workers were still working from home occasionally, but their distribution had nearly evened out: 42% of them maintained a hybrid schedule, while 39% did so full-time. When asked where they would like to work in the long run, remote-capable employees acknowledged that a hybrid work schedule will be the most common office setup moving ahead, based on the plans their company provided. Approximately 53% anticipate a blended work environment, while 24% anticipate working remotely only. Due to these

modifications, the office atmosphere will be unlike anything we have ever seen, with over twice as many individuals working remotely for at least some portion of the week as there were before the pandemic (Wigert, 2022).

The sudden changes to WFH and other COVID-19-related characteristics offer a special setting for investigating the impact of WFH on both physical and mental health. Social and behavioral factors account for the majority of perceived health effects. Specifically, the prolonged confinement to one's residence during the pandemic may exacerbate overall emotions of depression and anxiety, which frequently result in dietary and routine modifications. These dietary and activity adjustments may interact with other WFH-related stressors to have a direct effect on one's physical and mental health. Furthermore, workers with children are probably much more affected by these behaviors because of the closing of daycare centers and schools, which forces working parents to homeschool their children in addition to juggling a more hectic workplace with more distractions (Xiao, Becerik-Gerber, Lucas, & Roll, 2021).

Life's Challenges during COVID 19 Pandemic

The family, comprising parents, spouses, and children residing together, faced numerous challenges during the lockdown. These included managing childcare, schooling, and caregiving responsibilities, along with concerns about their children's mental well-being. Most caregiving duties centered around elderly family members who were unwell and required significant time and resources from their families. Additionally, parents struggled to balance childcare with work commitments, worrying about how prioritizing their jobs might impact their children (Bezak et al., 2022).

Managing the aftermath of the pandemic will be a major challenge, particularly due to the economic downturn and its impact on the mental health of children and their families. During the height of the pandemic, stressors such as social isolation, disruptions to family, school, and work routines, fear of contracting COVID-19, and the loss of loved ones were especially prominent. While economic challenges emerged early in the pandemic, they may only become fully apparent during its acute phase. Some parents may face increased workloads or major workplace restructuring, while others may have lost their businesses or jobs. Meanwhile, children and adolescents may experience heightened academic pressure to compensate for lost learning time. However, research suggests that harsh parenting is influenced more by the anticipation of negative economic changes than by actual financial hardships. This implies that instances of harsh parenting and domestic violence may peak during the acute phase of the pandemic, as concerns about economic decline serve as stronger predictors of negative parental behavior than the recession itself (Fegert et al., 2020).

The pandemic has led to widespread anxiety and social instability. The interruption of festive, religious, and cultural events significantly altered the psychosocial atmosphere in affected countries. Social isolation from family and friends, restrictions on interactions, and enforced solitude have contributed to heightened stress and anxiety among the population. Additionally, the fear of contracting the virus brought substantial changes to daily routines. The closure of schools and educational institutions, along with the shift to online learning, had a profound effect on the mental well-being of children and adolescents. Many children of all ages exhibited signs of stress, sadness, and a reduced sense of social connection (Banur, 2021).

Given that COVID-19 is a highly contagious and potentially fatal disease, inadequate treatment could have a severe impact on patients' mental health. Socioeconomic and socio-emotional factors further contribute to the disease's severity. Psychological distress among patients may stem not only from the

medical effects of the illness but also from the stress associated with the pandemic itself. Anxiety and depression are the most frequently reported symptoms in this group, with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) also being notably common after hospital discharge (Mohapatra et al., 2022).

During COVID-19, the three primary themes of "organizational challenges," "legal challenges," and "personal challenges" were examined as the primary obstacles facing health human resources management. Organizational challenges include limited funding, discrimination in compensation, staffing differences, workload imbalance, poor coordination, ineffective inter-sectoral relationships, parallel decisions, inefficient human resource distribution, lack of applied education, lack of integrated health protocols, inadequate performance evaluation, employee turnover, unclear staffing strategies, and lack of specialized manpower. Personal challenges include a lack of employee knowledge, psychological disorders, burnout, decreased self-confidence, decreased job satisfaction, the effects of patient and colleague bereavement, and a sense of insecurity toward the workplace (Yusefi et al., 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the loss of many lives. However, it has also prompted a global reassessment of healthcare systems. A significant positive outcome has been the reorganization of emergency departments, with many of these changes remaining in place to enhance efficiency, streamline interventions, and encourage patients with minor concerns to seek medical advice through telemedicine or phone consultations. Among all hospital wards, the emergency department bore the greatest burden of COVID-19 cases, requiring the redeployment of the most skilled and readily available medical staff. As a result, emergency rooms were often overcrowded (Filip et al., 2022).

While psychosocial characteristics played a lesser role in predicting strategies, active coping techniques were more commonly observed among women, older adults, individuals with higher education levels, those who were employed, and those with higher incomes. Similarly, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies were more prevalent among women, highly educated individuals, and students. Supportive coping mechanisms were also more frequently used by women, younger adults, and those with higher incomes. Additionally, individuals who felt lonely, lived in urban areas, had a diagnosed mental health condition, or lived with others were more likely to seek social support. On the other hand, avoidant coping strategies were more commonly adopted by women, younger adults, individuals with lower education and socioeconomic status, those living with others, those experiencing mental health issues, and those who felt isolated (Fluharty & Fancourt, 2021).

A text-mining analysis of free-text responses from the COVID-19 Social Study identified sixteen different coping strategies used by adults in the United Kingdom during the pandemic. Some strategies were cognitive or "antecedent-focused," involving attentional deployment (such as closely following rules or avoiding news to minimize distress), problem-solving (seeking social support), or cognitive reframing (adopting a more positive outlook). Others were response-focused, including engaging in hobbies, exercise, or substance use to manage stress. These coping mechanisms help explain why some individuals experienced lower levels of anxiety and depression during the pandemic. Understanding these strategies could be valuable in preparing for future lockdowns or periods of self-isolation. Socially supportive coping was particularly significant for high-risk groups, such as key workers and those living alone, emphasizing the need to foster social connections for individuals vulnerable to loneliness and reduced social support. Overall, the study highlights how people adapted to the challenges of COVID-19 and how coping mechanisms varied across different sociodemographic groups. It also underscores how individuals' roles in a pandemic—whether as survivors, healthcare workers, patients, caregivers, or members of the general population—can influence their coping strategies. (Liam et al.,

2022).

Coping strategies such as active coping, denial, behavioral disengagement, self-blame, and religious coping were linked to higher levels of COVID-19-related stress. In contrast, acceptance as a coping mechanism was negatively associated with perceived stress related to COVID-19. Researchers also found that individuals who scored highly in acceptance-based coping demonstrated a greater ability to manage stressful situations effectively.

COVID-19 was associated with both maladaptive coping strategies (such as denial, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame) and adaptive coping strategies (including active coping, acceptance, and religious coping) among individuals with chronic illnesses. Additionally, emotions like anxiety, fear, and anger were positively correlated with both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies, suggesting that increased coping efforts could be driven by heightened distress, or vice versa. The most frequently used coping strategies for managing COVID-19-related stress were religious coping, instrumental support, and active coping. Specifically, 76.3% of participants relied on religious coping methods, 51.4% sought instrumental support as their second most common strategy, and 51.2% engaged in active coping techniques (Girma et al., 2021).

“The coping and non-coping groups' techniques differed qualitatively in several ways, including spending less time conversing with friends and family. Additionally, the open-ended question revealed several qualitative categories, including talking with friends and family, exercising, taking up hobbies, maintaining a routine, lacking useful methods, and engaging in self-care and mindfulness practices. Other than talking to friends and family and engaging in self-care and mindfulness, gender-diverse respondents appeared to use similar tactics or resources” (Chankasingh et al., 2022).

Video games served as a coping mechanism for many individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, more than 23 million Canadians (61% of the population) identified as gamers. While this number remained unchanged at the start of the pandemic, 58% of adult gamers and 80% of teenage gamers reported playing more frequently during this time. Several studies have documented an overall increase in gaming activity since the onset of COVID-19. In the U.S., Verizon recorded a 75% surge in online gaming activity following stay-at-home orders, while Italy experienced a 70% rise in internet traffic related to Fortnite, a popular online game. In India, online mobile gaming increased by 30%, and multiplayer gaming saw a 35% uptick. Additionally, gaming-related content gained popularity, with YouTube Gaming and Twitch reporting a 10% growth in their audiences, indicating that people engaged not only in gaming itself but also in related activities such as live streaming. Although gaming is not inherently problematic, around 3.2% of gamers develop Gaming Disorder. Individuals with pre-existing mental health vulnerabilities, such as mood and anxiety disorders, are particularly at risk of developing problematic gaming behaviors (Lewinson et al., 2023).

People tend to respond to different adversities, such as COVID-19 and armed conflict, in similar ways, showing consistent patterns in resilience, distress, and well-being. However, compared to well-known crises, individuals often perceive new and unpredictable challenges as more difficult to manage. At the same time, they may underestimate the risks associated with familiar adversities. To develop effective policies for medical and psychological support during various emergencies, healthcare professionals must understand how individuals cope with adversity and adapt their response strategies accordingly (Kimhi et al., 2022).

Synthesis of Reviewed Literature and Studies

A review of related Literature focuses on the various impacts of different views coming from different

authors or researchers. However, this study mainly focuses on the worker's experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we deal with the research topic, there are several impacts of COVID-19 on the lives of many individuals.

Impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on work and private life and mental well-being of employees had a negative impact the employees such as About 30% of employees reported that German and Swiss employees' work and private life had worsened, whereas about 10% reported improvements in work and 13% in private life (Tušl et al., 2021). A long-lasting crisis can have major consequences for the financial and operational continuity of an organization. During the first phase of the COVID-19 crisis, expenditure increased, but this was offset by savings. (Halman & Huisman, 2021).

In overall terms, in 2020 8.8% of the global working hours were lost relative to the fourth quarter of 2019, which translates to roughly 255 million full-time jobs; a number four times greater than the 2009 financial crisis, with particular losses in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southern Europe and Southern Asia. (Beinhauer, 2021). As in the case of temporal disorientation, the social, political, and epistemic disorientations of the COVID-19 crisis all have momentous effects. Converging studies show that social shift effected by the pandemic (e.g. social distancing measures) has pernicious effects on our physical and mental health, ranging from disruptions in sleep patterns to recurring suicidal ideation. (Velasco, 2021). On the other hand, some researchers found that employees working remotely see more positive effects on their daily work, are more engaged, and have a stronger sense of well-being than those in non-remote jobs with little flexibility do (Emmett et al., 2020) many people sought to increase their resilience through a constructive outlook by seizing the chance to gain new skills in light of the changed working environment dragged them (McGlinchey et al., 2021).

While employers and employees experienced the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, responses were also discussed in this chapter thus, various employers implemented alternate work arrangements amidst the situation such as the Work From Home (WFH) and Hybrid Work Model. Pandemic-related lockdown decreased the work efficiency for almost half of the researchers (47%), and around a quarter (23%) of them experienced that they were more efficient during this time compared to the time before (Aczel et al., 2021).

Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research method used for identifying the lived experience of selected AMS employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The tradition of inquiry is also discussed as well as the description of respondents, research instrument, data-gathering procedure, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

To attain the primary data of this study, the researcher utilized the phenomenological method of research. "The phenomenological approach helps in describing the lived experiences of an individual and focuses on studying the phenomena that have impacted an individual. Phenomenology may be the method of choice when you want to study what an experience means to a particular group of people. An accurate presentation of the experience under study is more important in this approach than the ability to claim that the findings apply to across situations or people" (Grossoehme, 2014).

The researcher aimed to better understand the employees' lived experience, with informed consent, through conversations and interviews with open-ended questions, which allowed the researcher to make subjects comfortable enough to open up. Phenomenological research is a powerful way to understand personal experiences. It provides insights into individual actions and motivations by examining long-

held assumptions.

This study was constructed on the descriptive phenomenological method. Other psychologists have followed Husserl and have developed strictly descriptive phenomenological methods. The lead author, Amadeo Giorgi, has developed one such method and so has Moustakas. With descriptive approaches, one tries to describe the experiences being lived through very carefully and once the raw data has been obtained, a thorough phenomenological psychological analysis of the data takes place within the perspective of the phenomenological psychological reduction. Without the reduction, no claim that the analysis is phenomenological can be made today. This special attitude shift involves the epoche, which means to set aside knowledge not being directly presented to consciousness and then to consider what is given not as actually existing but merely as something present to consciousness. The presented intuitions are then carefully described and analyzed (Giorgi et al., 2017).

Tradition of Inquiry and Data-Generation Method

The respondents of this study are composed of selected fifteen (15) AMS offshore employees wherein COVID 19 pandemic is the independent variable while the lived experience of the selected AMS employees is the dependent variable. This technique includes subjects' selected based on specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those who fail to meet these criteria. The researcher used a purposive sampling approach in acquiring the respondents wherein the inclusion criteria include participants employed in AMS during COVID 19 Pandemic. The exclusion criteria were the employees who have an approved permanent Work-from-home arrangement due to extenuating circumstances, Managers, and Human Resource personnel. These criteria should be mutually exclusive so that the right respondents are selected to avoid confusion as well as bias in the study.

A purposive sample was chosen with the knowledge that it was not representative of the general population, rather it attempted to represent a specific portion of the population. Wherein, the AMS employees were only selected. It was highly subjective and determined by the qualitative researcher generating the qualifying criteria each participant must meet to be considered for the research.

Phenomenological researcher Giorgi outlined a method of analysis consisting of several key steps to interpret participants' responses. First, the researcher immersed themselves in the data by repeatedly reading transcribed interviews and listening to audio recordings to grasp the tone and nuances of participants' voices, aiming to understand the overall meaning. Second, the researcher coded the text by identifying and highlighting words, phrases, or sentences that capture the essence of the experience or phenomenon being studied. These extracted pieces of data are referred to as "meaning units." Third, similar meaning units were grouped into categories to identify patterns. Fourth, the researcher interpreted and articulated the meaning behind the participants' words. Finally, member-checking is conducted, allowing participants to review and validate the interpretations, followed by necessary revisions to refine the final model based on their feedback (Grossoehme, 2014).

The interview transcript data was analyzed using thematic analysis, a method that not only describes data but also involves interpretation through the selection of codes and the development of themes. A key characteristic of thematic analysis is its flexibility, making it applicable across various theoretical and epistemological frameworks, as well as different research questions, study designs, and sample sizes.

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and epistemological frameworks, as well as different research questions, study designs, and sample sizes. This study employed an inductive approach to thematic analysis, similar to the approach used in grounded theory, where themes emerged directly from the data rather than being predetermined. Since these themes are data-driven, they may not always align precisely with the specific questions asked during interviews, especially if participants deviate from the topic. Additionally, they are not necessarily influenced by the researcher’s interests or beliefs. As a result, this study offers a broader and more comprehensive examination of the entire dataset (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

The research process in phenomenological psychology is defined by four key characteristics: (i) it emphasizes description, (ii) it employs reduction, (iii) it seeks to identify essential structures, and (iv) it centers on intentionality (Isabirye & Makoe, 2018). In analyzing the data, the study followed the naive descriptions given by the participants on their lived experiences. Secondly, the researcher grasped phenomenological reduction by bracketing all preconceived notions about the COVID- 19 pandemic as being open to taking the meaning of any experience exactly as it appears in the consciousness of the participants. Thirdly, for the essence, the researcher looked for those similar and unchanging characteristics of the phenomenon being studied. And lastly, obtaining the essential definition of their life and coping strategies during the pandemic, is referred to as intentionality.

Data analysis in Giorgi’s phenomenological psychological method is oriented towards capturing as closely as possible how the phenomenon under investigation has been experienced by the participants. This entails a rigorous step-by-step process whereby raw data is segmented into units of meaning, restructured in terms of clusters, translated into scientific language consistent with their central meaning, and the constituent themes common to all the participants’ accounts eventually synthesized into a coherent description of the structure of the experience being studied (Isabirye & Makoe, 2018).

Sources of Data

The respondents were composed of selected AMS employees working amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Job Status	Length of Stay in the Company	Marital Status
1	26	Male	Regular Permanent Full Time	4 years	Single
2	40	Male	Regular Permanent Full Time	12 years	Single
3	33	Male	Regular Permanent Full Time	9 years	Single
4	25	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	5 years	Single
5	25	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	4 years	Single
6	37	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	10 years	Married
7	32	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	11 years	Single
8	27	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	6 years	Single
9	24	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	4 years	Single
10	27	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	4 years	Single
11	33	Transgender	Regular Permanent Full Time	8 years	Single
12	29	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	8 years	Single
13	31	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	9 years	Single

14	34	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	8 years	Married
15	34	Female	Regular Permanent Full Time	6 years	Single

Instrumentation

The main data-gathering instrument of this study to understand the lived experience of employees is through semi-structured interviews. This was purely an interview method and invited opportunities to get details in depth from the respondent. Through the interviews, the researcher explored the topic of interest, learned more about participants' viewpoints, and developed a thorough grasp of the phenomena under study. Beyond gathering factual data, semi-structured interviews seek to understand participants' perspectives, beliefs, values, and emotions to provide insightful information about their subjective experiences. These interviews were performed face-to-face or virtually which normally lasted between an hour to two hours or even more.

Making undertakings that the instruments utilized successfully capture the desired data was through validating the qualitative research instrument. To validate the research questionnaires, the researcher seeks a subject-matter expert to evaluate them for comprehensiveness, relevance, and clarity. Hence, their input ensured that the prompts or questions were in line with the goals of the study. After data collection, the researcher shared findings or interpretations with participants to verify the accuracy and authenticity of the captured data. This guarantees that the viewpoints of the participants are fairly represented.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher secured a permit to conduct the study from the AMS management using appropriate request letters designed to ask permission for the administering of the interviews to the respondents. Appointments were first made for the respondents to avoid any inconvenience on their part. After securing the permit, the researcher prepared the set of open-ended interview questions presented in the statement of the problem of the study. Then, the researcher arranged an interview with the selected participants by discussing first the Informed Consent and secured signature on the aforementioned document.

Chapter 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings from the interview process and a discussion of findings based on the statement of the problem. Participants are presented and subsequently, the key themes that emerged following the data analysis. The steps of the descriptive phenomenological method applied to data to the result of the following meaningful units.

Dealing with Life Difficulty during the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis

Each of the three broad meaning units as well as the participants' statements that reflect the meaning units. Using the broad meaning units and supporting transformations of the raw data provided by the fifteen participants, this study shows how they deal with COVID-19 pandemic. The following table described the meaningful units by the participants.

Table 2 Lived Experiences Meaning Units Definition Dealing with life difficulty Meaning Units Despite the uncertainties, there's a sense of gratitude and faith Valuing Health and Well-being as an expression of meaningful life Job security affects quality of life Feeling of Isolation through restriction Challenges and Mental Health impacts of the COVID 19 Pandemic

P1 It tells a message that regardless of what happens to you, you'll never know. That's why you just try to make the most out of it every single day.

It altered his physical self the most because when he realized that he had grown weaker as compared to before, grew weaker because his lifestyle during the pandemic is not as active as compared to like. During the start of the pandemic, it was somewhat convenient. In the middle, somewhat became demotivated to work. But when it comes to the quality of work, it did not change as much. During the peak of the pandemic season, there were protocols taking into place when you're positive with COVID, you're asked to stay in an isolation facility. It was challenging because he felt like he was a Challenging because the pandemic served as more of a challenge rather as an opportunity.

Trying to catch up with all of what's happening with all of the struggles that normal times, like they have to go out to go to the office and if they need to get somewhere, he will commute before.

prisoner. that has happened.

P2 He recalled usually in the first months that they were bound to get isolated, it was very emotional that time because he felt introverted. He just prays for that to end.

P3 It made him realize that nothing is certain. Nothing is certain and in terms of everything and your life has the tendency to or has a possibility into turning a complete 180, right in front of your eyes.

P4 It helps in terms of outlook in life. Because first of all, during the pandemic obviously a lot of people were dying, and you would just think that you just have to prepare yourself mentally for it because it's something that you would didn't know when it will come, and you It's a phase wherein there's a lot of discoveries as being secluded and how he would also react to certain stuff. Just so definitely, there's a lot of learnings in there despite all of these adversities with pandemic, it's a good life lesson as well. It shaped him to really appreciate life more and really value the day to day that they have because not everyone was quite lucky by then.

More of be more health conscious.

So given that the cases of pandemic during the time of 2021 was already going to the low, probably one of the experiences that shaped her during the pandemic was health wise.

Quality of life retained as he did retain his source of income, retained job and therefore, the basic needs are still being met. He can still feed himself, provide for his family, pay for bills, etcetera.

It was really nerve-wracking. They were in the position that jobs were lessened within the company, so a lot of employees were laid off accordingly. And then personally probably besides that mentally, since we had a lot of restrictions, I felt Stoic era, that you cannot see people outside.

You don't have all the means. You don't have the freedom.

The social aspect, thanks to technology, people were able to find ways on how to adapt.

He didn't have that much choices or options to do anything compared to that of pre-pandemic but it was really bad quality.

Quite emotional thinking about how your family would cope up because you always see news about the number of people dying and nobody knows what to do.

It's stressful and anxiety inducing, having random bouts of health anxiety.

Given that the pandemic limits her to just staying at home, it negatively impacted her and the only whole thing that she could think of to distract herself from her thoughts is to watch TV or gemstones.

just pray that you'll be able to avoid it.

P5 Eye -opener for her - how life is important for every one of us. Two family members died during pandemic due to COVID. She thinks it is important for me to have more quality time with your family This illness or this virus has been really affects a lot of people that to the point of many fatalities during this virus very anxious most of the time to a point that it became stressful, and it has affected work-life

balance.

Thankful as she didn't lose job. Improved life professionally because of an opportunity of promotion during pandemic She's been more of an overthinker during the pandemic. It really affects her mental health in terms of overthinking because she keeps on asking herself when will the pandemic ends.

P6 Simple symptoms is quite alarming as sore throat. Being more careful to the health. She doesn't experience any challenge in terms of work and all

P7 Spiritual life, praying together with family and serving to Church Valuing more the life. Time will come for everyone.

Valuing job as you'll never know when it will end at the time of uncertainties It decreased the quality of life in terms of social life and activities Fear of being isolated when been diagnosed as a COVID 19

Positive **P8** Health being more cautious.

P9 Life is as short as they say. But then again, you don't really expect a pandemic to hit you in the middle of your lifetime. A lot of her life choices were really affected during this time. Personally experience the COVID 19 with the family that is a negative effect.

Professionally, job security is affected by the pandemic

She would say work as weird as it sounds but because she thinks most of us did pour our heart out on their work because they didn't have any choice to be honest, she can do so much more after the pandemic should she try to change jobs or tried to change industries or even move out Online celebration. Sometimes you just need someone you could be related with as sense of belongingness is fading due to lack of activities outside

At first it was really exciting, but then eventually felt drained and unmotivated. Pandemic experience was pretty okay but there were really more underlying issues mentally and emotionally for that.

P10 The time of being alone and getting sick, made her realized that you shouldn't take advantage of everything that you can do before, and you have to accept the fact sometimes you also need help. If you are thinking that you are already strong independent woman, she feels like God will really humble you in those times

The time that she got COVID, it made her re-evaluate to have concern with other people and being emphatic of the country. Having a fear of losing a job, she actually did her best and got promoted during pandemic.

Social life, it's hard for her because she really loves going out, an outgoing person, so really love seeing friends and family Not having that kind of light that you have before will really make you anxious and afraid as well because we don't know when it will end.

P11 Quiet and comfortable since her work continues, and she was able to bring food on the table She didn't have that much like significant experiences or any unexpected situation which she didn't handle effectively. I think only the changes were the restrictions that she was not able to visit her parents that frequently and best friend. But it doesn't have any major impact on my lived experiences

P12 Life's too short because you've been seeing a lot of friends, relatives that has been passing because of COVID-19. So, it's quite an unexpected experience during the pandemic, but you also re-evaluate the meaning of life that just because of the pandemic a lot of things happened, and you've lost some of those close to On a professional setup, you are seeing some of those coworkers you've been working for years before, but after weeks' time you would just know that they've been part of those who are already been redeployed or has been redundiated, so it's quite saddening, but at the same When we talk about day in a life, it's just really home. It's no longer like home outside home, but it's really more of just staying at

home for the safety of everybody in our household.

It's challenging, making you overthink so it's because of the uncertainty of things, but at the same time, life during that time is like we just have to really go with the flow with limitations.

you, but you're not able to see them. So, it's like really living the moment and spending more time with your family and friends when you can time, that's really the reality of things that a lot of people is affected during pandemic

P13 Prioritizing well- being in terms of physical and mental health was prioritized during pandemic and post pandemic She thinks it's more of importance also of rest and you know to value relationships so that's family, friends and also job security During the pandemic it was just different that you couldn't go out and meet people, so your social life was virtual at all, basically everything was all virtual at all. So that was a change, of course there's also restrictions so we weren't really going out. There's anxiety and looming sadness that you'd experience when you'd see all sorts of news and then when you'd hear people, you know, who would die.

P14 You really have to be contented of what you have. Health matters most and if you have a budget, go with the healthy food.

Relationships are drifting - because of virtual. Missing connecting with people and enjoying happenings with friends. Those who will stay will stay

P15 Uncertain, focusing on mental health because of uncertainty and a lot of things happening around Job security as everyone is dispensable. Also, relationship for not being connected Meaningful connection with people than being not able to do it during the pandemic There was a negative impact, because lots of things have been tested like your resilience and mental health

Despite the uncertainties, there is a sense of gratitude and faith. Relatively, participants described their anxieties through uncertainties during the pandemic, however, they have been also expressive of their faith through prayer hoping that this event will end. During the early phase of the pandemic in the Philippines, one-fourth of the researcher's respondents reported moderate-to-severe anxiety and one-sixth reported moderate-to-severe depression and psychological impact. The factors identified can be used to devise effective psychological support

strategies (Tee et al., 2020). As the participants filled with anxiety and affected their mental health, one of the psychological support strategies that the event gave them was to keep hold of their faith and appreciate things that they have as described by the meaningful units. P2 and P10 have mentioned that their emotions have been impacted hence still look at the brighter side.

I could recall usually on the first months that we were, we are bound to get isolated, I was very emotional that time because I am introverted. I just really, really pray that time, that when will that end.
(Participant 2)

The time of being alone and got sick, made me realize that you shouldn't take advantage of everything that you can do before, and you have to accept the fact sometimes you also need help. If you are thinking that you are already strong independent woman, I feel like God will really humble you in those times.
(Participant 10)

Valuing Health and Well-being as an expression of meaningful life. Most of the participants said that the COVID-19 pandemic altered their sense of normalcy and lifestyle by being more health cautious and not being able to personally interact with people. For the Philippines, student status, low confidence in doctors, dissatisfaction with health information, long daily duration spent on health information, worries about family members contracting COVID-19, ostracization, and unnecessary worries about COVID-19 were associated with adverse mental health. Physical symptoms and poor self-rated health were associated with adverse mental health in the country (Tee et al., 2021).

P14 and P15 have emphasized the importance of health and well-being as they have experienced the impact on their health during the pandemic.

Health matters most and if you have budget, go with the healthy food. (Participant 14)

Uncertain, focusing on mental health because of uncertainty and a lot of things happening around.
(Participant 15)

The participants described their day-to-day activities which the majority have spent at home which limited ways of getting somewhere to walk or exercise. P1 later on made him realize that his body became weaker as to before the pandemic.

I could say it altered my physical self the most because it's that point when I realized that I've grown weaker as compared to before as getting my daily exercise in. And I'd say I grew weaker because my lifestyle during the pandemic is not as active as compared to like normal times, but like we have to go out to go to the office and if we need to get somewhere, I would commute before.
(Participant 1)

P6 and P14 also explained their cautiousness on health at that time not only for herself but also for their family as this has been the essential thing to look into during the pandemic.

In my personal, you really have to be very, very cautious of the things you will touch because I have a child, so I might bring virus inside our house and also even to my own family members. On a professional note, I have to secure stable internet to be able to work at home. (Participant 14)

Mas na-improve lang yung belief ko in terms of being hygienic and taking care of my health.

(Participant 6)

Job security affects quality of life. Participants thought positively about the changes as they improved life professionally because of an opportunity for promotion during a pandemic, you're able to save more, and somewhat a blessing in disguise, how work really changed for everyone else because they had to transition to virtual setup, they need to be wiser, still fit and plan on what is important. While some expressed the quality of life as if it had not changed because they retained their source of income.

Quiet and comfortable since my work continues, and I am able to bring food on the table.

(Participant 11)

According to one of the related studies, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on employment in the Philippines: A majority of employees reported their job was suspended, hours and pay reduced, or they were forced to take unpaid leave. Only 37% of employees could report that COVID-19 had no impact on their jobs; A total of 6 out of 10 families lost income; Over 60% of those affected began working from home. However, nearly 70% of employees reported they were able to be equally or more productive during the crisis – 21% of women and 14% of men reported being more productive. Overall, 4 in 10 adults felt pressure to do more household work and childcare. Increased time spent on cleaning was reported by 77% of women and 72% of men. Importantly, 48% of women and 39% of men reported a negative impact on their mental well-being due to COVID-19, and 4 in 10 respondents reported a negative impact on their physical well-being ("Investing in Women," 2020).

One of the affected aspects of life during the COVID-19 pandemic of the participants was their job security. Their quality of living has been associated with their job since it was primarily their source of income which made them sustain their living. Participants acknowledged their job security as to how they defined their stability in life at the time of the pandemic whilst they viewed that if they don't have their jobs, life will become more tough and challenging.

On the other hand, employers also experienced the impact of the pandemic. An organization needs to be able to resist the potential damage from a long-drawn-out crisis such as that of the COVID-19 pandemic. A long-lasting crisis can have major consequences for the financial and operational continuity of an organization. During the first phase of the COVID-19 crisis, expenditure increased, but this was offset by savings. On balance, the financial result for 2020 is expected to be about 4 million more favorable than initially budgeted. If it is possible to catch up in February 2021 or the academic year 2021 to 2022, the expectation is that the financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the longer term is limited. (Halman & Huisman, 2021). In this regard, employees were also affected to think that their jobs might be lost anytime during the pandemic as P12 described her observation to her colleagues.

On a professional setup, you are seeing some of those coworkers you've been working for years before, but after weeks' time you would just know that they've been part of those who are already been redeployed or has been redundant, so it's quite saddening, but at the same time, that's really the reality of things that a lot of people is affected during pandemic.

(Participant 12)

Feeling of Isolation through Restriction. Restriction aligned with the Government of the Philippines guidelines that imposed strict community quarantine measures starting in mid-March 2020 in its effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19, and over time gradually allowed greater mobility and business operations. The Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) status, applied to most of the country in April 2020, involved strict home quarantine and allowed only a few essential economic activities, with many firms not permitted to operate. Restrictions started to ease in May 2020, and by July 2020 all 17 regions

in the country were either under General Community Quarantine (GCQ) or Modified General Community Quarantine (MGCQ), with more firms allowed to operate. However, a spike in confirmed cases in July 2020 led to a temporary return of stricter community quarantine in major urban areas. In November 2020, the National Capital Region and a few other areas were kept under GCQ with the rest of the country under MGCQ. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has prescribed and updated the categorization of business activities and operating hours allowed in different community quarantine areas, gradually easing restrictions over time ("World Bank," 2021).

In this regard, the majority (thirteen) have mentioned that there were drastic changes in their lives during the pandemic which affected their social life, mental health, health consciousness, and job security. One participant mentioned the theme of restrictions which made her stressed and affected his professional being.

I could say for everyone that it was really nerve-wracking. We were in the position that jobs were lessened within the company, so a lot of employees were laid off accordingly. And then personally probably besides that mentally, since we had a lot of restrictions, I felt very anxious most of the time to a point that it became stressful, and it has affected work-life balance.

(Participant 4)

Moreover, participants explained how their mental health and social life became affected during the time of pandemic as they described themselves as an outgoing person who loves to travel.

Being anxious of what will happen next and when it will end. Financially wise saving. Social life, it's hard for me because I really love going out, I'm an outgoing person, so really love seeing my friends, seeing my family. (Participant 10)

The restrictions on travelling definitely it has an impact on having anxiousness and well-being. Also, one of the challenges before is the normalcy of seeing your family and relatives in a normal way as you need to be quarantined after travelling.

(Participant 12)

It decreased the quality of life in terms of social life and activities. (Participant 7)

Isolation has been felt by many of the participants as they have experienced the restriction, particularly those who had the COVID-19 pandemic. One reason is that they need to go to the isolation facility provided by the government or can be at their home in a separate room, and strictly monitored so the virus will no longer spread.

I think only one thing popped up to mine and it's me being positive with COVID. So, during the peak of the pandemic season, of course there were some how do you call this, protocols taking into place when you are when you're positive with COVID, of course in my town if, since we were found positive by the LGU, you're asked to stay in an isolation facility. So, of course it was challenging for me because felt like I was a I was prisoner some somewhat for a for a while although it's not for like disciplinary action, but I felt like I didn't need to be there because the rest of the family is positive. (Participant 1)

I would say what really stood out for me is just the very stoic era, if that's how you describe it, that you cannot see people outside.

(Participant 2)

Challenges and Mental Health impacts of the COVID 19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the mental health of the participants particularly with the anxiety caused by the uncertainties of when the pandemic will end. Participants mentioned the predominant descriptions.

I think I would describe it as challenging because feel like the pandemic served as more of a challenge

to me rather as an opportunity, as compared to some. I've got the challenging part of the pandemic and up to date, I think I'm still trying to like to catch up with all of what's happening with all of the struggles that that has happened. During the pandemic, I would say life was dangerous or I think life was filled with anxiety because of course, the way how Covid was presented to people is of course it was a deadly virus so I could not imagine being caught with it, at the time. So, I would, I would say it was really more danger in time ahead or like being taking more precaution to all of the to all of the action I do during that time.

(Participant 1)

I can now remember I was quite emotional and of course I'm working in NCR, so my family is in Davao, the danger as well, thinking about how your family would cope up because you always see news like number of people dying and nobody knows what to do, like even our government, even you know if you are daily checking, every hour what's happening. Even the World Health Organization doesn't know what to do with it. With, decision on that, that's a really pretty scary.

(Participant 2)

I've been more of an overthinker during the pandemic. It really affects my mental health in terms of overthinking because I keep on asking myself kung kailan ba talaga matatapos yung pandemic kasi I don't know kung ano yung susunod na buhay ko after the pandemic o kung matatapos pa yung pandemic.

(Participant 5)

I mean at first it was really exciting, but then eventually I felt drained and unmotivated. So, I really had to work around that feeling within me because again, well, this is an opportunity for you to spend more time on yourself at the at the end of the day, sometimes you can't help but not be able to separate work from your personal life. So, I would say my pandemic experience was pretty okay than I think the rest. But then again, there were really more underlying issues, I guess mentally and emotionally for that. And then I did have COVID as well, but I think I had it just once.

(Participant 9)

I usually go out a lot since it's really sad kasi my apartment and my unit and not, you know, seeing other people and lastly will be from my mental health. Of course, not having that kind of light that you have before will really make you anxious and afraid as well because we don't know when it will end. Siguro parang parang naa-anxious tayo when you don't know what's going to happen next. So, yun yung sigurong parang big impact sakin na parang – kailan kaya siya matatapos or what will really happen next.

(Participant 10)

The challenges mentioned by the participants that have been brought about by the pandemic in this study proved that the public has experienced anxiety and social instability as a result of the pandemic. The disruption of festive, religious, and cultural celebrations forced a radical shift in the psychosocial climate of the impacted nations. The population is experiencing excessive stress and anxiety as a result of social alienation from family and friends, contact limitations, and isolation. Furthermore, our everyday routines underwent substantial alterations as a result of our fear of catching the virus (Banur, 2021).

Self-Coping Mechanisms of Selected Employees during Post-pandemic Recovery

Using the broad meaning units and supporting transformations of the raw data provided by the fifteen

participants, this study shows their coping strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following table describes the meaningful units by the participants.

Table 3

Coping Strategy Meaning Units Meaningful Units Definition Self-Coping Meaning Units Self – Care Self – Detachment Self – Reflection Self-Upskilling by doing home activities Socialization through virtual connection

P1 Just drown himself in the things that he likes to do. Focusing on hobbies, on the stuff that he enjoys - doing playing games, watching series, movies.

It was getting off social media because news during that time was, I'd say chaotic. How he approaches stress right now has been a product of the pandemic. Video calls with friends and online games started to be more popular.

Losing access to what they are used to say going outside, seeing friends basically just going outside out.

P2 Getting himself busy somewhere else It's a phase wherein there's a lot of discoveries as well for myself being secluded, and how I would also react to certain stuff. Surviving the pandemic definitely is something does not forget that has been surpassed What he did was he upskilled himself Started online trainings.

P3 He valued whatever stability he has in every aspect of life because that's again, majorly what the pandemic has made him realized.

The biggest change of course is everyone, including himself, got forced into working from home. Not being able to have personal interaction with the people he works with.

Maintaining the connection through virtual.

P4 She would literally not think about any work-related stuff Being able to let life go at it is, like control whatever you have to control.

It became more difficult but then it also made her think better because she needs to be creative on how she could cope up with this challenge, it's not something that could be routinary. Being able to be with other people physically was the biggest challenge

P5 Not just focus at present, but also focus in the future and planning ahead is really important They did the work from home setup and this work from home setup is really a big adjustment for everyone.

P6 This event is an eye- opener to value more the people that matters because you wouldn't know what's gonna happen.

P7 Putting more effort, more attention on self of how we can keep oneself healthy.

P8 Outside work is very important to have to have hobbies, you have to have like productive leisure activities to have boundaries in life and work

P9 It was just taking a leave off of work even if it meant just staying at home.

P10 It's more on doing the things that used to love before like painting and having a new pet as

Filing a sabbatical leave for 2 months to reset body and whole perspective of work on herself and in personal life in general Being more self- conscious and a time to reflect on herself.

The only thing that we can control is how our thoughts and behavior will affect our daily lives.

Pandemic really did shape her into a different person because just the lack of interaction itself and having to really manage your emotional well-being on the daily was a struggle in its own. It did shape her to be a better person in a sense that she had to really work on herself, on her own Because of pandemic, she was able to resolve problem by herself, diverting her attention, and helping other Quarantine - Everything has to be done and completed at home.

Health cautious and realization of having a work life balance.

Pretty memorable because that's when I really started to invest in gaming.

Wake up, work, and then I game after work, and sometimes watching. Interacting online with friends through online games is what stood out the most It's a blessing in disguise as pandemic detoxified the Earth and a lot of people

Personal - Interaction online. Communication style is affected from getting used to online then coming back to in-person meetings.

Professional - nothing much that has been changed

How work really changed for everyone else because they really must transition to virtual setup.

Realization over time that virtual setup actually works for work well as exercising.

Doing activities support herself like painting, taking care of dog, cooking and stop to watch news for it adds heaviness on her chest.

P11 During the COVID 19 pandemic, she had more time to focus on herself. She just spent time with herself because she has the time, so she just did what she wanted to do when she doesn't have the time before.

P12 To take care of herself, she's reading motivational books and motivational sites where she could read some things, not only for motivation but also for learning new things. So, one of those things is that she was able to do those things

people by doing volunteer works Having more time with herself realizing what she wanted to do, doing hobbies which she didn't know she wanted to do.

This is a time where you can focus on yourself. Know what you want to do, know what changes you can do in order for you to know what you really want in life or have a realization on how to cope with certain things or during the pandemic, or basically it's just a self-reflection.

Trying to be positive everyday despite of those news where she was hearing. So, it's the same coping mechanism she been doing before and after pandemic became innovative of staying at home and a lot of things to think about It's really finding things that you could really enjoy, not limiting yourself that just because you're at home, you can't do something productive, so she was able to cope in a way that she's browsing through social media, Been into a full swing of a work from home set-up She's not able to see them on a daily basis, so there's a real adjustment on how you would be engaging with your team.

that she wasn't able to do before pandemic, like learning new things, because she already has the time to be able to do that after work.

P13 It was actually peaceful and then she also think she had more time for herself and also to do other things so well.

She started doing more walking, going for walks during pandemic. So up to now she'd still try to have that in place because it really helps her to stay calm, distressed and have some more steps and exercise.

And then also sometimes she'd also look forward for like slow, quiet mornings or evenings to going down. So, she thinks some of these practices came from pandemic as well, which she'd carried over up until now.

What was challenging was the bad news or the sad news that you'd hear around and also of course the fear involved people getting COVID, people dying, getting sick, getting contagious, the news, what's happening in the healthcare and then our front liners and then all these policies and then getting locked down. There's also some anxiety to that, looming sadness when you'd see and hear all sorts of news finding things that she could do at home like cooking, learning new things, even planting or cooking new

dishes.

During the pandemic it was just different that you couldn't go out and meet people, so your social life was virtual at all, basically everything was all virtual at all

P14 You tend to balance responsibilities on work/house by making boundaries. You need to be wiser - still fit. Thrift, prudent on money.

Life would teach you to become more flexible, adaptive because of changes.

Don't stop, there's always something to celebrate. Looking for improvement, loss of relationship at times as reason of virtual

P15 During the pandemic, she was able to cut toxic people like not so close friends for her mental health That time, you really have to be contented of what you have on the table.

Acceptance has been developed as understanding people have their own struggles.

Learning online games like ML because its entertaining and helped a lot It's still a work in progress for her, like being able to manage remote working, having that kind of connection with people **Self-care**.

Many people sought to increase their resilience through a constructive outlook by seizing the chance to gain new skills in light of the changed working environment that dragged them. However, despite the resiliency, worries about the long-term effects and whether this level of adaptability can be sustained. The "resilience decreasing a little" was a common feeling (McGlinchey et al., 2021). Gathered responses from the participants shared a common theme of how they were able to spend time at home due to restrictions which gave them time to also take care of themselves to alleviate the anxieties felt from uncertainties of the event.

All of the participants have their strategies for coping stress and uncertainties of the COVID-19 Pandemic such as: doing hobbies, focusing on work, finding opportunities, watching videos, getting support from the family, talking to people, following online trends, having an online celebration, taking a leave off of work, solemnizing through prayers, focusing on self, reading motivational books, having a proper allocation of the task, and having an open and transparent communication with people.

Participants shared how they managed their emotional well-being by recognizing the challenges of working on their own selves which gave them doors to give priority to what they can further perform as a way of diverting their time productively and as a way of taking care of themselves.

Pandemic really did shape me into a different person because just the lack of interaction itself and having to really manage your emotional well-being on the daily was a struggle in its own. It did shape me to be a better person in a sense that I had to really work on myself, on my own.

(Participant 9)

Because of the pandemic, I was able to resolve problem by myself, diverting my attention, and helping other people by doing volunteer works.

(Participant 10)

Having more time with myself realizing what I wanted to do, doing hobbies which I didn't know I wanted to do.

(Participant 11)

I started doing more walking, going for walks during pandemic. So up to now I'd still try to have that in place because it really helps me to stay calm, distressed and have some more steps and exercise. And then also sometimes I'd also look forward for like slow, quiet mornings or evenings to going down. So, I think some of these practices came from pandemic as well, which I've carried over up until now.

(Participant 13)

Self-detachment. Four of the participants set boundaries during the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain their work-life balance. One participant mentioned getting off social media because news during that time was chaotic.

It was getting off social media because news during that time was, I'd say chaotic.

(Participant 1)

Further on doing things on her end, P10 also stopped watching the news as it brings unhelpfulness to her health.

None, as I'm doing activities support myself like painting, taking care of dog, cooking and stop to watch news for it adds heaviness on my chest. (Participant 10)

Detaching from what the participants heard from the news to lessen the burden on their negative outlook, P15 has also shared her detachment to the insignificant circle to give more time to her family and most importantly special ones. Also, some participants, commonly designated their time to work and outside work by setting boundaries between personal and professional life specifically when they are working from home.

Self-Reflection. Most of the participants learned lessons from the pandemic and acknowledged the pandemic period adversities which provided time for them to have self-reflection as one of the coping strategies.

I would say it's just a side quest. It's a phase wherein again, there's a lot of discoveries as well for myself being secluded and how I would also react to certain stuff. Just so definitely, there's a lot of learnings in there despite all of these adversities no' with pandemic, it's a good life lesson as well. Yeah, it shaped me to really appreciate life more and really value the day to day that we have because not everyone was quite lucky by then.

(Participant 2)

our of the participants responded that there has been no change in their approach to coping with challenges as the pandemic progressed. Hence some turned into positive, and some weighed into a negative outlook. Participants valued stability over time.

I need to value whatever stability I have in every aspect of my life because that's again, majorly what the pandemic has made me realize.

(Participant 3)

It was emotional well-being in a sense that how do I get my normalcy back while also trying to live a normal life work as a working adult

(Participant 9)

Among the participants, seven of them have experienced the COVID-19 Pandemic with either themselves or their family members. Thus, makes them reevaluate the meaning of life what really makes the most out of life every single day, and having quality time with the family even more.

One participant re-evaluated life as she had COVID:

The time that I got COVID, it made me re-evaluate to have concern with other people and being emphatic.

(Participant 10)

Reflecting as well on what P13 has observed in her environment during a time of need was a great relief to the trials felt by most of the people at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When my grandma died and people just attended online, so it was just a different experience, but it was solemn, and I was glad that we had quality time with her like it was just different from the usual. More

so, I know there were initiatives that were done to help the front liners and other people in need, the poor and the suffering, so I found that interesting that generosity was also seen during those times.

(Participant 13)

Self-upskilling by doing home activities. All participants responded that their days have been spent in their homes during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, doing household chores, hobbies, work, and other activities which helped them to improve either their life or upskill themselves.

One participant talked about a day in life:

I think when we talk about a day in a life, it's just really home. It's no longer like home outside home, but it's really more of just staying at home for the safety of everybody in our household.

(Participant 12)

P2 responded that everything has to be done and completed at home as he defined his quality of life as being basic, in which he stayed at home and did a lot of stuff.

It was just pretty basic. So, everyone, I did a lot of basic stuff already, so just really, you know, being in inside my house, just doing basic stuff really like eating, surviving and then just putting food into the table as simple as that. (Participant 2)

Spending time at home doing creative things supported the participants to sustain their living which is also associated with the study that employers and employees have been put through a stress test by the COVID-19 pandemic's force majeure. It has demonstrated where more funding is required to boost connections or upskill personnel. Additionally, it has helped to build stronger employer-employee and manager-employee relationships, reducing the risk of labor market failures. The COVID-19 pandemic has dismantled societal and psychological obstacles to telework. It has compelled both businesses and employees to get beyond their initial reservations about working remotely (Grzegorzczuk et al., 2021).

Socialization through Virtual Connection. Participants acknowledged the adjustment of transitioning to virtual communication at the time of the pandemic either to their social relationship or job. All the participants managed to continue the connection through online communication and leaned into working from home to continue their jobs.

P12 and P13 mentioned how her social life was affected during the time of the pandemic:

In my professional life is that the team I'm handling, I'm not able to see them on a daily basis, so there's a really adjustment on how you would be engaging with your team. When it comes to personal, it really changed cause there's a lot of restrictions that you can do during the time like travelling. (Participant 12)

During the pandemic it was just different that you couldn't go out and meet people, so your social life was virtual at all, basically everything was all virtual at all.

(Participant 13)

However, there are some participants who interestingly, have thought that it did not really affect their lives at the time of the pandemic and stated that:

I didn't see how impactful it is to me cause I still have work. (Participant 7)

Some participants could see COVID as having no major impact as they still had work at that time. Most firms have adopted the hybrid work paradigm as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on workplace arrangements. In this regard, it influenced how employees dealt with the sudden changes while attempting to adjust to them despite being prohibited from reporting to work. Different organizations have various interpretations of the term "hybrid." Some employees might come into the workplace every other day or a few days a week. Other businesses might just need sporadic face-to-face

meetings, possibly taking place once every three months in a central area. In any case, research demonstrates that many businesses struggle to integrate a virtual workforce (Mitchell, 2021).

Chapter 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and the corresponding recommendations.

Summary of Findings

Based on the gathered responses of the participants, the following are salient findings of the study.

Dealing with life difficulties during the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis. The findings of this research mirror the findings of previous research that individuals expressed both negative and positive feelings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Negative responses are due to the drastic changes in their lives before and during the pandemic such as the inability to personally socialize with other people especially with colleagues and friends due to the community restrictions of going outside their home, having anxiousness in terms of uncertainties to the forthcoming and when they can go out, as well as hearing daily news from the social media of the reported mortality and thinking of their job security that anytime they can be laid off due to the low demand of the service to the company and less income to the organization. However, they have also experienced optimistic outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic as it brought new opportunities, promotion, the experience of working from home and hybrid set-up, getting to know more of their hobbies, discovering new ideas which have been shared through social media, and having more time with self and family as they are spending most of their time at home. More so, despite uncertainties, a sense of gratitude and faith have been boosted as having experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, gave them a life lesson, and realization and became an eye opener to most of the participants by sharing that life may become uncertain at once and sometimes the only thing that they need to do is to have faith and pray.

Coping Strategy during COVID-19 Pandemic. Participants have their coping strategies during the pandemic as they have different impacts on the situation. Coping strategies came along with doing hobbies, focusing on work, finding opportunities, watching videos, getting support from the family, talking to people, following online trends, having online celebrations, taking a leave off work, solemnizing through prayers, focusing on self, reading motivational books, having proper allocation of task, and having open and transparent communication with people.

Most of the participants have gained no new forms of support at the time of the pandemic hence the same circle influences their coping strategies through keeping connections, particularly through virtual communication even staying at home.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn. There are positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the various aspects of life of the participants. Not all participants view it negatively, as others look at it as a challenge and a life lesson. It reflects the view of Velasco, 2021 that as in the case of temporal disorientation, the social, political, and epistemic disorientations of the COVID-19 crisis all have momentous effects. People have been taught that the pandemic has a negative impact on the lives of the people as it initially brought health and life challenges hence, based on the participant's responses, not all participants have viewed the pandemic negatively. It also supplemented that employees working remotely see more positive effects on their daily work, are more engaged, and have a stronger sense of well-being than those in non-remote jobs with little flexibility do.

Participants value the meaning of life during and after the pandemic as they have experienced unexpected deaths, isolation from people due to community restrictions, and being more cautious about health which is prior pandemic became neglected or least priority. It supports the statement that many people sought to increase their resilience through a constructive outlook by seizing the chance to gain new skills in light of the changed working environment dragging them.

In response to COVID-19, most countries imposed mandatory emergency lockdown procedures to control the spread of the virus. With that, organizations and employers deemed it necessary for their employees to work from home, and that provisions should be made to deliver education and work remotely. Consequently, participants spend more time at home doing significant things and people in their lives as those are only the things that can be retained and be with for the gloomy part of their life.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

How the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the lives of the participants differs in that it brought psychological impact due to the anxieties of uncertainties of what will happen next and what to expect in the upcoming years. Therefore, the researcher recommends the enhancement of the psychological support and mental health activities of the organizations in terms of having more programs and awareness of the mental health status of individuals.

There is a positive impact that has been brought to the attention of offshore employees who appreciate the hybrid work arrangement which they have found helpful and feasible. Which, this study supports the continuous implementation of the hybrid work arrangement as an alternative work arrangement if deemed necessary.

To future researchers, this study presented the lived experiences of the participants who have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic while being employed at the institution. Wherein, the researcher recommends studying the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on unemployed individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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