

Work-From-Home Arrangements: Narratives of Government Employees

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative, phenomenological study explored the lived experience of fifteen Davao del Sur provincial governments employees who engaged in a work-from-home (WFH) arrangement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using purposive sampling and expert-validated guide questions, researchers gathered personal stories and perspective, which were then analyzed using thematic analysis. The study's findings largely indicated positive general ratings for the WFH set up. Employees valued the improved work-life balance, autonomy, and flexibility it provided.

Keywords: Government employees, public administrations, work-from-home, covid-19 pandemic, qualitative study work-from-home.

INTRODUCTION

Multiple companies in the world were forced to used work-from-home arrangements to their employees due to the threats posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In response, remote work became the only viable option for many people to operate mitigating the adverse effects of the deadly virus. Work-from-home arrangements provided the work-life-balance and flexibility needed by the employees, it also has its opposing effects such as challenges in managing the workloads, overcoming technological barriers, and issues in maintaining productivity (Kaushik & Gulera, 2020) and potential for isolation and hindered communication and trust among team members (Nicola, 2020; Kaushik, 2020). Furthermore, this is supported in the study of Lagura (2017), that despite all Davao Region cities utilizing their official websites for e-governance, the substandard quality, static nature, and under utilization of their limited content—with the exception of Davao and Tagum cities—demonstrate a critical deficiency in digital service readiness, thereby establishing a contextual basis for understanding potential infrastructure-related challenges faced by government employees in Work-From-Home arrangements.

Research Gap and Existing Literature

Similar studies already showcased the effect and impact of work-from-home arrangements towards job satisfaction and work productivity among government employees such as Bryant (2024) who studied about the impact of teleworker on employee outcomes and job satisfaction in the government of the United States. The study discovered that while teleworker did not significantly affect performance or productivity, it did have a favorable influence on job satisfaction, work-life balance, and general well-being. A different study by Bloniarz and Ladd (2019), as cited by Bryant (2024), that was published in the International Journal of Public Administration in 2019 looked at the effects of teleworker on productivity and job satisfaction among federal government employees in the United States. The study discovered that teleworker had a positive impact on both productivity and job satisfaction and that employees who teleworker were more likely to report feeling valued and engaged in their work. A study by Rose and Brown (2021) looked at how South Korean government workers' attitudes and behaviors were affected by teleworking. The study highlighted that teleworker had no effect on the job performance but had a linear effect on the management of trust, job satisfaction, and improving organizational commitment.

Based on the existing literature's relating to remote work, work-from-home arrangements has very less impact on the productivity of the government employees but highlights a direct effect on employee outcomes and job satisfaction. Even though some studies have tried to explore the effects of remote work towards employee outcomes, it might also be noted that some factors such as collaboration and communication tools, degree of managerial support, as well as availability of technical support may also have a direct impact on the success of work-from-home arrangements.

The current study addresses a notable gap in understanding the effects of work-from-home arrangements towards government employees on a prolonged period due to a global pandemic showcasing the personal experiences of the employees. Some existing literature's, such as the one conducted by Mousa et al. (2024), failed to focus on important aspects such as job roles, managerial support, and technological readiness which may make or break the success of work-from-home arrangements. Hence, this research paper addresses the mentioned gap as this study highlights the lived experiences of the government employees of the Provincial government of Davao del Sur, focusing on their personal experiences, challenges faced, coping mechanisms or strategies as well as valuable insights.

Research Focus and Objectives

The study focuses to explore the lived experiences of the government employees who engaged into the work-from-home setup due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This research is specifically geared towards exploring the personal experiences of the Davao del Sur employees on their work-from-home setup.

Sub-Research Questions

- i. explore the lived experiences of Davao del Sur government employees in their work from home arrangement.
- ii. discover the challenges faced by the said employees during their work from home setup
- iii. Identify the coping strategies used by the Davao del Sur government employees in overcoming the work-from-home setup; and
- iv. produce insights from the research participants which can be shared to the community.

This study also aims to benefit several individuals or groups of individuals. The results of this study may aid the supervisors and managers in knowing the advantages and disadvantages of work-from-home setups paving the way for understanding and interventions. Since the study will allow the government employees to share their personal stories towards working remotely, this can be an opportunity for them to be heard of their suggestions and recommendations to in working remotely to increase their productivity and improve their overall well-being. It also supports the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations to help people across the globe.

METHODOLOGY

Study participants and Data Collection

The research focused on fifteen (15) regular employees of the Davao del Sur Provincial Government. Participants were selected using Purposive Sampling, a non-probability method critical for a phenomenological study, ensuring that all respondents had direct, relevant experience with the WFH setup (Thomas, 2022) and (Denieffer, 2020). Eligibility was restricted to regular employees 18 years of age or older who actively participated in the WFH arrangement.

Data was gathered using Key-Informant-interview (KII). The interview guide questions crafted personally by the researcher and duly validated by a pool of experts from the academic community, human resource, local government unit, and other relevant disciplines of public administration receiving a "Good" rating (8-9 out of 10). Through the acquired certification from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (Protocol

No. UMER-2023-580) on January 22, 2024, this research study ensures that the data obtained from this study are both valid and reliable. The data gathering methods employed all throughout the course of this study safeguards integrity and transparency from the data collection process up until the data analysis phase. The researcher also employed additional mechanism to protect the integrity of the research by making sure that the participation of the respondents is purely voluntary with the individuals given the freedom to withdraw at any given time of the research. Data privacy and confidentiality were also observed making sure that the data collected were only used for research and educational purposes. The researcher also ensured to follow academic integrity by avoiding fabrication, plagiarism, falsification, deception, and by securing appropriate permissions and agreements to authorship.

Theoretical Framework

This research anchored towards several theories that corroborates the idea of remote work or work-from-home arrangements. Herzberg and Edgar Schein, also known as Organizational Behavior Theory, examines how remote arrangements affect several factors such as employee engagement, institutional dynamics, and leadership styles. Another theory that supports the idea of remote engagement is the Work-Life Balance Theory, specifically the Boundary Theory crafted by Sue Campbell Clark and the Role Conflict and Enrichment Framework founded by Greenhaus and Beutell which justifies how the government employees administer the connection between professional and personal responsibilities while working from home.

Additionally, the theory developed by Fred Davis, dubbed as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), analyzes how employees adopt digital tools in a remote working environment and how these employees perceived the nature of their work with due respect to factors such as their willingness to continue to use technologies, their perceptions on the importance of technology, and their ability to utilize technology.

And lastly, the Theory proposed by George Homans, also known as the Social Exchange Theory, reveals the relationship between remote work dynamics and their organizations focusing on vital factors such as trust, support, and reciprocity between employees.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Experiences of Government Employees in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Table 1 presents the experiences of government employees in the work-from-home arrangement, focusing on the identified themes of flexible work routines, autonomy

and time management; work-life balance; technology as a facilitator/barrier, limited field monitoring and satisfaction with WFH.

Table 1. Experiences of Government Employees in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Themes	Descriptions	Representative Responses
Flexible Work Routines	Employees organize work around personal productivity and comfort	SP3
Autonomy and Time Management	Workers control their schedules and tasks	SP2
Work-Life Balance	Ability to handle both personal and work responsibilities	SP1
Technology as a Facilitator/Barrier	Use of digital tools enhances or limits efficiency depending on literacy	SP2
Limited Field Monitoring	Inability to perform physical inspections or interactions	SP4

Flexible work routines

A significant number of respondents emphasized the flexibility of their daily routines. Many were able to structure their day around both work and personal responsibilities. This autonomy in time allocation led to perceived increases in productivity for certain tasks, particularly paperwork.

During the pandemic, WFH was implemented, I work in the time of the day where I am almost productive. I start with my personal needs before I proceed to work proper, then planning the day as to what specific tasks to do and finally execute the plan (SP3).

"I work in the time of the day where I am most productive... planning the day as to what specific tasks to do and finally execute the plan (SP3)."

I feel safer when I'm at home during the peak of COVID crisis. I save more from my transportation expenses. More productive in terms of paper works while having more family time. Less productive in terms of extension services (SP2).

"More productive in terms of paper works while having more family time (SP2)."

This aligns with the findings by Monzani et al. (2022) who observed that flexibility in remote setups enhanced productivity and job satisfaction when paired with clear goals and expectations.

Autonomy and time management

The theme of autonomy was repeatedly mentioned, with employees expressing that they had control over their schedules and workload pacing which reflects the self-directed nature of remote work.

"I am familiar with my work and as long as I can beat the deadline. (SP1)."

"I have 24 hours to manage my time for rest and works. My office is in my bed only. I save time from transportation (SP2)."

"Work from home, since it's more challenging to manage your time (SP3)."

Yes I am much satisfied with the WFH because I can manage my personal responsibilities and work (SP7).

The study of Earl-Wilcox (2021) supports these findings when he emphasized that perceived autonomy enhances motivation and performance among remote workers.

Work-life balance

Despite these benefits, the blurring of boundaries between home and work posed a challenge. Employees like SP3 had trouble in balancing work with household chores.

For me it's a bit challenging trying to balance and adjust to the work I should be doing in the office and the chores at home. There are pros and cons, one concrete example is that there were times it's tempting to take more rest, on the other hand, my time is flexible where I can work productively (SP3).

"It's a bit challenging trying to balance... it's tempting to take more rest (SP3)."

I am happy and satisfied when working from home because I can do my paper works and at the same time I can do some of my household chores (SP1).

You can really feel the advantage of WFH: 1. NO cost of transportation 2. you have the flexible time 3. You can integrate your office work with the household chore but as a field monitoring staff it is difficult for me to work from home because I need to verify the actual developments in the field (SP4).

"You can really feel the advantage of WFH... You can integrate your office work with the household chore but as a field monitoring staff it is difficult for me to work from home because I need to verify the actual developments in the field (SP4)."

I love working from home 'chill-chill' lang (SP6).

“I love working from home ‘chill-chill’ lang. (suggesting relaxed work pace with personal comfort) (SP6).”

During Work from Home, I don't need to wake up early to allocate time to travel. I can provide a better balance between work and personal responsibilities (SP7).

This is consistent with the study of Zhang and Bowen (2021) who highlighted that the overlap of domestic and professional roles can lead to reduced focus and potential burnout without proper boundaries.

Technology as a facilitator/barrier

The role of technology emerged as both an enabler and a barrier. While some found that online platforms made their work more accessible. Others pointed out challenges in communication, particularly for roles requiring extension services.

No difference at all since online platforms/applications are accessible/available (SP1).

Job onsite is more complex. My nature of work needs extension service which makes more complex. I also need to spend more time for transportation. Office work is very simple as long as you know how to use the new technology. However, it becomes complex only when your co-workers or clients don't know how to use and navigate the new technology (SP2).

“It becomes complex only when your co-workers or clients don't know how to navigate the new technology (SP2).”

According to Khorakian et al. (2024), digital literacy significantly affects the efficacy of remote work, especially in public sector environments where standardization may be lacking.

Limited field monitoring

Lastly, the theme of limited field interaction highlighted the gap in service delivery for employees engaged in extension and field programs.

For works that really requires your presence in the field like extension services, work from home is a bad choice (SP2).

For me it's a bit challenging trying to balance and adjust to the work I should be doing in the office and the chores at home... there were times it's tempting to take more rest, on the other hand, my time is flexible where I can work productively (SP3).

“For me it's a bit challenging trying to balance and adjust to the work I should be doing in the office and the chores at home... there were times it's tempting to take more rest, on the other hand, my time is flexible where I can work productively. (Indirect but also noted reliance on office systems not accessible from home) (SP3).”

Even if you are in WFH arrangement still do your job at your best because you still receive the same salary/benefits... but as a field monitoring staff it is difficult for me to work from home because I need to verify the actual developments in the field (SP4).

This points to the inherent limitations of remote setups for jobs requiring face-to-face interactions, which is also discussed in Hunsicker (2023), who assert that remote work may not be universally applicable across all roles, particularly those requiring on-site verification and physical engagement.

Challenges of Government Employees in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Table 2 presents the challenges faced by government employees in a work-from-home (WFH) arrangement, focusing on the identified themes of connectivity and technology; fieldwork limitations; productivity and work environment; equipment and tools, and training and orientation.

Table 2. Challenges of Government Employees in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Themes	Key Issues	Representative Responses
Connectivity and Technology	Slow internet, tech unfamiliarity, delayed responses	SP1, SP2, SP3, SP7
Fieldwork Limitations	Inability to visit or respond to field issues	SP4
Productivity & Work Environment	Difficulty maintaining focus, noisy surroundings	SP3, SP5, SP7
Equipment & Tools	Mostly sufficient equipment, some lacking initially	SP3, SP6
Training & Capacity Building	Lack of formal training; self-learning via YouTube	SP2, SP5, SP6, SP7

Connectivity and Technology

The experiences of government employees working from home revealed several key themes that shaped their adaptation and performance during the remote work period. One prominent theme was connectivity and technological limitations, which emerged as the most significant challenge across respondents. Unstable internet significantly affected productivity and response time, while some respondents also mentioned issues in co-workers' technological adaptability when asked what are the difficult situations they have encountered working from home.

The most difficult I encountered during pandemic is having a Slow internet connections, receiving a late response on my concerns (SP1).

Productivity and internet connection (SP3).

The most challenging part is that when you experience slow internet connections (SP1).

When your co-workers are not that good in using the new technology, we have. Having an office like nature. Internet connection and electricity cost (SP2).

Additionally, difficulty in contacting people was raised as a specific barrier to effective work communication:

When I cannot contact the person whom I need to communicate with (SP7).

When there is a need to address the problems in the field and you cannot contact the person in charge (SP4).

Several studies have emphasized that internet connectivity and digital competence are foundational to the success of remote work. According to Davies (2021), poor internet infrastructure remains a critical barrier in developing regions, limiting employees' ability to participate effectively in remote work arrangements. Similarly, Nikou, De Reuver, and Mahboob Kanafi (2022) identified that a lack of digital literacy among some employees can hinder communication, collaboration, and productivity in a virtual work environment.

Fieldwork Limitations

Another major theme was the limitation of fieldwork during work-from-home arrangements. For employees whose responsibilities included community outreach or field monitoring, remote work posed significant barriers. Several participants expressed frustration when they were unable to conduct site visits or respond to field-related issues in real time due to WFH schedules. This limitation hindered their ability to fulfill aspects of their duties that required physical presence, such as technical consultations or program supervision.

When there is a need to visit the field and I cannot do it because of WFH schedule (SP4).

When there is a need to address the problems in the field and you cannot contact the person in charge (SP4).

Extension works can't apply WFH setup (SP2).

"Extension works cannot be applied to the WFH setup (SP2)."

The unique nature of public service work—especially for agencies engaged in field-based activities like agricultural extension and livelihood programs—makes remote work challenging for field operations. Sheveleva and Rogov (2021) noted that remote work is most effective for tasks that can be digitized or managed virtually. However, field-related responsibilities often require physical presence, making full remote adaptation problematic.

Productivity and Work Environment Challenges

A third theme that surfaced was related to productivity and environmental distractions. While some employees maintained productivity, others shared that working from home made it harder to stay focused, particularly when faced with household distractions like noise or an informal home environment. The absence of the structured atmosphere of the office also made it difficult for some to sustain the same level of output they were accustomed to in a traditional setup. Maintaining motivation and concentration was especially challenging for tasks that required sustained focus. Some respondents shared that maintaining productivity without the structure of a traditional office was difficult. Environmental distractions like noise were also mentioned.

The most challenging part during work from home schedule is to stay productive. (SP3).

For me, the most challenging during work from home arrangement is to continue being productive (SP7).

The challenging part of being in a work-from-home arrangement is how are you going to manage or overcome the Noise of the environment and the noise of your neighbors and yet you cannot concentrate (SP5).

Productivity concerns in remote work environments have been a topic of debate. While Yan, Xia, Li, and Gao (2024) found that remote workers can be more productive under structured systems, others such as Bergefurt et al. (2023) highlighted those home-based distractions, such as family responsibilities or noise, may negatively affect focus and efficiency.

Equipment and Tools Availability

In contrast to the challenges, most respondents reported that they had adequate access to equipment and tools needed for remote work when asked if they have the necessary equipment and tools to work from home. Several participants mentioned that their offices allowed them to bring home laptops, and many already had access to internet services. However, there were still instances where employees had to invest personally to meet work requirements, pointing to slight discrepancies in resource provision across agencies or roles. Most respondents confirmed having the necessary tools to perform their jobs at home, such as laptops and internet access. Some offices allowed equipment to be taken home.

Yes, I have laptop at home. I use it a lot, Ilabi na karong panahona nga naay schedule work from Home. (SP1)

"Yes, I have a laptop at home. I use it a lot, especially now that we have a work-from-home schedule."(SP1)

Yes I have a laptop at home. It is necessary (SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7)

Yes, I have laptop and internet connections (SP2).

Yes, we are allowed to bring home the laptop (SP6).

The availability of appropriate hardware and software tools is fundamental to the efficiency of WFH setups. Alashwali et al. (2024) emphasized the need for institutional support in providing devices and ensuring secure access to government systems. In contexts where employees were allowed to bring home government-issued laptops, remote work was more feasible and productive.

Training and Capacity Building

Lastly, the analysis revealed a clear gap in training and formal preparation for remote work when participants were asked if they receive enough training and seminars to adjust to a work-from-home arrangement. A majority of respondents noted that they did not receive formal orientation or capacity-building seminars to help them transition to a WFH setup. Some learned through self-exploration, online tutorials, or trial and error. This lack of institutional support placed additional burden on employees, especially those less familiar with digital tools, and may have contributed to the inefficiencies experienced during the initial adjustment phase.

No, I did not received enough training and seminars during pandemic. (SP1,).

No I did not receive any training kay murag kalit ang mga panghitabo.. pag ingon nga naay work from home pagabuhaton, gihatagan na dayon me sa among work from home schedule. (SP 4)

"I didn't receive any training because everything happened so suddenly. When they said there would be work-from-home arrangements, they immediately gave us our work-from-home schedule." (SP 4)

No, we have no training or seminars (SP5)

There is no training conducted (SP6)

Yes, through YouTube and experience (SP2).

Yes, online training (SP3).

Training plays a crucial role in ensuring smooth transitions to new work systems. Olowu (2024) stressed that ongoing capacity-building initiatives are necessary for public employees to adapt to digital work environments effectively. Unfortunately, many public sector organizations tend to overlook structured training during sudden transitions.

Overall, the thematic analysis suggests that while many government employees adapted to working from home and had the necessary tools to perform their roles, systemic issues—such as weak internet infrastructure, inadequate training, and limitations in fieldwork—posed significant challenges. Addressing these concerns would be vital to improving the effectiveness and sustainability of remote work arrangements in the public sector.

Strategies Employed to Overcome the Challenges in the

Work-From-Home Arrangements

Table 3 presents the strategies employed to overcome the challenges in the work-from-home arrangement, focusing on the identified themes of technology utilization and digital adaptation, personal accountability and resilience, communication and availability,

strategic planning and continuous improvement, organizational contribution through task fulfillment. Each theme is rooted in the lived experiences of the respondents and supported by recent empirical research. The findings underscore the multifaceted nature of remote work, which requires a balance of technology, mindset, and strategic behavior to thrive.

Table 3. Strategies Employed to Overcome the Challenges in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Themes	Descriptions	Representative Responses
Technology Utilization and Digital Adaptation	Use of digital tools, online platforms, and hardware upgrades to enable remote productivity	SP1, SP2, SP7
Personal Accountability and Resilience	Internal coping strategies and proactive attitude toward adapting to remote work	SP2, SP3, SP6
Communication and	Maintaining open communication channels and virtual	SP4, SP1

Availability	availability to support teamwork	
Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement	Application of structured frameworks (like PDCA) for personal work improvement	SP7
Organizational Contribution through Task Fulfillment	Demonstrating commitment by fulfilling tasks and responsibilities on time	SP3, SP5, SP6

Technology Utilization and Digital Adaptation

The study participants widely cited the use of technology—particularly cloud storage, virtual collaboration tools, and hardware upgrades—as a method to overcome WFH challenges. Technology served as both a solution and an enabler of productivity, ensuring seamless communication and access to resources.

I save my files in Google drive; I save it using my Google drives and I keep my files in the USB; Video conferencing platforms like Zoom, Google Meet (SP1).

“I save my files in Google Drive. I save it using my Google drives and I keep my files in the flash drive. I also used video teleconferencing platforms like Zoom and Google Meet (SP1).”

Upgrading my internet and laptop RAM and memory”; “Using Google Drive, Zoom, MS Power Query (SP2).

“I upgraded my internet connection speed and the RAM and memory of my laptop. I also use different online platforms such as Google drive, Zoom technology and MS Power Query (SP2).”

There is a lot. By incorporating the new technologies into my work like saving files in the google and other online application (SP3).

“Incorporating new technologies like saving files in Google (SP3)”

Installing online platform in my laptop; Adopt virtual collaboration tools like Zoom, Google Meet (SP7).

“Installing online platform in my laptop and adopting virtual collaboration tools like Zoom, Google Meet, etc. (SP7).

According to Nkem (2024), digital readiness and infrastructure play a critical role in employee performance during remote work. Tools like cloud storage and video conferencing not only facilitate collaboration but also support flexibility and work continuity. Similarly, Odunayo and Fagbemide (2024) highlight that access to appropriate technology is essential to sustaining remote work effectiveness.

Personal Accountability and Resilience

Several participants emphasized internal coping mechanisms such as resilience, acceptance, and proactive behavior to manage WFH demands. These reflect personal responsibility and psychological adaptation as key components in navigating remote work dynamics.

None, just be resilient (SP2).

“Just be resilient (SP2).”

Acceptance of the present situation (SP3).

“Just accept the present situation (SP3).”

Be attentive”; “Make myself available on any calls (SP4).

“Just be attentive and make myself available of any calls (SP4).”

I will finish all the work I bring at home. I will finish the job assigned to me on the expected deadlines (SP6).

Doing my job effectively and efficiently (SP7).

“I will do my job effectively and efficiently (SP7).”

Loreto et al. (2022) stress that psychological resources like resilience and adaptability are crucial for maintaining productivity and mental well-being while working remotely. Likewise, a study by Hayden (2022) found that high levels of self-discipline and conscientiousness directly influence WFH success.

Communication and Availability

Availability and communication were noted as vital strategies to sustain engagement and ensure responsiveness by the study participants. This reflects a recognition of the importance of staying virtually connected despite physical isolation.

Keep in contact with them; Make myself available on any calls (SP4).

“I will keep in contact with my colleagues and make myself available on any calls (SP4).”

Adopt virtual collaboration tools like zoom, google meet, etc. (SP1).

“Adopt virtual collaboration tools (SP1).”

They make themselves available on any calls. If someone calls you and you did not attend to it, make a return call (SP4).

“If someone calls you and you missed it, make a return call (SP4).”

Haque (2023) and more recently, Shamsub (2024), affirm that effective digital communication is central to remote work success, contributing to employee visibility and alignment with organizational goals.

Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement

One participant clearly articulated the use of a structured framework (PDCA) as an innovation and coping strategy. This systematic approach denotes a high level of strategic engagement with one's work.

Yes. The PDCA cycle. Plan, Do, Check, Act. It is a method used to achieve a continuous improvement of an entity and even to a person if applied properly (SP7).

“PDCA cycle—Plan, Do, Check, Act (SP7).”

By continuous planning, checking, doing, and acting (SP7).

“Continuous planning, checking, doing and acting (SP7).”

The PDCA cycle has been advocated in various studies (e.g., Trippner-Hrabi, Chadzynski & Kam, 2024) as a method for continuous improvement in remote and hybrid work settings. Its application to personal productivity reflects a proactive stance towards quality and performance management.

Organizational Contribution through Task Fulfillment

Employees perceive their consistent task completion and deadline adherence as a form of contribution to organizational goals. This reflects a task-oriented view of productivity.

By just doing on time what is required to be done is a big help already (SP2).

“Doing what is required is a big help already (SP2).”

By doing your work religiously maski walay boss (SP3). ”

“Doing your work religiously even without a boss (SP3).”

Ensure that all the travel orders and its related are properly intact and completely fill-up (SP5).

“Ensure that all the travel orders and its related tasks are complete (SP5).”

I will finish my job assigned to me on the expected deadlines (SP6).

“I finished my job assigned to me on the expected deadlines (SP6)”.

According to Novita and Edriani (2024), meeting deliverables is a key metric used by both employees and managers to assess remote work performance. The emphasis on self-monitoring and goal completion aligns with broader findings on accountability in remote environments.

Insights Shared by Participants in the

Work-From-Home Arrangement

Table 4 presents the insights shared by participants in the work-from-home arrangement, focusing on the identified themes of work-life integration, accountability and integrity, technology as enabler/limitation, communication & connectivity, and role-based WFH suitability.

Table 4. Insights Shared by Participants in the Work-From-Home Arrangement

Themes	Descriptions	Representative Responses
Work-Life Integration	WFH allows integration of personal and professional tasks, boosting satisfaction.	SP1, SP4 SP6
Accountability and Integrity	Employees display strong commitment and ethics even without physical oversight.	SP3, SP4, SP5, SP6
Technology as Enabler/Limitation	Technology both empowers and limits WFH depending on access and skills.	SP1, SP2, SP3
Communication & Connectivity	Virtual communication is critical to remote collaboration and productivity.	SP1, SP3, SP6
Role-Based WFH Suitability	Not all roles are suited for full remote work; hybrid models are recommended.	SP2, SP4,

Work-Life Integration and Time Flexibility

Many participants acknowledged that WFH enabled them to balance work with personal and household responsibilities, leading to satisfaction and better time use.

I am happy and satisfied when working from home because I can do my paper works and at the same time, I can do some of my household chores (SP1).

You can really feel the advantage of WFH: 1. No cost of transportation. 2. You have the flexible time. 3. You can integrate your office work with the household chore but as a field monitoring staff it is difficult for me to work from home because I need to verify the actual developments in the field (SP4).

“You can really feel the advantage of work-from-home set-up: no cost of transportation, flexible time (SP4).”

Work from home offers time flexibility, while maintaining our performance task productive (SP6).

Bellman and Hubler (2021) emphasized that WFH enables employees to gain better control over their time, promoting work-life balance and job satisfaction. Ferrara et al. (2022) also supports this idea when he found

out through his study that flexibility in remote work correlates positively with employee well-being and performance.

Accountability and Professional Integrity

Despite the lack of direct supervision, participants demonstrated a strong sense of accountability and ethics in fulfilling their duties while working remotely.

To be a good employee is not impossible even if your boss is not watching (SP3).

Even if you are in WFH arrangement still do your job at your best because you still received the same salary/benefits (SP5).

“Make sure that even if you are in WFH schedule you still do your job (SP5).”

Do your job well even if you are in WFH mode (SP4).

“Do your job well even if you are in WFH mode (SP4).”

Effectiveness and efficiency depend on the person working from home. If the employee is not doing his/her job at home, then he is not effective. But we should always remember that we are still receiving the same salary as we are working on site. That is why we must do our job faithfully (SP6).

“Effectiveness and efficiency depend on the person... we must do our job faithfully (SP6).”

Even (2023) identified self-discipline and accountability as critical traits that enhance remote work performance. Lindberg and Steinmann (2023) also noted that intrinsic motivation and a strong sense of responsibility are key to thriving in remote setups.

Technology as Enabler and Limitation

While technology enables remote work, its accessibility and users' digital literacy affect overall effectiveness. Digital divide remains a challenge, especially for field-based roles and older employees.

Work from home is good only for techy people, when you have good signal for internet and calls. It is good for family-oriented people. It is not good for the older people and for those who have no gadget and internet connections. Extension works can't apply work from home setup. Work from home is boring in general (SP2).

“Work from home is good only for techy people... not good for the older people and for those who have no gadget (SP2).”

You must keep your files updated in a USB or upload it in google for easy access (SP1).

“Keep your files updated in a flash drive or upload in Google Drive (SP1).”

Yes, because nowadays we need to adopt on the fast-changing world like to be technology savvy (SP3).

“We need to adopt to the fast-changing world and be tech-savvy (SP3).”

Onyekwere (2024) argue that digital infrastructure and skills gaps are major barriers to equitable remote work success. Nkem (2024) also highlights that remote work effectiveness depends heavily on both technical support and employee digital readiness.

Communication and Connectivity

Participants emphasized the need for constant communication and proactive engagement, which are crucial for collaboration and responsiveness while working remotely.

When working from home you must stay online and connected to interact and communicate immediately to the colleagues to easily address issues and concern promptly (SP1).

“Stay online and connected to interact and communicate... to address issues and concerns promptly (SP1).”

Make feedback to your colleagues and to your supervisor regularly to established better communication that leads to better performance (SP3).

“Make feedback to your colleagues and supervisors regularly (SP3).”

Stay organized and keep all data encoded is exact, be mindful on the deadlines (SP6).

“Be mindful on the deadlines (SP6).”

Richardson (2023) discusses that clear communication and frequent interactions support employee engagement and organizational cohesion in remote work. Newman and Ford (2021) also found that ongoing communication builds trust and improves task coordination.

Suitability of WFH Based on Role Nature

Participants noted that WFH arrangements may not fit all job types, especially field-based or service delivery roles. Hybrid models were suggested as a practical solution.

Working from home requires good knowledge in the new technology we have today. If your work is somewhat in extension activity, work from home is not a choice (SP2).

“Extension works can’t apply WFH setup (SP2).”

You can really feel the advantage of WFH: 1. No cost of transportation. 2. You have the flexible time. 3. You can integrate your office work with the household chore but as a field monitoring staff it is difficult for me to work from home because I need to verify the actual developments in the field (SP4).

“As a field monitoring staff, it is difficult for me to work from home (SP4).”

Yes, for paper works and administrative works only. For works that really requires your presence in the field like extension services, work from home is a bad choice. The organization may blend both working conditions to attain higher public service motivation and work engagement (SP2).

“For administrative works only... the organization may blend both working conditions (SP2).”

Hopkins and Bardoel (2023) suggest a hybrid work model are more effective for organizations with diverse role requirements. Rinando and Whalen (2023) also advocate for role-based flexibility when implementing remote work policies.

Implications And Concluding Remarks

The experiences of government employees under the work-from-home arrangement reveal a generally positive outlook, underscored by themes of flexibility, autonomy, and improved work-life balance. Employees appreciated the ability to structure their workday around personal productivity, manage their own time and space, and integrate household responsibilities with official duties. However, the effectiveness of remote work was influenced by the availability and literacy in digital tools, and for some roles, particularly those involving fieldwork or physical monitoring, remote arrangements posed limitations. As whole, the study revealed that that even though remote work or work-from-home arrangements offers advantages such as work convenience and work efficiency, its efficacy is dependent on the nature of the job of the employees and the ability of the employees to adapt to remote working conditions.

The study also highlighted several challenges in the remote working environment such as lack of proper digital training, connectivity issues, and their ability to focus due to distractions from their respective homes. Several respondents also mentioned that the work-from-home arrangements did not allow them to effectively perform their functions that involves field work due to the limitations brought by the remote work. There are also some

respondents who mentioned that they have personal struggles in utilizing different tools and technologies needed to perform their job remotely. But despite these mentioned challenges, the respondents were also quick to adapt to the challenges by allowing themselves to secure the needed resources and by self-learning.

Several government employees also employed different strategies to overcome the challenges brought by the work-from-home set-up by maintaining open communication to their colleagues and subordinates, practice personal accountability, and by adapting to different digital tools and technologies. Several employees also showed their commitment and dedication to work by managing their tasks appropriately to effectively and efficiently perform their functions, evaluate and improve their workflows, and ensure that their job responsibilities were performed well despite the remote arrangements.

The respondents also shared some valuable insight about their personal experiences on the work-from-home setup during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some shared that the remote work allowed them to enjoy the benefits of having a work-life-balance through fostered accountability and work-life integration, even though there's no presence of direct supervision. The respondents also mentioned that technology also played a duplicate role of being an enabler and a limiter with due respect to the technological capabilities of the government employees. And even though the remote work paved the way for a speedier communication which also fosters collaboration, this study revealed that not all types of work is well suited for a full remote work setup highlighting the need for a more flexible means of working.

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