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The purpose of this study is to explore attitudes of Filipino employees toward work during the COVID-19 crisis. Data was collected through an online survey distributed to workers in the Philippines, and qualitative responses from 106 participants were subjected to thematic analysis. Several themes that reflect favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward job and work tasks, work arrangements, employers, as well as work-life balance, health, and sustainability emerged from the data. These themes were described using the tripartite (or affect-behavior-cognition) model of attitudes. Results of the study emphasize the importance of context in shaping employee attitudes, and suggest different ways organizations can help improve employees' experiences and perception of work during and beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

Keywords: attitudes, work, employee, crisis, cognitive, affective, behavioral

Working conditions and organizational contexts have vastly transformed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, likely impacting employee experiences in many ways (Hamouche, 2020). With a few exceptions, early empirical research on employees within the context of COVID-19 tends to be directed on the psychological health and experiences of medical frontliners (e.g., Liang et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020). This is understandable since being at the forefront of pandemic

response placed doctors and nurses at a particularly unique position. With evidence suggesting that some of their experiences may be distinct from the general population (Liang et al., 2020), there is merit to expanding research in this area to include other professions and industries. In addition, focusing solely on mental health means that other psychological processes remain largely unexplored despite their potential to enrich our understanding of workplace behavior. This research aimed to fill these gaps by taking into account the experiences of employees from various industries and professions. In particular, it documented the work attitudes of Filipino employees in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and offered insights on how these attitudes may influence behaviors in the workplace.

Work Context and Conditions Amid the COVID-19 Crisis

Interest in workplace-related research amid COVID-19 increased as the impact of the pandemic became more and more pronounced. One topic that stands out revolves around telecommuting or working from home. P and Shahid (2020) explored perceptions and experiences of employees on telecommuting due to the pandemic and found that willingness to adopt this arrangement is dependent on factors like having a conducive work environment at home and having no intervening personal responsibilities. They also cited having a reliable internet connection as an important factor, supporting conclusions made by other researchers (e.g., Allen et al., 2015) that central to the success of work-from-home arrangements is the use of technology to deliver work output.

Telecommuting comes with several issues. Some employees are simply not afforded the opportunity to work remotely (Cetrulo et al., 2020). It is also not the best work arrangement for everyone: those whose work is more routinary do not perform as well when working from home when compared to those whose work requires more creativity (Dutcher, 2012). Meanwhile, some workers reported losing a feeling of connectedness with their employer and colleagues when working from home (Baert et al., 2020), while others observed that work-from-home employees run the risk of misusing the supervision-free environment to attend to personal affairs (Reddy & R, 2018).

Another issue that hounds telecommuting during the COVID-19 pandemic is work-life balance. Although working from home can lessen stress and burnout (Baert et al., 2020), the accessibility provided by digitalization blurs the boundaries between personal time and work, which may lead to working longer hours (Savić, 2020). With schools closed, parents (especially women) have to deal with additional childcare hours on top of fulfilling their job responsibilities (Sevilla & Smith, 2020), adding more pressure both at home and in their jobs (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020). The emotional exhaustion arising from additional demands from work proves to be unhelpful as it can strain family relationships (Liang, 2015). This led others like Wheeler and Gunasekara (2020) to advocate work-life integration or synergizing work and life instead of looking at them as two constructs independent of each other.

Notwithstanding these downsides, telecommuting has many reported benefits. Earlier research has suggested that working from home improves performance, increases productivity and job satisfaction, and lowers attrition rate (Bloom et al., 2015). These are largely aligned with the findings that telecommuting at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in overall job satisfaction, improvement in work-life balance, decrease in work-related stress and burnout, and improvement in job efficiency and job concentration (Baert et al., 2020). Such benefits were likely a result of a more relaxed work environment at home, which is supported by previous studies (e.g., Aguilera et al., 2016). Another benefit lies in digitalization. Specific to the pandemic, Savić (2020) noted that the community lockdowns and the consequent need to work from home hastened digital transformation in organizations.

The psychological well-being of employees during the pandemic is also of parallel interest. Doctors and nurses have reported a wide range of psychological experiences such as fatigue, fear and anxiety, realizations of the importance of health and family, and increased appreciation and gratefulness toward life (Liu et al., 2020). Outside of medical frontliners, job insecurity and its consequences seem to be a major challenge to the psychological well-being of employees. One industry that experienced considerable job loss during the pandemic is tourism. The World Tourism Organization (n.d.) estimated that

100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs are at risk. In the Philippines, Cebu Pacific Air had to let go of 25% of its workforce in August 2020 (Manuel, 2020) while flag carrier Philippine Airlines announced a 30% reduction of its workforce in March 2021 (Rey, 2021). In addition, agency workers, subcontracted laborers, and professionals in the gig economy are susceptible to job insecurity due to the economic downturns resulting from the pandemic (Spurk & Straub, 2020).

The experience of job insecurity is not limited to a few subsets of the workforce. In a survey of the general Chinese population, Li et al. (2020) found a prevalence of depression, anxiety, insomnia, and distress among individuals who experienced income losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Shahabi et al. (2020) observed similar results in a national survey conducted in Iran. All of these boil down to a common observation: reduced work results in loss of income and, consequently, feelings of uncertainty of being able to keep one's job (Godinic et al., 2020; Hamouche, 2020) regardless of industry or profession.

Work Attitudes

The literature cited demonstrates how external factors can influence the internal organizational environment resulting in shifts in employee needs, values, and dispositions. Scholars like Burke and Litwin (1992) supported this notion. They suggested that the external environment (the COVID-19 pandemic in this case) affects transformational factors like company direction and leadership, which in turn influences transactional factors such as management practices, interactions between employees, and individual motivations and attitudes.

In our study, we describe the attitudes of Filipino employees toward their work within the context of COVID-19. Attitudes are a person's evaluative reactions toward a subject, which can be a person, a place, an event, or an object (Sayankar, 2015). Attitudes include a person's thoughts and feelings toward an attitude object and the behavioral reactions that may arise from them. Pickens (2005) illustrated how these three elements come into action:

When we refer to a person's attitude, we are referring to the

person's emotions and behaviors. A person's attitude... his or her point of view about the topic (e.g., thought); how he or she feels about this topic (e.g., emotion), as well as the actions (e.g., behaviors) he or she engages in... (p. 44)

These affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions are otherwise known as the "ABCs" (Myers, 2008) or the tripartite perspective of attitudes (Jackson et al., 1996).

Work attitudes is a topic of vast interest in employee research as they have been shown to explain employee behavior (Myers, 2008) such as substance use in the workplace (Tiu et al., 2019), non-availment of paid vacation leaves (Kuykendall et al., 2020), ethical leadership (Tu et al., 2017), and organizational citizenship (Ozyilmaz et al., 2018). Other studies, on the other hand, have investigated the environmental and behavioral factors that explain various employee thoughts, beliefs, and feelings (e.g., Holtbrügge et al., 2015). Specific to COVID-19, however, research on attitudes remains sparse, either limited to public perceptions in certain nations (e.g., Azlan et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020) or focusing on just a single phenomenon such as telecommuting (e.g., Baert et al., 2020) or job insecurity (e.g., Gasparro et al., 2020).

Research Setting

We conducted our study in the Philippines, a country which, at some point, had the highest number of recorded COVID-19 cases in Southeast Asia (Esguerra, 2020). The first case of COVID-19 was reported in the country on January 30, 2020 (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Since then, the Philippines has seen a steady rise in confirmed cases. As of March 19, 2021, the Philippines had a total of 635,698 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with fresh cases being reported daily by the thousands (WHO, 2021).

Similar to other parts of the world, the pandemic forced the national government to enforce drastic measures to curb its spread. On March 16, 2020, the Philippines enacted what it called an Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in the entire island of Luzon, including the capital of Manila and the greater National Capital Region, as a response to the growing number of COVID-19 cases in the country

(Mediadela, 2020). The Philippines also closed its international borders, suspended public transportation, and encouraged the private sector to consider work-from-home arrangements (Inter-agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Disease, 2020). All of these measures effectively demanded its citizens to stay home and immobilized economic activity. As a result, some businesses were forced to let go of employees to arrest financial losses (Camus, 2020), while others were left with no other option but to permanently close down their businesses and cease operations (Salaverria, 2020). Given the widespread economic and social impact of the pandemic in the country, this study focuses on employees in the Philippines regardless of the industry they work in.

Significance of the Study and Research Question

This study contributes to the literature on work attitudes in several ways. First, it documents work attitudes during crisis situations (like the COVID-19 pandemic) in relation to a broad range of work-related issues such as how work is done (e.g., shifts to telecommuting, increased reliance on technology), job outcomes (e.g., feelings of stress), and employee coping behaviors. Second, it goes beyond the most commonly investigated topics of telecommuting, psychological well-being and job insecurity, and unearths dimensions of employee attitudes that current studies are yet to explore. Lastly, understanding employee attitudes allows organizational psychologists and human resource professionals to better understand the forces that drive workplace behavior in times of crisis, affording them better opportunities to make informed decisions on designing workplace programs in response to crisis situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognizing the value of studying employee attitudes as well as the limitations enumerated above, this paper thus sought to answer the following research question: What attitudes do Filipino employees have toward work amid the COVID-19 crisis?

METHOD

This research is part of a broader study conducted by a university-based research and organization development center about the experiences of organizations and employees in the Philippines during the COVID-19 crisis. An online qualitative survey was utilized to gather data from April 15 to 20, 2020, around a month after ECQ was put in place.

Participants

Participants were all working in the Philippines at the time of the survey. They were asked, "Has this pandemic changed your attitudes towards work?" Majority (62.2%) of the respondents answered "Yes" (N = 111). They were then asked to describe in what ways their attitudes have changed and the dataset for this study was comprised of all the qualitative responses from these participants (N = 106). The average length of service of participants in their current employment was 7.25 years (SD = 7.59) with the majority (75.8%) working from home at the time of the survey. The sample included 74.5% female and 25.5% male participants with age ranging from 21 to 66 years old (M = 36.62, SD = 10.49). Various industries were represented including retail and manufacturing (17.9%), government (14.7%), information technology (IT)/business processing outsourcing (BPO)/communications (14.7%), education (13.7%), medical/health (8.4%), services (6.3%), and financial and insurance (5.3%) industries.

Data Collection and Instrument

The survey was administered through the online platform QuestionPro. Participation was solicited through social media and the mailing list of the proponent organization. To ensure informed consent, respondents were first presented with information about the study's topic and purpose as well as details about their rights as participants prior to asking the survey questions.

Participants were asked, "Has this pandemic changed your attitudes towards work?" Those who answered "Yes" were asked a

follow up question: "If yes, please describe in what ways your attitudes towards work have changed." They were not given a limit to the number of words. The number of words per entry ranged from 1 to 211 (M = 34.50, SD = 34.96), which mostly were in sentence format.

Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) described it as an approach in which qualitative data is coded independent of a pre-determined theory or framework. The researchers followed the steps prescribed by the same authors: First, the data was analyzed repeatedly and emerging patterns were identified before a code was assigned to each one. Two of the researchers performed these independently to ensure reliability. After, the two researchers convened to review each other's coding and proceeded to organize them into themes. The themes were then presented to the third member of the research team. Another round of review was performed as a final step. This iterative process was favored to ensure rigor and validity of the themes identified. The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

RESULTS

Themes that represent positive and negative self-reported attitudes toward work emerged from the data. Figure 1 depicts how these themes fit into the tripartite model of attitudes. Most themes appear to encompass more than one dimension except for those that pertain to thoughts and realizations about work amid the pandemic. The themes will be described below and excerpts from the dataset (with respondent ID in parenthesis) will be used to expound on these.

Affective and Cognitive

There were several themes that included both affective and cognitive dimensions of attitude. Themes that consisted of positive feelings and realizations include Increased Appreciation
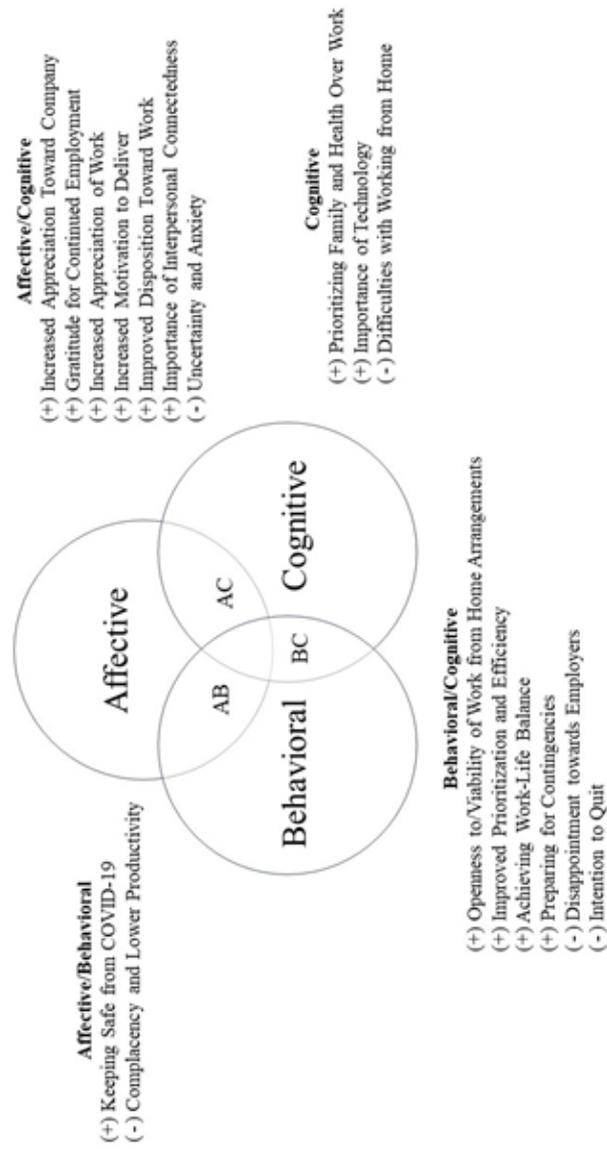
Affective/Cognitive
(+) Increased Appreciation Toward Company
(+) Gratitude for Continued Employment
(+) Increased Appreciation of Work
(+) Increased Motivation to Deliver
(+) Improved Disposition Toward Work
(+) Importance of Interpersonal Connectedness
(-) Uncertainty and Anxiety

Cognitive
(+) Prioritizing Family and Health Over Work
(+) Importance of Technology
(-) Difficulties with Working from Home

Affective/Behavioral
(+) Keeping Safe from COVID-19
(-) Complacency and Lower Productivity

Behavioral/Cognitive
(+) Openness to/Viability of Work from Home Arrangements
(+) Improved Prioritization and Efficiency
(+) Achieving Work-Life Balance
(+) Preparing for Contingencies
(-) Disappointment towards Employers
(-) Intention to Quit

Affective

Cognitive

Behavioral

AC

AB

BC

Figure 1. Employee Attitudes During the COVID-19 Crisis

Toward Company, Gratitude for Continued Employment, Increased Appreciation of Work, Increased Motivation to Deliver, Improved Disposition Toward Work, and Importance of Interpersonal Connectedness. In contrast, the theme Anxiety and Uncertainty reflected negative emotions and thoughts.

Increased Appreciation Toward Company

Participants reported feelings of gratitude toward their employer because of company actions that they perceive to be addressing employees' concerns and needs during the crisis [e.g., "I appreciate my company...for the way we are responding to this pandemic" (25)]. Indeed, some respondents valued their companies more and felt "very privileged to have a company who cares for their employees even in times of uncertainties" (62). There is a "positive perception" (36) of employers and management, especially for those who exhibited "advanced preparation" (62) for crises such as COVID-19.

Gratitude for Continued Employment

Given the context of businesses permanently ceasing operations and "the news of people losing their jobs" (2), there was increased appreciation for having a job and being employed by "a company that is still surviving even during this time" (5). Employees realized that they were fortunate to be receiving sustained income [e.g., "I am blessed to still be working and being paid amidst this crisis" (19); "I realized that I am beyond grateful that I have a job which is not a no work no pay basis" (49)], given that it allowed for the continued provision of needs as well as keeping their "family safe from hunger" (14).

Increased Appreciation of Work

Respondents expressed that they have "become appreciative of work" (1) and they perceived work differently [e.g., "I think differently of the work I do now" (4)] particularly because they "can see the importance of the work" (4) that they do during these difficult times. For many, this was tied to the perception of their impact to their

organization and society at large as seen in the following quotes: "I understood my role and the contribution I bring to our organization" (90); "I have also learned to value and love my work - I feel lucky being needed in the workforce" (66); "I have cherished it even more considering I'm in the helping field" (97).

Increased Motivation to Deliver

Amidst the crisis, some workers felt an increased motivation to perform their jobs. As one participant shared, "I feel more invigorated and motivated to do better and perform enthusiastically" (81). Similarly, they also expressed being "more determined" (90) and "eager" (78) to fulfill their work. This was true despite feeling fatigued, as seen in the following quote: "Even though there are hints of burnout on my system, I feel more inspired to do my work as I see how our organization is being true to our mission of being in continuous service to our Filipino consumers, and seeing how they care for the people" (90).

Improved Disposition Toward Work

Improved disposition means having a "more positive relationship with work" (56) as well as other positive attitudes regarding the way employees approached their tasks. For example, employees shared the realization that they have to be "more patient, flexible, creative" (30). Moreover, this theme also involves the disengagement from negative stressors and emotions, with participants sharing the need to set "aside [my] emotions to be more efficient during these times" (90)" as well as not letting "stressors get the better of [me]" (46).

Importance of Interpersonal Connectedness

Beyond attitudes toward employers and work, the pandemic also "highlighted the value of good camaraderie among coworkers who also serve as a support system at work" (75). This is especially relevant within a crisis as one participant shared: "affirmation of support to colleagues is the best support system" (104). Another realization from

the respondents was the importance of having a "positive working environment" (64) and a community ["I miss community" (74)]. Thus, this sense of connectedness with other people made employees realize the need to be "more compassionate" (85) and "more sensitive to the needs" (36) of their colleagues and clients. The importance of social connectedness is also reflected in the following quote: "The opportunity to reflect on priorities and what matters in life led me to the realization that while work is an important aspect of my life, strong relationships with others and myself is what I ultimately use to define a life well lived." (41)

Uncertainty and Anxiety

Within the context of a health and economic crisis, workers experienced uncertainty and anxiety. These negative feelings revolved around their current experiences as well as the uncertainty of the future as seen in this quote: "There is also uncertainty these past few days so we don't know what we are looking ahead" (13). Much of this anxiety relates to job insecurity, and the "uncertainty of revenue and therefore income for management and employees" (9).

The massive shift to digital platforms also brought about uncertainty with regard to the relevance of certain jobs or ways of working. Given this, participants recognized that some jobs "will become obsolete" (20), and there is a need to review "redundant tasks handled by some current staff being employed by the company" (21). This also brought about the realization that it is important to develop new competencies that are more relevant to future needs and work trends [e.g., "With this in mind, I really have to upskill" (20)].

Cognitive

The cognitive dimension of attitude focuses on employees' thoughts, points of view and realizations during the crisis. Unlike the affective and behavioral dimensions, there were some quotes that distinctly reflect cognitions about work during the pandemic. Positive attitudes include Prioritization of Family and Health Over Work and realizations about the Importance of Technology, while unfavorable

attitudes were reflected in Difficulties With Working From Home.

Prioritizing Family and Health Over Work

Some respondents shared how they realized the greater relative importance of interpersonal relationships and specifically, family, in comparison to work. Health also became top of mind given the pandemic. These thoughts and realizations are reflected in the following quotes:
"Work went down on the priority list because this pandemic made you think of more   important things like family and health" (26)
"Work can take secondary priority - family first" (18)
"Wellness should come first" (77)
"I've come to realize that we shouldn't stress too much about work and that health should still be our main priority. I am still aware of my deadlines and deliverables but I know that they are not the most important thing that I should be taking care of." (10)

Importance of Technology

Given shifts in working arrangements, the value of technology was highlighted in the responses, with employees saying that "technology is vital in an organization" (51) and that "digital adoption is very important" (71). Participants shared that "there are now a lot of technological service tools present out there to assist in [our] daily operations" (21), and that "a lot more work can be done with the right support given in terms of equipment and technology" (33).

Difficulties With Working From Home

Technology enabled work-from-home arrangements. However, some employees expressed realizations about "how difficult it is to work from home" (21) during the crisis. It defied their expectations [e.g., "Work at home setup is not as easy as I perceived it to be" (77)], stating that sometimes their "focus is not working" (39) and that despite "more urgency in the work to be done" (61), the "physical remoteness from co-workers has made it difficult to execute some workload" (61).

For some respondents, this perceived difficulty seemed to be related to challenges with virtual communication. For example, it was noted that "collaboration with (my) team is lost" (39), and that it is still easier "to talk face to face than through social media or Viber" (8).

Behavioral and Cognitive

Several themes included both behavioral and cognitive dimensions of attitude. Positive themes in this category include Openness to Work-from-home Arrangements, Improved Prioritization and Efficiency, Achieving Work-life Balance, and Preparing for Contingencies. Conversely, negative behaviors and cognitions were noted in the themes Disappointment Toward Employers and Intention to Quit.

Openness to/Viability of Work-from-Home Arrangements

Employees reported "trying to work at home during this crisis" (13) and for many employees, this shift in work arrangements brought about the realization that "work from home is viable" (3). Despite physical distance from the office, "work can still be done effectively remotely" (91), and employees "don't have to be sitting on [my] desk to be productive" (93). As one respondent noted, "I may not be required to report to office since I can be productive even when working from home" (60), suggesting that employees believe telecommuting can be adopted as a normal work arrangement even after the crisis.

Improved Prioritization and Efficiency

Beyond feeling increased motivation, there were also improvements in the way employees viewed and actually performed their tasks [e.g., "I'm more focused and take extra miles to be more effective and efficient as an employee." (88)]. The new work arrangements led to the realization that "some tasks apparently are not that urgent or important" (5), and, conversely, taught employees "which tasks are REALLY critical" (99). This led to increased "focus on the essential processes" (32) and "the most important task(s)" (94). Similarly, the pandemic taught workers to "set priorities" (94) and "to

be more efficient in completing tasks" (96).

Achieving Work-life Balance

Respondents also shared the realization that "one can be productive when living a life of balance" (16) between work and non-work domains. Participants recognized that "the work really never ends and there will be time the following day for that" (96). To promote work-life balance, participants mentioned communicating and setting boundaries as being helpful:

> But one can find ways to be more creative and hardworking to balance the two.   Communicating with the rest of the family members of the need to do both helps get   their   collaboration to make this happen. It is also fair for all who have the same needs   -- it created authentic cooperation and empathy. (18)
> I realized that I can actually say no to unrealistic deadlines or the times I was being   obliged to do the work overtime which were unnecessary. Just this time that I realized   that my 8-5pm work must just stay on that time frame for the sake of my well-being. (82)
> "No need to do OT if it can be done within the 8 hours." (64)

Preparing for Contingencies

The crisis emphasized the importance of managing risks by preparing for contingencies and having "back-up plans" (47). On the level of the individual, this is highlighted in the following response: "I valued available resources and try to stretch it as much as I could because I have to assume 'What ifs....?'" (89). On the organizational level, respondents noted the importance for companies to "prepare/strategize for the next pandemic" (71). As one participant shared, "we should accept that crisis will happen in the future. Thus, we need to have crisis plan and how it works must be institutionalized in the work force" (12). Consequently, the stress of having to create and respond to crises with appropriate and timely measures will be avoided [e.g., "we scrambled to work on it during the first two weeks under ECQ which was too stressful" (33)].

Disappointment Toward Employers

Negative perceptions toward employers were also reported. For some respondents, these stemmed from observed inequalities in the workplace and perceived lack of support from the company. This can be seen in the following statements:

> Although I'm grateful for my company for all they've provided during this pandemic but I believe that it's not fair for them to defer the company benefits of their managers. I believe that regardless of position, we should all be treated equally (20).

> I had seen the unequal treatment of company policies between sites. Our fellow workers on the other site are qualified to work from home while we at the other end are not (17).

These negative perceptions about their employers led to changes in planned work performance. As noted by one respondent, "Before, I'm always making sure that I exceeded the expected numbers needed to pass my scorecard and also to make sure that the company gets what they need from us. Now, after this pandemic, I will still make sure to pass my scorecard but I'll not render any OTs without pay, I'll not come to the office earlier than my shift 'unpaid' just to attend some trainings and to sum it up, I will not patronize this company since they did not have my back when this pandemic started" (40).

Intention to Quit

Another work-related attitude during the COVID-19 pandemic is the desire to stop working altogether with some participants reporting "I want to quit" (48) and "It helped me finalize my decision to leave my current organization" (103). This intention to resign appears to be related to undesirable working conditions such as "working non-stop" (103), "the overall nature/type and volume of the work" (103), and the realization that these are "unhealthy in the long run" (103).

Affective and Behavioral

There were two themes that had both affective and behavioral dimensions of attitudes. Keeping Safe From COVID-19 involved

feelings and actions of employees to prevent being infected by the virus while Complacency and Lower Productivity describe negative feelings and underperformance of one's tasks.

Complacency and Lower Productivity

Some respondents reported lowered productivity and feelings of complacency in performing their tasks. This includes being "more relaxed" (92) and "not as efficient during this quarantine" (84). Employees also mentioned that they "got lazy" (79) and "became more laid back" (8) with the changes in work arrangement. These behaviors sometimes led to negative attitudes toward the self: "Sometimes, I still beat myself up for not being as productive at work" (84).

Keeping Safe From COVID-19

Specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents pointed to the need to keep oneself and others protected from the risk of contracting the virus. This includes behavioral changes such as "frequent hand washing" (43), "maintaining physical distancing" (43), and "following the suggested protocols" (53) with regard to safety. It also extends to feeling more cautious when facing other people as seen in the following statements: "suspicious in every person we have encountered" (59) and "safety concern in dealing with clients" (44).

DISCUSSION

The study examined employee attitudes toward work during the COVID-19 pandemic. This health and humanitarian crisis altered societal and organizational dynamics as well as the working conditions of most employees (Baert et al., 2020). Changes in these contextual factors seem to have shaped employee attitudes or evaluative reactions (Sayankar, 2015) about work and work-related factors.

Themes that emerged from the data reflected the affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of attitude as put forth by the tripartite model (Jackson et al., 1996). These attitudes were mainly directed at their job and work tasks, work arrangements, employers,

work-life balance, health, and sustainability. Examining work attitudes is important as prior studies show how these are associated with both positive (e.g., organizational citizenship; Ozyilmaz et al., 2018) and negative (substance use in the workplace; Tiu et al., 2019) behaviors in the workplace.

Favorable attitudes toward the job and work tasks (e.g., increased appreciation of work, increased motivation to deliver, improved disposition toward work) were reflected in the positive feelings and realizations about the importance of the work that they do amid the pandemic and in the organizations that they are a part of. Although participants recognized feelings of stress and burnout, they were able to set aside these emotions and find ways to engage in behaviors that demonstrate improved prioritization and efficiency in performing their tasks. These findings reflect the observations of Taylor (2020) on how experiences of crises may bring out the best in people especially in work organizations. Findings on the positive attitude of employees toward their job and work tasks that was observed to be the most prevalent theme (across all three dimensions of attitude - affective, cognitive, and behavioral) are likewise aligned with various theories of motivation. For example, the job characteristics theory emphasizes the importance of *task significance* or knowing the impact of the job that you do on other people and its contribution to the organization (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The enhanced attitude toward the job and tasks may also be understood from the assumptions of equity theory (Adams, 1963) and social exchange theory (Homans, 1958). Many people lost their jobs during the pandemic (Rivas, 2020) and the positive thoughts and feelings as well as efficient work behaviors may be ways for employees to give back to their organization in exchange for being able to keep their jobs.

Consistent with literature that emphasized individual differences in levels of motivation and the factors that contribute to it (e.g., Kanfer & Ackerman, 2000; Riggio, 2003), there were also a few participants that reported being complacent and less productive on the job. The low levels of performance and lack of motivation to accomplish work tasks may be due to reduced supervision (Reddy & R, 2018) while working from home during the pandemic. Some participants also reported experiencing uncertainty and anxiety because of the possibility of job

loss. Previous studies point to the tendency to demonstrate depressive symptoms due to heightened job insecurity amid the crisis (Gasparro et al., 2020).

Participants likewise shared favorable and unfavorable thoughts, feelings, and intended behaviors toward employers. As the findings have shown, some participants felt an increased sense of gratitude toward employers that demonstrated care and concern for their workers. They also appreciated the preparations made by their organization to manage the impact of crises such as COVID-19. These thoughts and feelings may have contributed to the motivation and productivity of most of the participants. Prior studies have pointed out how caring for employees (e.g., Tomo & Todisco, 2018) and corporate sustainability initiatives (e.g., Obeitoh & Ekundayo, 2018) improve work performance.

Nonetheless, these positive organizational responses were not experienced by all respondents. Some have developed negative perceptions of their employers due to the seeming lack of support, perceived inequalities, and inadequacy of organizational response to the crisis. The unfavorable attitudes reflected in some intended behaviors such as not going the extra mile for the organization or the lack of desire to demonstrate organization citizenship. These attitudes and their corresponding relationships with behaviors (as demonstrated and intended) align with previous studies on work attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (e.g., Ozyilmaz et al., 2018).

Being forced to transition to a remote work arrangement that reflect novel experiences of physical distancing during the pandemic seemed to have engendered varying attitudes toward working from home, interpersonal relationships, and the use of technology at work. Employees now see telecommuting as a viable work arrangement even beyond the pandemic as this allows people to be productive and to work effectively. The positive attitude toward telecommuting aligns with the findings of previous research (e.g., Bloom et al., 2015) that demonstrate how working from home enhances performance and increases productivity. Perhaps the realization and hopeful anticipation that telecommuting can be the work arrangement beyond the COVID-19 crisis were also shaped by contextual factors. The Philippine capital has the second worst traffic in the world (Rappler,

2020) and the government estimated that the country loses $3 billion annually because of lost productivity, commuting related sickness, and expenses incurred in wasted fuel and vehicle upkeep due to traffic congestion (Maddock, 2016).

Realizations on the importance of adopting technology and maximizing this in performing work duties go with the favorable attitude toward telecommuting. Remote work is highly reliant on the internet and the use of technology (Allen et al., 2015). Organizations and employees were therefore forced by circumstances to immediately embrace digital transformation (Savić, 2020) to continue operations. In general, it seems that the positive thoughts and feelings about telecommuting and technology enabled productive work behaviors among employees while working from home.

Less favorable attitudes toward telecommuting were also reported by some participants because of the difficulty in focusing on work tasks and collaborating with colleagues while working from home. As found by P and Shahid (2020), intervening personal responsibilities and the absence of a conducive work environment are critical factors in work from home arrangements. The remote work arrangement also significantly reduced face-to-face interaction with work colleagues. This aspect of one's experience in telecommuting, albeit negative, seemed to have enhanced favorable attitudes toward social connectedness. The pandemic has highlighted the value of having a sense of community in the workplace and the positive feelings brought by the camaraderie and support experienced from work colleagues. Although there have been efforts to transition work collaborations and engagement activities (e.g., by having constant check-ins) among work teams during the pandemic (Teng-Calleja et al., 2020), employees still feel a loss of connectedness with their peers (Baert et al., 2020). This has emphasized the importance of interpersonal connections at work especially in collectivist societies such as the Philippines (Hofstede, 1983). Filipinos are highly relational (Jocano, 1988) and having opportunities to share both job and personal experiences are very much valued in work teams (Alafriz et al., 2014). These constant and spontaneous interactions naturally occur when employees are physically present in the workplace.

Decisions to deprioritize work due to realizations of the importance

of family and health as well as of achieving greater work-life balance were also expressed by some participants. This aligns with findings of Liu and colleagues (2020) on how the COVID-19 experience emphasized the importance of health and family. Employees now seem more conscious about engaging in behaviors that will protect themselves and others (e.g., frequent handwashing and following protocols) to ensure everyone's safety. Working from home has also emphasized the value of setting boundaries between work and other life roles. Savić (2020) pointed out the blurring of personal and work time due to the digitalization of work. Being at home while performing one's job also heightens the need to more effectively allocate time and effort for work and personal/familial responsibilities (P & Shahid, 2020; Teng-Calleja et al., 2020). Not being able to find this balance may shape intentions to quit one's job despite the difficulty of finding employment during the pandemic. Staying in jobs that will make employees unhealthy in the long run are perceived to be less sustainable (Katić et al., 2019). Similarly, the current crisis seemed to have strengthened favorable attitudes toward preparing for contingencies both at the individual and organizational levels. There appears to be a realization that crises can happen any time. As such, employees and organizations need to have back-up plans and plans on how to sustain the organization despite disruptions.

Implications

Findings of the study lend support to the utility of the tripartite model (Jackson et al., 1996) in exploring changes in employee work attitudes during the COVID-19 crisis. The responses of the participants generally reflected interrelated affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions (the ABC or tripartite model) indicating attitudes (Myers, 2008; Sayankar, 2015) toward work and work-related factors (e.g., job, employer, work-life balance etc.).

The results also emphasized that employee attitudes – their thoughts, feelings and behaviors, are largely influenced by context. This supports the findings of other studies (Myer &Moore, 2006; Teng-Calleja et al., 2020) that illustrated how employee reactions and actions are shaped by situational factors such as through the lens of

Lewin's field theory (Lewin & Cartwright, 1951) and Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). The empirical evidence from existing literature as well as the current study highlight the importance of examining employee attitudes amid collective experiences of disruptions and crises as this may enable understanding of both current and future behaviors/behavioral intentions of people in organizations.

For example, thoughts and feelings about telecommuting and technology as well as social connectedness may have shaped organizational responses and employee coping strategies during the COVID-19 crisis. To illustrate, social coping behaviors (that include nurturing relationship with work colleagues) were integral for Filipino employees and organizations to adapt to the challenges brought by the pandemic (Teng-Calleja et al., 2020). The attitudes identified in this study may also reflect on employee behaviors beyond the COVID-19 crisis. Employees may prefer telecommuting given its perceived viability and the employee's desire to achieve work-life balance. However, the desire to be socially connected if not fully satisfied in digitally-enabled interactions, coupled with the difficulty in focusing on work (coupled with other factors such as the ineffective internet connectivity) may encourage employees to prefer fully or partially working on-site.

The results of this study may also orient organizational initiatives that promote employee motivation, productivity, engagement, and retention during and even beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings of this study surfaced how showing care and concern toward employees engender performance and commitment. It is imperative for organizations to reach out, understand the needs of employees (and in collectivist societies, even the needs of their immediate family), and give whatever support that it can provide. This is especially true in crisis situations where employees experience a multitude of challenges and difficulties. Having effective communication systems in place will also encourage employees to articulate the help that they need.

Ensuring good health and safety became salient in the minds of employees during the pandemic. There is awareness that contracting the virus will not just affect them but others (including peers and family members) which is manifested in employee commitment to abide by

protocols and engage in protective behaviors. Given these, employers need to make sure that it has/will have programs and systems in place to assure employees that they will be protected from COVID-19 when asked to work on-site.

All the points mentioned regarding providing support, having effective communication systems and engagement programs, and ensuring health and safety highlight the need to have business continuity/sustainability plans that will allow the organization to more effectively and immediately respond to crisis situations. These plans can cover actions in response to various possible future scenarios given the COVID-19 pandemic and other possible future disruptions. Preparing for contingencies and having business continuity/sustainability plans in place will not only save the business but ensure that employees are cared for. Engaging employees in conversations about future plans, creating opportunities for them to share their thoughts and feelings, and ensuring that they are listened to will help make sure that they are onboard and will commit to future organizational directions.

Limitations and Implications for Research

Despite its theoretical and practical contributions, this study is not without limitations. First, the data collection used a cross-sectional design and was conducted at the onset of the pandemic. A longitudinal design may be used in future studies to locate evolving work attitudes during and beyond the COVID-19 crisis. Also, it would have been more meaningful if the data gathering clearly captured employee attitudes prior to the pandemic and the changes that occurred during COVID-19 to better examine attitude change. Second, given the objective of the study, the data was examined as a whole and did not determine differences across demographic characteristics (e.g., age, industry, gender, etc.). Future studies may expand the number of participants and gather additional demographic data (e.g., region in the Philippines) to enable meaningful comparison of findings across groups. Relatedly, participants who reported that their attitudes toward work did not change during the pandemic were not prompted to expound on their response. Future studies can ask these participants to also elaborate on their answers to provide greater

understanding of which attitudes have and have not shifted during the crisis. Finally, to address limitations inherent to using a qualitative approach in data gathering and analysis, future research may build on the findings and develop a survey tool that can be used to gather quantifiable information from more respondents. The survey tool may include other relevant variables (e.g., affective commitment, turnover intention, productivity) to further validate the link between work attitudes and behaviors observed in this study.

Conclusion

The study used the tripartite (or affect-behavior-cognition) model to understand the work attitudes of employees during the COVID-19 crisis. Findings reflect favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward job and work tasks, work arrangements, employers, and work-life balance, health, and sustainability. Examining work attitudes is important given its association with both positive and negative behaviors in the workplace. Insights from the findings may orient organizational efforts to promote employee motivation, productivity, engagement, and retention during and beyond the pandemic.

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