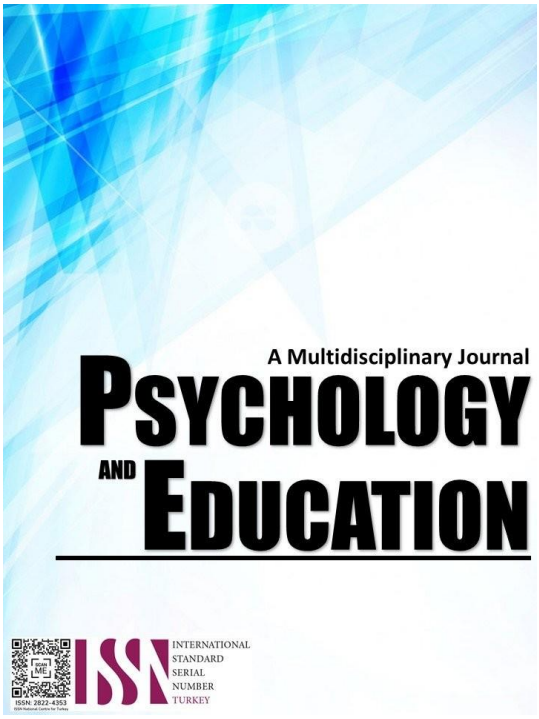
HOME-BASED TELEWORK IN PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTEXTS, AND WELL-BEING OF FILIPINO ONLINE FREELANCERS



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Research Article

Home-based Telework in Physical, Social, Psychological Contexts, and Well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers

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Abstract

Home-based telework may appear appealing, but inadequate awareness of its health implications can introduce potential risks. This research investigated how the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework influence the well-being of Filipino online freelancers. The physical context is divided into ergonomics and health conditions, the social context into social interaction and team dynamics, and the psychological context into stress and job insecurity. Employing descriptive-correlational and causal research methodologies, the study surveyed a randomly selected 107 participants, utilizing an adapted 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. Results indicated that participants rated ergonomics as high and health conditions as moderately high in the physical context. Social interaction and team dynamics were also rated as high in the social context. Regarding the psychological context, stress and job insecurity were rated as moderately high. Overall, participants reported a high level of well-being. The study found significant relationships between the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework and well-being, with social interaction having the most significant impact. Further research on long-term teleworkers could provide deeper insights into these impacts. These findings suggest that improving telework conditions can enhance work and personal life satisfaction and mitigate potential health risks through implementation of ergonomics programs to optimize workstation setup for comfort and productivity, regular physical activity, expanding social circles beyond existing network, strengthening social support within teams, establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life to reduce stress, and creating government policies that bring online clients and freelancers into agreements that safeguard the rights of both parties to foster a secure and equitable working environment.

Keywords: *home-based telework, physical, social, psychological, well-being*

Introduction

Home-based online freelancing has been a viable option for Filipino professionals even before the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the shift to remote work to control infection spread (Tudy, 2021). The Philippines has emerged as a leading destination for outsourcing by foreign clients, such as those from the US and Australia, due to lower labor costs and the reputation of Filipinos as diligent workers. The typical home office setup includes a desk, computer, headphones (if needed), a chair, and reliable internet, resembling traditional office environments where freelancers engage in computer-based tasks for set hours.

The researcher, a nurse with over ten years of online freelancing experience, aims to bridge the gap between nursing and telework. As health advocates, nurses can significantly contribute to promoting health within the growing home-based teleworking community in the Philippines. Home-based teleworking offers numerous advantages. Employees can save significantly by reducing expenditures on work attire and eliminating the need for a daily commute. This setup also allows individuals to work from the comfort of their homes, with easy access to tasks via a laptop or computer and an internet connection. Furthermore, the flexibility of working hours, subject to client approval, enables workers to manage their time efficiently as long as they fulfill the required hours. In addition, the potential for higher earnings exists, particularly when working with a generous client. However, despite these benefits, this work arrangement also presents certain challenges that must be considered. It has been observed that home-based telework presents various health issues, particularly in the physical, social, and psychological contexts.

Physical Context: Prolonged computer use is associated with several health risks, particularly sedentary behavior, which can adversely affect cardiovascular, metabolic, musculoskeletal, and cognitive health (Vayre, 2022). Research indicates that even short periods of sitting can lead to discomfort in the lower back, hips, and thighs (Baker et al., 2018). The researcher has experienced lower back pain linked to telework. In addition, long-term exposure to computer screens can lead to conditions like computer vision syndrome and dry eye disease, which are prevalent among frequent users (Mohammad et al., 2018).

Social Context: While remote work offers flexibility, it can also reduce involvement in workplace activities and social events (Masilionytė, 2021). Filipino freelancers often work night shifts to accommodate foreign clients, leading to disrupted sleep patterns and limited social interactions. The researcher notes that years of home-based work have diminished her motivation to socialize, as she has grown accustomed to remaining at home or feeling fatigued.

Psychological Context: The rise of home-based telework has implications for psychological well-being (De Sio et al., 2021). Meeting client expectations and deadlines can be stressful, compounded by the potential for increased workload and job insecurity. The psychological distress experienced by freelancers may vary based on their tenure in telework and the number of clients. Increased demands correlate with a decline in overall well-being.

Despite the appeal of working from home, the physical, social, and psychological risks associated with this lifestyle warrant attention. This study aims to explore how these contexts affect the well-being of Filipino online freelancers. It does not seek to discourage home-based work but rather to educate professionals on potential health risks, encouraging them to adapt their work environments and adopt preventive measures for improved well-being.

Research Questions

This study aims to determine the influence of the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework on the well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers. Specifically, this study will answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of physical context of the participants in terms of:
    1.1. Ergonomics; and
    1.2. health condition?
2. What is the level of social context of the participants in terms of:
    2.1. social interaction; and
    2.2. team dynamics?
3. What is the level of psychological context of the participants in terms of:
    3.1. stress; and
    3.2. job insecurity?
4. What is the level of Well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the well-being and the physical, social, and psychological context of home-based telework among Filipino Online Freelancers?
6. Which variables, singly or in combination, best predict the well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers?

Methodology

Research Design

This research study used a descriptive-correlational approach and a causal research design. Descriptive research addresses the question "What is?" while correlational research examines relationships between variables or entities. These methods rely on data collection through surveys or observations to identify and analyze relationships between two or more variables (Miksza et al., 2023). Researchers using correlational designs do not manipulate variables but instead observe and measure them to detect patterns and associations (Bhat, 2023). Causal research, in contrast, focuses on identifying cause-and-effect relationships between variables. It seeks to determine how changes in one variable (the independent variable) lead to changes in another (the dependent variable) (Villegas, 2023).

This study utilized these designs to collect data through surveys, investigating relationships between independent variables (physical, social, and psychological contexts) and the dependent variable (well-being), while also exploring potential causal links between them.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were members of the Iligan Online Freelancers Facebook Group, with a total population of 147. The RAOSOFT tool was used to determine the required sample size, inputting a 5% margin of error, 95% confidence level, 147 population size, and 50% response distribution. The tool calculated a recommended sample size of 107 participants, and 107 group members were selected for the study.

A simple random sampling method was employed, ensuring each group member had an equal chance of selection (Horton, 2024). This approach was appropriate given the small population size. All group members were listed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and assigned numbers from 1 to 147. The researcher randomly selected 107 participants by drawing corresponding numbers from a box. Participants were required to have at least one year of online work experience and were contacted online to participate.

Instrument

To collect the relevant data required to address the research questions, this study utilized multiple self-reported survey questionnaires:

Physical context: a survey questionnaire on Ergonomics adapted from the study of Turci et al. (2015) which used the Maastricht Upper Extremity Questionnaire (MUEQ-Br revised), and a survey questionnaire on the prevalent Health Conditions of teleworking adapted from the study of Niu et al. (2021).

Social context: a survey questionnaire on Social Interaction adapted from the study of Slavkovic et al. (2021) which used the UCLA Loneliness Scale Version 3 developed by Russel (1996), and a survey questionnaire on Team Dynamics was adapted from the study of Veldhuis (2021) which used the Loneliness at the Workplace Scale (LAWS) developed by Wright et al. (2006).

Psychological context: a survey questionnaire on Stress was adapted from the study of Soubelet-Fagoaga et al. (2022) which used the Stress in General Scale developed by Stanton et al. (2001), and a survey questionnaire on Job Insecurity was adapted from the study of Vieira dos Santos et al. (2022) which used the Job Insecurity Scale (JIS) developed by De Witte (2005).

Subjective well-being: a survey questionnaire was adapted from the studies of Kroner et al. (2023) which used the WHO Well-being Index developed by Topp et al. (2015) and Priesack et al. (2015) which used BBC Subjective Well-being Scale.

The researcher chose to analyze the results of the study based on the arbitrary scoring for the following reasons: the 5-point Likert-like type scale, as suggested by Likert (1932), is known for its simplicity in understanding and usage, and both survey administrators and respondents find it easy to measure levels towards different issues using this scale.

Procedure

The researcher obtained consent from the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and the Administrator of the Iligan Online Freelancers Facebook Group to conduct the study. A pilot test with 30 participants was conducted and analyzed, achieving a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher. Following this, the researcher applied for a study protocol review at the Liceo de Cagayan University (LDCU) Research Ethics Board and received approval. The inclusion criteria were members working online for at least one year, while those who did not consent or had offline employment were excluded.

The researcher presented the Administrator's approval to the Iligan Online Freelancers Group and administered an online survey through Google Forms, after providing an orientation about the study's purpose. The survey consisted of five parts: participant demographics, physical, social, and psychological context assessments, and well-being related to home-based teleworking. Participation involved attending an orientation and completing the questionnaire, which took approximately 30 minutes. Responses were tallied in MS Excel, and the University Research and Coordination office assisted in data processing for ISO compliance. All documents and data were submitted for analysis.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data in this study. For research problems 1 to 4, the mean and standard deviation were calculated to assess participants' physical, social, and psychological contexts, as well as their well-being. The mean measured the average responses (Rouse, 2021), while the standard deviation reflected the consistency of these responses, offering a clearer understanding of the data (Hargrave, 2023).

For research problem 5, Pearson Product Moment of Correlation was used to examine the relationships between the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework and well-being. For research problem 6, multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify the variable that best predicted participants' well-being, using independent variables to predict a dependent variable (Bevans, 2023).

Ethical Considerations

The questionnaire had an attached informed consent detailing information about what the participants needed to know and their rights as study participants.

Transparency and Privacy. Participants were informed about the study's data usage, ensuring transparency and compliance with the Data Privacy Act (DPA) of 2012 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations effective since September 8, 2016. All survey responses were treated confidentially; identities were excluded from the final manuscript and not disclosed to readers. Data collected were securely stored, with access limited to the research team, advisor, statistician, and individuals involved in data collection. Participants were assured that their data would solely be used to address the study's objectives and not for any other purposes. Upon completion of the research, all non-returnable information was destroyed to maintain confidentiality. In the event of publication, only aggregated findings would be reported, ensuring individual results remained strictly confidential.

Recruitment Process. Regarding the recruitment process, the participants were recruited based on their voluntary willingness to participate in the study. Participants were selected based on a simple random sampling method. They were individually contacted online to participate in the study.

Right to Withdraw or Refuse. The participants might refuse to participate or exit the survey at any time without consequences. They were free to decline to answer any question they did not wish to answer. Had they withdrawn before the data were collected, their information would have been returned, disposed of, or destroyed and not used in the research study. They had the right to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once it had started with reasonably foreseeable factors such as potential risks, discomfort, or adverse effects.

Risks. Participants were required to complete the online survey using their personal devices and internet connection. They were assured that no risks were involved in participating, and no sensitive questions that could cause emotional discomfort were included. Privacy was safeguarded, with no external sharing of responses that could compromise confidentiality. Participants retained the right to decline answering any questions that could cause distress.

Benefits. The participants received no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, their responses would help us understand the influence of physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework on the well-being of Filipino online freelancers, benefiting the researchers by generating unbiased findings and supporting future researchers who seek to build upon this

study.

Incentives or Compensation. The participation was entirely voluntary and did not involve monetary rewards. Therefore, no incentives were provided upon completing the online survey questionnaire. In the same way, the participants of this study were also not obliged to pay for their participation.

Sharing the Results. The published paper would be accessible at Liceo de Cagayan University's library for student research. During data dissemination, only the researcher, advisor, statistician, and data collection team had access to the online survey results. The findings would be shared with the Filipino Online Freelancers Facebook community and presented at a colloquium and external research presentations. Moreover, the research is intended for publication in an internationally recognized online journal.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the tables and analyses of the data collected for this study, and it further emphasizes the discussions surrounding the implications and recommendations derived from the analyzed data.

Problem 1. The Level of Physical Context of Online Freelancers

In terms of Ergonomics

Table 1 shows that the overall mean for the level of physical context in ergonomics for home-based telework is 3.51, indicating a high level of ergonomic practice among participants. Most freelancers effectively position work equipment, such as adjusting table and chair height, using arm support, and selecting chairs that support the lower back. They ensure adequate workspace, a good environment, fresh air, and use eyeglasses as needed.

However, moderate ergonomics were observed in body mechanics, such as maintaining posture, avoiding prolonged sitting, and minimizing repetitive tasks. Participants show awareness of ergonomic risks and take steps to ensure a safe and comfortable working environment.

Tahernejad et al. (2022) found that while ergonomic workstations reduce awkward postures, a significant number of users still maintained improper lumbar curvature for extended periods. This highlights the challenge of ensuring consistent proper posture even with ergonomic furniture. Properly designed workstations, including ergonomic chairs and adjustable desks, are essential for preventing musculoskeletal pain (Shahwan et al., 2022). An ergonomic chair that supports the user's body contours is particularly crucial for maintaining good posture (Larrea-Araujo et al., 2021). McAllister et al. (2022) emphasized the need for comprehensive ergonomics programs that include adjustable equipment, training, and assessments to ensure the comfort and productivity of teleworkers.

Table 1. *The Level of Freelancers' Ergonomics*

Ergonomics	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
1. My desk (table) at work has a suitable height.	4.09	1.033	Agree	High Ergonomics
2. I can adjust the height of my chair.	3.85	1.413	Agree	High Ergonomics
3. When I use the mouse device, my arm is supported by the table or an arm support.	3.95	1.247	Agree	High Ergonomics
4. The chair I use for work supports my lower back.	3.70	1.238	Agree	High Ergonomics
5. I use ergonomic chairs which provide comfort when I work.	3.36	1.369	Agree	High Ergonomics
6. I have enough space to work in my office.	3.98	.990	Agree	High Ergonomics
7. During my work, I keep a good work posture.	3.11	1.144	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
8. At work, I DON'T sit for long hours in one position.	3.32	1.293	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
9. For more than two hours per day, I DON'T sit with lifted shoulders.	3.53	1.012	Agree	High Ergonomics
10. During my work, I DON'T sit in awkward posture.	3.17	1.169	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
11. At work, I DON'T perform repetitive tasks.	2.60	1.080	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
12. When I type, my hand is placed in a straight line with my lower arm.	3.39	1.088	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
13. When I work, my head is NOT bent.	3.36	1.102	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
14. When I work, my head is NOT twisted towards the left or right.	3.73	.977	Agree	High Ergonomics
15. When I work, my trunk is NOT twisted towards the left or right.	3.55	1.048	Agree	High Ergonomics
16. I find my work environment good.	4.07	.872	Agree	High Ergonomics
17. There is available fresh air in my workroom.	3.69	1.076	Agree	High Ergonomics
18. I DON'T gaze at the computer screen for long hours.	2.66	1.157	Neutral	Moderately High Ergonomics
19. I need to wear eyeglasses every time I work.	3.52	1.501	Agree	High Ergonomics
20. I tend to change working position from sitting to standing and vice versa.	3.55	1.261	Agree	High Ergonomics
Overall Mean	3.51	0.677	Agree	High Ergonomics

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Ergonomics; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Ergonomics; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Ergonomics; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Ergonomics; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Ergonomics

In terms of Health Condition

Table 2 shows that the overall mean for health condition related to home-based telework is 3.28, indicating that participants experienced moderately high health issues. Commonly reported conditions include eye strain, shoulder pain, lower back pain, fatigue, headaches, and poor sleep. Moderate issues include stiff neck, dizziness, tinnitus, joint pain, and numb fingers. Less frequent were diarrhea and hypertension. Eye strain and dizziness stem from prolonged screen exposure, while musculoskeletal pain is linked to improper posture. Though hypertension was less commonly reported, 49 out of 107 participants experienced it, suggesting it is not insignificant. Baker et al. (2018) found that sitting for just two hours can cause discomfort in the lower back, hips, and thighs, with common complaints including neck, lower back, and shoulder pain (Shahwan et al., 2022) and visual strain due to poor ergonomics (Mohammad et al., 2018). Poor home office setups, especially when using mobile devices, contribute to musculoskeletal issues (Reznik et al., 2022). Teleworkers also face reduced sleep linked to screen time and negative health effects, such as elevated diastolic blood pressure (Hoshi et al., 2023), as well as increased fatigue (Zalat and Bolbol, 2022). Regular physical activity and proper office setups are crucial for mitigating these risks (Bouziri et al., 2020).

Table 2. *The Freelancers' Level of Health Condition*

Health Condition	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
In the years I have been working as an Online Freelancer, I have experienced…				
1. Stiff neck	3.08	1.198	Neutral	Moderately High Experienced Health Condition
2. Eye strain	3.87	1.019	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
3. Shoulder pain	3.73	1.202	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
4. Lower back pain	3.78	1.184	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
5. Fatigue	3.72	.998	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
6. Body feels heavy	3.67	1.053	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
7. Headache	3.70	1.066	Agree	High Experienced Health Condition
8. Dizziness	3.11	1.239	Neutral	Moderately High Experienced Health Condition
9. Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)	2.61	1.242	Neutral	Moderately High Experienced Health Condition
10. Joint pain	2.94	1.180	Neutral	Moderately High Experienced Health Condition
11. Diarrhea	2.20	1.050	Disagree	Unlikely Experienced Health Condition
12. Numb fingers and forearms	3.11	1.261	Neutral	Moderately Experienced Health Condition
13. Not getting enough sleep	3.93	1.118	Agree	Likely Experienced Health Condition
14. High blood pressure (hypertension)	2.47	1.355	Disagree	Unlikely Experienced Health Condition
Overall Mean	3.28	0.74836	Neutral	Moderately High Experienced Health Condition

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Ergonomics; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Ergonomics; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Ergonomics; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Ergonomics; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Ergonomics

Problem 2. The Level of Social Context of Online Freelancers

In terms of Social Interaction

Table 3. *The Freelancers' Level of Social Interaction*

Social Interaction	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
1. I don't feel like I lack companionship.	3.74	1.049	Agree	High Social Interaction
2. I often feel like there is someone I can turn to.	3.81	1.100	Agree	High Social Interaction
3. Working at home doesn't make me feel alone.	4.10	1.055	Agree	High Social Interaction
4. I don't feel like I am no longer close to anyone.	3.54	1.246	Agree	High Social Interaction
5. My interests and ideas are shared by those around me.	3.79	1.055	Agree	High Social Interaction
6. I feel outgoing and friendly.	3.61	.979	Agree	High Social Interaction
7. I feel like I'm close to people.	3.48	1.076	Neutral	Moderately High Social Interaction
8. Working at home, I don't feel left out.	3.85	1.026	Agree	High Social Interaction
9. My relationships with others are meaningful.	4.08	.826	Agree	High Social Interaction
10. Working at home doesn't make me feel isolated from others.	3.87	1.019	Agree	High Social Interaction
11. I can find companionship when I want it.	4.16	.859	Agree	High Social Interaction
12. Working from home most of the time, I don't feel shy when I am out in the public.	3.86	1.161	Agree	High Social Interaction
13. Working from home, there are people I can talk to.	4.03	.926	Agree	High Social Interaction
14. Though my workload is demanding, I am still able to socialize with others as much as I would like to.	3.79	1.019	Agree	High Social Interaction
15. I make the effort to meet and get to know new people.	3.49	1.200	Neutral	Moderately High Social Interaction
16. My work doesn't keep me away from spending time with family or friends.	4.07	.978	Agree	High Social Interaction
Overall Mean	3.83	0.749	Agree	High Social Interaction

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Social Interaction; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Social Interaction; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Social Interaction; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Social Interaction; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Social Interaction

Table 3 shows that the overall mean for the level of social interaction among home-based teleworkers is 3.83, indicating a high level of social engagement. Participants reported strong social ties, with high interaction in areas such as companionship, having someone to rely on, meaningful relationships, and balancing work with time for family and friends. However, participants showed only moderately high interaction in feeling close to others and making an effort to meet new people.

Collins et al. (2016) found that teleworkers may face social isolation, relying on pre-existing social ties and struggling to form new ones, which can be insufficient for long-term remote workers. Teleworkers with shorter remote periods require less technical and social support, reducing isolation risks (Bentley et al., 2016). Of the study participants, 43.9% had been freelancing for only 1 to 3 years. Pabilonia and Vernon (2022) reported that men use extra time for hobbies or child care, while women take on more housework, with 60.7% of the participants being parents. Despite video conferencing, meaningful social interaction remains essential for maintaining physical and mental health during remote work (Denzer & Grunau, 2023; Lunde et al., 2022).

In Terms of Team Dynamics

Table 4 shows that the overall mean for team dynamics among home-based teleworkers is 3.84, indicating a high level of team interaction. Participants reported strong team dynamics in areas such as having supportive co-workers, feeling a sense of belonging, not feeling isolated, and forming meaningful relationships at work. However, they only reported moderately high dynamics regarding co-workers being too busy to address their problems, suggesting that while most participants feel supported, co-workers are often focused on their tasks and may be too occupied to address others' concerns.

Strong social relationships improve employee well-being, with regular communication reducing isolation (Oakman et al., 2020). Social support from peers and supervisors boosts work vigor and resilience, especially during telework (Pulido-Martos et al., 2021; Layous & Nelson-Coffey, 2020). Regular team meetings and virtual sessions on platforms like Zoom or Skype help prevent isolation (Lunde et al., 2022). Health-promoting leadership that emphasizes communication and trust fosters a supportive work environment (Lengen et al., 2021). Organizations should prioritize support networks and communication to keep employees engaged (Siregar & Rachmawati, 2023).

Table 4. The Freelancers' Level of Team Dynamics

Team Dynamics	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
1. There are co-workers I can turn to if I am not coping at work.	3.82	1.017	Agree	High Team Dynamics
2. I DON'T avoid interacting with my co-workers.	4.01	.895	Agree	High Team Dynamics
3. I have companionship at work.	3.77	.987	Agree	High Team Dynamics
4. I DON'T feel isolated from the people I work with.	3.93	.843	Agree	High Team Dynamics
5. People at my work give me the support I need.	4.07	.809	Agree	High Team Dynamics
6. I DON'T feel left out from work conversation with my workmates.	3.95	.840	Agree	High Team Dynamics
7.People at work are generally NOT too busy to bother with my problems.	3.36	1.013	Neutral	Moderately High Team Dynamics
8. I have a sense of belonging in my organization.	3.94	.811	Agree	High Team Dynamics
9. There is someone at work who I can talk to about my day-to-day work problems if I need to.	3.67	1.097	Agree	High Team Dynamics
10. I find a friend at work when I need one.	3.83	.947	Agree	High Team Dynamics
11. I share personal thoughts with my co-workers if I want to.	3.52	1.085	Agree	High Team Dynamics
12. I get along well with my co-workers.	4.01	.771	Agree	High Team Dynamics
13. I DON'T feel alienated from my co-workers.	3.93	.839	Agree	High Team Dynamics
14. I have meaningful relationships at work.	3.89	.805	Agree	High Team Dynamics
15. I DON'T feel isolated when I'm with my co-workers.	3.91	.885	Agree	High Team Dynamics
16. I feel satisfied with the relationships I have made at work.	3.96	.857	Agree	High Team Dynamics
17. There is someone I can confide in at work if I need to.	3.74	.984	Agree	High Team Dynamics
Overall Mean	3.84	0.724	Agree	High Team Dynamics

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Social Interaction; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Social Interaction; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Social Interaction; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Social Interaction; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Social Interaction

Problem 3. The Level of Psychological Context of Online Freelancers

In terms of Stress

Table 5 shows an overall mean of 2.60 for the stress levels of home-based teleworkers, indicating a moderately high level of stress. Participants reported moderate stress from job demands, such as feeling pressured, nervous, burdened, or overwhelmed. However, they experienced lower stress in areas such as feeling calm, comfortable, and in control of their duties. While the repetitive nature of tasks may lead to lower stress, participants still faced stress from unexpected problems, deadlines, and workload pressures, explaining the moderately high stress levels.

These stressors contribute to mental health issues, fatigue, and declining physical health (Tavares, 2017). Balancing work and personal responsibilities at home increases stress (Denzer & Grunau, 2023). Curzi et al. (2021) found that teleworkers experience stress from

heavier workloads, lack of control, and working during personal time. Frequent teleworking, especially for long hours, is linked to higher stress levels, with most participants working 6-8 hours a day and 5-6 days a week (Soubelet-Fagoaga et al., 2023; Heiden et al., 2021). However, telework can reduce stress if employees avoid isolation and manage work demands effectively (Adamovic, 2022). By giving employees more freedom to better handle and react to stressors, telework helps to mitigate the harmful effects of stress on their health.

Table 5. *The Freelancers' Level of Stress*

Stress	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
In relation to my job, I…				
1. feel under pressure	3.36	1.041	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
2. feel nervous	2.67	1.017	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
3. feel burdened	2.79	1.016	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
4. don't feel calm	2.48	.904	Disagree	Low Stress
5. don't feel comfortable	2.19	.902	Disagree	Low Stress
6. have difficulties in fulfilling my duties	2.26	.925	Disagree	Low Stress
7. feel like it is quite demanding	2.60	1.045	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
8. feel like it is hectic	2.75	1.091	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
9. don't feel like it is under control	2.36	.944	Disagree	Low Stress
10. feel more stressful than I'd like	2.64	1.039	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
11. feel overwhelmed	2.74	1.076	Neutral	Moderately High Stress
12. feel like it is nerve-wracking	2.44	1.011	Disagree	Low Stress
Overall Mean	2.60	0.767	Neutral	Moderately High Stress

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Stress; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Stress; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Stress; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Stress; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Stress

In Terms of Job Insecurity

Table 6 shows an overall mean of 2.82 for job insecurity among home-based teleworkers, indicating a moderately high level of insecurity. Participants expressed moderate insecurity about the long-term stability of their jobs, including concerns about losing their jobs or the security of online work. However, they reported low insecurity about imminent job loss. This sense of security is likely due to observable signs of potential job termination, such as reduced tasks or communication, rather than immediate concerns of job loss.

Online freelancing offers high earning potential but involves financial risks, as income can vanish quickly (Villena, 2020). Freelancers face job insecurity and uncertainty after each project, especially as many startups fail (Wiersma, 2019). This insecurity negatively affects health, well-being, and organizational performance (Probst et al., 2017), while inadequate governance leads to low pay and exploitation (King-Dejardin, 2021; Soriano & Cabañes, 2019). Job insecurity also reduces trust and job satisfaction, increasing mental health issues. Clear, transparent communication during organizational changes can help rebuild trust and mitigate the effects of job insecurity (Richter & Naswall, 2019). Adekya (2015) calls for policies to reduce job insecurity and establish international governance to protect freelancers' rights.

Table 6. *The Freelancers' Level of Job Insecurity*

Job Insecurity	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
1. I feel insecure about the future of my job.	3.06	1.227	Neutral	Moderately High Insecurity
2. I am NOT sure I can keep my job for long term.	3.06	1.331	Neutral	Moderately High Insecurity
3. Chances are, I will soon lose my job.	2.44	1.183	Disagree	Low Insecurity
4. I think I might lose my job in the near future.	2.61	1.211	Neutral	Moderately High Insecurity
5. I think online work is NOT a secure job.	2.93	1.291	Neutral	Moderately High Insecurity
Overall Mean	2.82	1.038	Neutral	Moderately High Insecurity

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Stress; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Stress; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderately High Stress; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Stress; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Stress

Problem 4. The level of Well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers

Table 7 reveals that Filipino online freelancers have a high overall sense of well-being, with a mean score of 3.86. Participants reported high well-being in areas such as feeling cheerful, calm, active, satisfied with their work and personal life, and confident in their ability to achieve personal growth and meet their needs. This is consistent with their high levels of ergonomics, social interaction, and team dynamics, as well as moderate stress and job insecurity. However, participants reported only moderate well-being in areas related to physical health, sleep quality, and exercise, which may be attributed to 72% not getting enough sleep and 65.4% working at night.

Santos and Pereira (2023) suggested that telework fosters well-being and performance by enhancing key life aspects, including performance, relationships, and work-life balance. However, its impact on productivity and well-being depends on employees' expectations for social interaction, rewards, and autonomy. Lu and Zhuang (2023) reported that telecommuting men experience higher job satisfaction due to increased autonomy, while Kroner and Muller (2023) found that telework mitigates the negative effects of high work intensity. Boulet and Parent-Lamarche (2022) emphasized flexibility as key to improving work-life balance. Despite its benefits, De Macêdo (2020) and Erro-Garces et al. (2023) noted that telework presents challenges, such as reduced interpersonal connections,

and suggested that employers support telework by offering digital skills training and necessary tools to improve employee well-being.

Table 7. The Freelancers' level of Well-being

Well-being	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Verbal Description*	*Interpretation*
1. I feel cheerful and in good spirits.	3.90	.846	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
2. I feel calm and relaxed.	3.84	.814	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
3. I feel active and vigorous.	3.61	.919	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
4. I woke up feeling fresh and rested.	3.24	1.054	Neutral	Moderate Sense of Well-being
5. My daily life has been filled with things that interest me.	3.57	.972	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
6. I am happy with my physical health.	3.14	1.059	Neutral	Moderate Sense of Well-being
7. I am happy with the quality of my sleep.	3.02	1.107	Neutral	Moderate Sense of Well-being
8. I am happy with my ability to perform my daily activities.	3.77	.927	Agree	Good Sense of Well-being
9. I am happy with my opportunity for exercise/leisure.	3.46	1.066	Neutral	Moderate Sense of Well-being
10. I am happy with my ability to work.	4.33	.750	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
11. I am happy with my personal and family life.	4.13	.880	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
12. I am happy with my friendships and personal relationships.	4.13	.825	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
13. I am comfortable with the way I connect with others.	4.02	.835	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
14. I am able to enjoy life.	4.01	.863	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
15. I feel optimistic about the future.	4.17	.852	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
16. I feel in control of my life.	4.00	.858	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
17. I feel happy with myself as a person.	4.13	.836	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
18. I am able to live my life the way I want.	3.87	.943	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
19. I am confident in my own opinions and beliefs.	4.19	.741	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
20. I am able to do the things I choose to do.	4.09	.864	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
21. I feel able to grow and develop as a person.	4.15	.877	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
22. I am happy with myself and my achievements.	4.10	.879	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
23. I am happy that I have enough money to meet my needs.	3.87	1.133	Agree	High Sense of Well-being
Overall Mean	3.86	0.658	Agree	High Sense of Well-being

Legend: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree, Very High Sense of Well-being; 3.51–4.50, Agree, High Sense of Well-being; 2.51–3.50, Neutral, Moderate Sense of Well-being; 1.51–2.50, Disagree, Low Sense of Well-being; 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree, Very Low Sense of Well-being

Problem 5. Significant relationship between the well-being and the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework among Filipino Online Freelancers

Table 8 shows the correlation between the physical, social, and psychological contexts of home-based telework and the well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers.

As the p-value of ergonomics (0.000), health condition (0.000), social interaction (0.000), team dynamics (0.000), and job insecurity (0.000) were lower than 0.01 level, and the p-value of stress (0.014) was lower than 0.05 level, the results meant that ergonomics, social interaction, and team dynamics had a significant positive correlation with the well-being of Filipino online freelancers; and health condition, stress, and job insecurity had a significant negative correlation with the well-being of Filipino online freelancers. The positive correlation implied that the higher the freelancer's level of ergonomics, social interaction, and team dynamics, the higher their level of well-being. On one hand, the negative correlation implied that the lower the freelancer's level of health condition, stress, and job insecurity, the higher their level of well-being and vice versa.

Ergonomics and Well-being. Buomprisco et al. (2021) indicated that teleworking can impact psychological and physical well-being. Larrea-Araujo et al. (2021) emphasized the necessity of ergonomic chairs in workspace design, noting that these chairs provide stability, mobility, and proper posture by adjusting to users' body contours. They found that the absence of ergonomic chairs leads to significant pain, particularly in the neck and lower back. Hoffmeister et al. (2015) reported that consistent implementation of ergonomic practices reduces pain and enhances performance and well-being. Faez et al. (2021) further demonstrated that applying ergonomic principles improves both employee well-being and productivity, with better ergonomics associated with lower self-reported musculoskeletal pain and higher organizational performance. Thus, companies that promote a holistic approach to workplace ergonomics are likely to foster healthier, more productive employees.

Health Condition and Well-being. Reznick et al. (2022) noted that remote workers face various health challenges, with inadequate home office setups contributing to musculoskeletal disorders due to poor posture. Teleworkers commonly experience pain and discomfort in the hands, arms, shoulders, lower back, and neck. Barone Gibbs et al. (2021) found that remote work increased sedentariness outside of work hours and diminished physical functioning in individuals who worked "always remote." Negative physical effects of working from home include weight gain, poor sleep quality, musculoskeletal pain, increased junk food consumption, and reduced physical activity (Fontecilla Galleguillos, 2022). Stefan (2021) highlighted that remote work adversely affected multiple health aspects, including heart health, digestion, eyesight, and overall mental well-being. Subjective well-being (SWB) is directly related to health status and positively correlates with higher SWB (Ngamaba et al., 2017).

Social Interaction and Well-being. Wohrmann et al. (2021) reported that strong social relationships positively impact employees' well-being, according to their ongoing empirical observations. Whether social interactions were measured through self-reports or observer reports, a higher number of social interactions was consistently associated with greater well-being, both in the moment and overall. Higher levels of well-being were also related to conversational (depth and self-disclosure) and relational (knowing and loving one's interaction partners) aspects of social interaction quality. This study provides significant multimethod evidence supporting the link between well-being and more profound and regular social contacts (Sun et al., 2020).

Team Dynamics and Well-being. An ongoing empirical study indicates that strong social relationships positively influence employee well-being. Teleworking may heighten the risk of psychosomatic health issues if it diminishes the quality of coworker relationships (Wohrmann et al., 2021). Lunde et al. (2022) found that remote work negatively impacts mental engagement, emotional well-being, and communication among coworkers. Pulido-Martos et al. (2021) identified a strong positive correlation between workplace vigor and social support from peers and superiors. Perceived social support fosters resilience against challenges, such as telework and confinement, enhancing employee energy (Layous & Nelson-Coffey, 2020). Notably, employees' physical well-being is significantly influenced by their vigor at work.

Stress and Well-being. Tavares (2017) found that telework can contribute to job-related stressors, such as excessive workloads, looming deadlines, extended workdays, difficulty disconnecting from work, and limited leisure time. These stressors are associated with mental health issues, fatigue, and a decline in physical well-being. Similarly, Gueguen and Senik (2023) reported that fully remote employment generally harms mental health. Bogaerts et al. (2021) highlighted that workplace stress negatively affects psychological well-being, with resilience acting as a buffer against workplace verbal abuse. Anindita and Korompis (2022) identified a significant relationship between perceived stress and psychological well-being in teleworking, suggesting that telework mediates this relationship and influences well-being based on stress levels. Their findings also linked perceived stress to psychological well-being and perceived productivity.

Job Insecurity and Well-being. Job insecurity represents a significant psychological risk that adversely affects both organizational performance and employee health (Probst, 2017). Nica et al. (2016) found that job insecurity negatively impacts psychological well-being and job satisfaction, increasing psychosomatic issues and physical strains. Parlangeli et al. (2020) noted its considerable effect on the stress levels of teleworkers, while Mutambudzi et al. (2017) reported a strong correlation between job insecurity and heightened psychological distress. Various factors contribute to job insecurity, which notably raises the risk of poor mental health outcomes. De Witte et al. (2015) highlighted its negative individual consequences, including psychological contract violations and a diminished sense of control. Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) further confirmed that job insecurity detrimentally affects employees' subjective well-being.

Table 8. *Results of Pearson Correlation: Physical, Social, and Psychological Contexts of Home-based Telework and Well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers*

Variables	*R*	*P-Value*	*Interpretation*
Physical Context			
Ergonomics	0.613**	0.000	Significant
Health Condition	-0.406**	0.000	Significant
Social Context			
Social Interaction	0.699**	0.000	Significant
Team Dynamics	0.598**	0.000	Significant
Psychological Context			
Stress	-0.238*	0.014	Significant
Job Insecurity	-0.402**	0.000	Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Problem 6. The variable that best predict the Well-being of Filipino Online Freelancers

Table 9 shows that social interaction (β = 0.423), ergonomics (β = 0.273), and health condition (β = -0.123) significantly predict the well-being of Filipino online freelancers, with all p-values below 0.05. The regression equation is Y' = 1.915 + 0.423X1 + 0.273X2 - 0.123X3, where Y' represents well-being, and X1, X2, and X3 represent social interaction, ergonomics, and health condition, respectively. With an R^2 of 0.631, the model explains 63.1% of the variation in well-being is explained by a linear relationship with health condition, ergonomics, and social interaction. The F value of 4.831 (p = 0.000) confirms the model's significance. Social interaction has the strongest influence, followed by ergonomics and health condition. Social interaction, such as spending time with family, reconnecting with friends, and engaging in activities, plays a key role in well-being.

Catana et al. (2022) found that teleworking characteristics influence employee evaluations of well-being and productivity across three key groupings: individual and societal factors, technical issues, and workplace social factors. In addition, Paggi et al. (2016) identified that aspects of well-being, such as leisure time and social interaction, are precursors to effective aging. The social dynamics of coworking spaces are prioritized over physical features, indicating that Filipino freelancers seek environments conducive to interaction and collaboration. Moreover, a greater number of social interactions correlates with enhanced well-being, as does the quality of these interactions, including conversational depth and relational connections (Sun et al., 2020). This study offers substantial multimethod

evidence for the relationship between well-being and meaningful social contacts.

Table 9. *Regression Analysis of Filipino Online Freelancers' Physical, Social, and Psychological Contexts*

Variables	*Unstandardized Coefficients B*	*Std. Error*	*Standardized Coefficients Beta*	*t*	*Sig*
(Constant)	1.915	0.422		4.542	0.000
Ergonomics	0.265	0.074	0.273	3.567	0.001
Health Condition	-0.108	0.063	-0.123	-1.724	0.008
Social Interaction	0.372	0.080	0.423	4.665	0.000
Team Dynamics	0.082	0.082	0.090	0.993	0.323
Stress	-0.065	0.061	-0.076	-1.067	0.288
Job Insecurity	-0.072	0.046	-0.114	-1.572	0.119

R= .631 R2= 0.608 F Value= 4.831 p value= 0.000

Conclusions

The objective of this research study is to determine how home-based telework in physical, social, and psychological contexts influence the well-being of Filipino online freelancers. The findings contribute new insights, enhance awareness of home-based telework, and promote health practices to improve the well-being of these workers. The results indicate that Filipino online freelancers exhibit high levels of physical ergonomics and moderately high health conditions related to remote work. They maintain high levels of social interaction and team dynamics, while psychological factors such as stress and job insecurity are moderately high; overall, their well-being is high. The study emphasizes the importance of physical, social, and psychological health in participants' well-being, revealing a significant relationship between these contexts and the well-being of Filipino online freelancers, with social interaction exerting the most substantial influence on their overall well-being while working from home.

The following recommendations are based on the findings: Home-based teleworkers and online freelancers may implement ergonomics programs with adjustable equipment and proper training to optimize workstation setup for comfort and productivity. Regular physical activity and a well-arranged home office may mitigate health risks from sedentary work. Expanding social circles beyond existing networks is essential for long-term teleworkers. Strengthening social support within teams, including managers, through better communication, feedback, trust, and collaborative leadership, may also enhance well-being. Establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life may help reduce stress, as telework enhances employees' autonomy in managing stressors, thereby mitigating their detrimental health effects.

Job insecurity is a significant issue within the online freelancing sector. To mitigate the perception of job insecurity, it is essential for online clients, businesses, and organizations to implement policies aimed at safeguarding freelance workers. Establishing an international governance framework, which includes the involvement of governments, labor platforms, clients, and freelancers, is necessary for ensuring fundamental rights and protections for freelance workers. Currently, there are no policies or governing bodies in the Philippines that protect the rights of online freelancers. It would be advisable for the Philippine government to explore the creation of policies that bring online clients and freelancers into agreements that safeguard the rights of both parties, thus fostering a more secure and equitable working environment. Furthermore, future research may explore other factors influencing teleworkers' well-being and further examine the long-term impacts of physical, social, and psychological health on their well-being.

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