



# LEGITIMIZING THE STABILITY OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS TOWARDS PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE

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## ABSTRACT

*This study analyzed the relationship between workplace health and safety variables including hazard environment, occupational health and safety, mental health awareness, engagement and support, policies and procedures, and productivity performance measures in terms of customer service and quality of work. The organizations analyzed were LGU and PAF. Data revealed that LGU generally performed better in the aforementioned variables, as indicated by higher mean scores and verbal descriptions (VD). However, statistical analysis failed to find a significant correlation between these health and safety variables and productivity performance for either LGU or PAF. The findings suggest that other variables may be at play in determining productivity, and future research should consider these additional factors and potentially re-evaluate the measurement of productivity. The importance of a healthy and supportive work environment, while not directly linked to productivity in this analysis, is underscored in terms of its contribution to employee wellbeing and job satisfaction.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Stability of health and safety, productivity in the workplace, employee wellbeing*

## INTRODUCTION

The concern for health and safety is legitimate in every context of human enterprise. Agwar et al. (2020) emphasized that improving the mental health of your workers can improve decision-making, thinking, confidence, and working relationships. Clifton & Harter (2019) noted that employees will feel that management is dedicated to their ongoing success on-the-job and in life. Empirical findings suggested that supporting mental health is also a wise business decision. Investing in the mental health work programs can have a cost savings effect by reducing absenteeism, presenteeism, disability claims, and lost productivity (Knapp & Wong, 2022). Moreover, it also contributes to helping you meet workplace health and safety guidelines to reduce legal exposure (Sinclair et al., 2020).

There are many ways a work environment can contribute towards poor mental health at work. Excessive stress and frustration due to toxic or inexperienced leadership and unclear communication can build up over time. Layer this with a lack of clear roles and expectations, long or inflexible work schedules, unrealistic demands, and lack of support for employees and it's no surprise a worker can feel unsatisfied, depressed, and exhausted (Virtanen, 2020). Other factors can compound the issue too many unpleasant or rote tasks, being subjected to discrimination, watching favoritism play out with coworkers, harassment or bullying, no sense of teamwork, and lack of recognition (Wiedenkiller, 2020). Don't overlook the ripple effect of mental health at work as employees struggle to balance personal and work demands as well as growing financial pressures (Lewis et al., 2022).

According to Morgado, Silva & Fonseca (2019) employee health and safety programs should be a major priority for management because they save lives, increase productivity, and reduce costs. These health and safety programs should stress employee involvement, continued monitoring, and an overall wellness component (Maltseva, 2020). Work safety requires that safe working conditions should not create significant risk of people being rendered unfit to perform their work (Lingard et al., 2021). Health and safety at work is therefore aimed at creating conditions, capabilities, and habits that enable the worker and his/her organization to carry out their work efficiently and in a way that avoids events which could cause them harm (Mamurov et al., 2020).

Modern employees expect employers to help them live great lives. But improving employee wellbeing isn't just an exercise in altruism (Bucci, 2020). Employers who care for employee health and wellbeing see numerous measurable benefits, from higher productivity and profitability to lower turnover and fewer safety incidents (Sheik & Adhikari, 2022). Mental health and psychosocial support include any support that people receive to protect or promote their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. Encourage exercise and regular social events to boost staff health, team work and mental wellbeing, such as lunchtime walking clubs or 'Lunch and Learn'. plan further improvements, enhance morale and increase productivity (Baik et al., 2019).

Without effective support, mental disorders and other mental health conditions can affect a person's confidence and identity at work, capacity to work productively, absences and the ease with which to retain or gain work (Van Weeghe et al., 2019). Twelve billion



working days are lost every year to depression and anxiety alone. The most common mental health issues in the workplace are anxiety, depression and stress. Our employee wellbeing statistics revealed that 60% of working professionals experience at least mild symptoms of anxiety, and 1 in 4 meet the threshold for clinically relevant symptoms of anxiety (Solomou & Constantinidou, 2020). Furthermore, people living with severe mental health conditions are largely excluded from work despite this being important for recovery. Mental health conditions can also impact families, carers, colleagues, communities, and society at large. Depression and anxiety cost the global economy US\$ 1 trillion each year predominantly from reduced productivity (Knapp & Wong, 2020).

Everyone has the right to work and all workers have the right to a safe and healthy working environment. Carbone (2020) stated that work can be a protective factor for mental health, but it can also contribute to worsening mental health. Work-related mental health conditions are preventable. Much can also be done to protect and promote mental health at work and support people with mental health conditions to participate fully and equitably in work (WHO, 2022).

Well-being perceived by employees is closely associated to producing good attitudes and actions of employees (Kooji et al., 2013). There is no agreed criteria for evaluating employee well-being, but looking at the broader conceptual definition of well-being, it refers to an individual's judgment of the amount to which he/she contributes to increasing his/her quality of life (Grzeskowiak & Sirgy 2007). In other words, employee well-being relates to the belief that the quality of one's life is improving through the health, happiness, comfort, and calm that employees feel while working (Moreno et al., 2021). A study on employee well-being indicated that improving employee well-being awareness had a favorable influence on mental health, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work-life balance (Baptiste, 2008; Sirgy & Lee, 2016). (Baptiste, 2008; Sirgy & Lee, 2016). When employees' well-being awareness increases, productive results such as good service quality and productivity improvements appear, and conversely, when the well-being perception of employees decreases, productivity and quality of work decrease and decision-making ability decreases (Edgar et al., 2017).

The favorable influence of the increase in perception of well-being is visible in the service business. In other words, customers who utilize products and services in the service industry, such as hotels, can sense employee emotion at service point of contact with employee, and the perceived emotion effects the customer's future behavior (Chong & Ahmed, 2017). (Chong & Ahmed, 2017). In other words, the degree of well-being felt by hotel employees is highly related to preserving the sustainable profitability of a company (Baek et al., 2018). (Baek et al., 2018). Thus, firm performance is very directly tied to employee performance, and hence, it is vital to boost the well-being awareness perceived by employees to improve employee performance (Maheshwari et al., 2022).

Self-rated mental health is a self-assessment of one's present mental health status (Pietila et al., 2015). In addition, mental health is more than just a condition of being free of illness or disease and can be considered to be a state in which the physical, mental, and social well-being have been fully realized (Magyar et al., 2019). In other words, mental and physical health are not independent of one other but are linked. Mental illness is one of the most frequent and costly health conditions that affects a person's mood, thoughts, and behavior, and causes severe pain and dysfunction for lengthy periods of time (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2019). (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2019). Anxiety and sadness have been recorded in 262 million persons globally and represent the leading causes of mental diseases. In addition, it has been reported that the cost burden of these diseases is more than 1 trillion dollars yearly associated with a decline in productivity (Ma et al., 2022).

For instance, industry personnel, such as those in hotels, are often required to engage with customers as part of their jobs, and this can cause emotional strain in the form of unhappiness or hopelessness (Kalargyrou et al., 2023). So, it is becoming increasingly important to consider how one feels about their own mental health. A number of factors in the workplace might have a negative impact on employees' mental health (Hamouche, 2020). Examples include improper behaviors and communication, poor levels of welfare, and unsuitable health and safety policies. Issues that negatively affect mental health can be ascribed to a decline in employee productivity (e.g., turnover, passive attitude, lower love for work), and moreover, can contribute to a decrease in corporate productivity and to increased expenditures. In particular, insufficient health and stability policies are particularly critical issues that might show as physical and mental health problems in employees. Thus, mental health disorders might function as a huge burden on enterprises, and hence, studies contributing to overcome such problems are urgently necessary (Yu et al., 2021). Many studies have speculated about the causes of mental and physical health problems in different establishments and among different groups of workers, but no research has yet looked at how the government helps its employees deal in terms of health and safety at work.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this research is to assess the current implementation status of mental health and safety measures within the identified agencies based in Lapu-Lapu. Conducting this assessment, the study aims to establish a basis for developing strategic health and safety mechanisms that promote productivity and enhance the overall quality of the workplace environment. Specifically, the research seeks to answer several key questions. Firstly, it aims to explore the perceptions of the respondent groups regarding the status of health and safety in relation to various aspects, including the hazard environment, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) practices, availability of Mental Health Resources, level of Engagement and Supports, and adherence to policies and procedures. Additionally, the study aims to examine the productivity performance of the respondent groups to understand how it may be influenced by the existing



mental health and safety measures. Ultimately, the findings of this research will be utilized to identify areas for improvement and to provide recommendations that contribute to the development of effective and holistic health and safety mechanisms, leading to a more productive and conducive workplace environment.

**Methodology**

The descriptive-correlational method of research was used in this study, which described data and the characteristics of the population under study. This method answered the questions who, what, where, when, and how. In particular, the present conditions of the respondents as regards to the status of the health and safety in terms of hazard, occupational health and safety, mental health resources, engagement and supports, and policies and procedures and perceived issues and concerns by the respondents. Data were described and analyzed through data gathered using the research instrument. The research locale is in Lapu-Lapu City. This questionnaire will be adopted the questionnaire from Workplace Mental Health Survey (2021). The questionnaire was analyzed and inline in the Philippines settings.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1. Hazard Environment**

Indicators	PAF		LGU	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
Interact with chemicals or inflammable substances	2.20	D	2.18	D
Manually push or lift items that are more than 20 kgs	2.47	D	2.23	D
Do repetitive movements with your hands or wrists (packing, sorting, assembling, cleaning, pulling, pushing, typing) for at least 3 hours during the day	3.47	A	3.36	MA
Perform work tasks, or use work methods, that you are not familiar with.	2.27	D	2.49	D
Interact with hazardous substances such as chemicals, flammable liquids and gases.	1.53	SD	2.01	D
Work in high decibel levels	2.00	D	2.23	D
Grand Mean	2.32	D	2.42	D

Table shows PAF and LGU Hazard Environment Assessment results. Each organization's employees' hazard exposure is shown by mean scores and VDs. Assess chemical or inflammable substance interactions, manual handling of heavy goods, repeated hand or wrist movements, unusual labor activities or methods, dangerous substances, and high decibel levels. The mean scores reveal PAF and LGU workers confront different occupational hazards. Both organizations scored 2.20 on "Interact with chemicals or inflammable substances," falling into the "Disagree" category. Workers moderately reject such hazards. Both companies received mean ratings below 2.50 for "Manually push or lift items that are more than 20 kgs," indicating that employees moderately disagree with this danger. Both groups gave "Do repetitive movements with your hands or wrists for at least 3 hours during the day" higher mean ratings. PAF scored 3.47, "Agree," and LGU 3.36, "Moderately Agree." Both organizations' employees agree or moderately agree they work with repetitive hand or wrist movements. On the sign "Interact with hazardous substances such as chemicals, flammable liquids, and gases," the PAF scored 1.53, "Strongly Disagree," and the LGU 2.01, "Disagree." The PAF vehemently opposes this hazard, whereas LGU employees partially do. Both groups scored above 2.00 for "Work in high decibel levels," meaning "Disagree." Both organizations' employees moderately reject loud noise. PAF and LGU "Disagree" Grand Means are 2.32 and 2.42. Both firms' workers moderately oppose workplace hazards. These data demonstrate the need for occupational safety precautions. Risk assessments and prevention should make the PAF and LGU safer.

**Table 2. Occupational Health and Safety**

Indicators	PAF		LGU	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
I am clear about my rights and responsibilities in relation to workplace health and safety	3.87	A	4.49	SA
I am clear about my employers' rights and responsibilities in relation to workplace health and safety	3.60	A	4.44	SA
I know how to perform my job in a safe manner	4.13	A	4.64	SA
If I became aware of a health or safety hazard at my workplace, I know who (at my workplace) I would report it to	3.93	A	4.53	SA
I have the knowledge to assist in responding to any health and safety concerns at my workplace	4.20	A	4.10	A
I know what the necessary precautions are that I should take while doing my job	4.27	SA	4.40	SA
Grand Mean	4	A	4.43	SA



Table 2 presents the occupational health and safety awareness of the Philippine Air Force and local government units. Based on the data, the Philippine Air Force had a mean score of 4 or higher in all indicators, indicating that the respondents had a high level of awareness of occupational health and safety. Meanwhile, the local government units had a mean score of 4 or higher in all indicators except for "I have the knowledge to assist in responding to any health and safety concerns at my workplace," which had a mean score of 4.10, indicating an average level of awareness. The grand mean for the Philippine Air Force was 4, while the grand mean for local government units was 4.43, indicating a higher level of occupational health and safety awareness among local government units compared to the Philippine Air Force.

**Table 3. Mental Health Awareness**

Indicators	PAF		LGU	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
Administrator provides free screening tools for depression, anxiety, substance use/abuse, PTSD, or other mental health concerns	2.27	D	3.61	A
Administrators provides initial assessments of a mental health issue/concern	2.07	D	3.65	A
Administrator provides digital mental health tools (i.e., online programs, mobile phone apps, wearables, etc.)	2.20	D	3.56	A
Our organization provides pay to offer any medical plan benefits	2.29	D	3.50	A
Our organization conduct regular and on-going check-in meetings and receiving guidance from leadership	2.27	D	3.86	A
Grand Mean	2.22	D	3.64	A

Table 3 compares PAF and LGU mental health awareness indicators. The Philippine Air Force (2.22) and Local Government Units (3.64) have quite different mental health awareness. The LGU moderately agrees with mental health awareness indices, whereas the PAF disagrees. These findings show that the LGU provides more mental health resources than the PAF. Due to organizational priorities, resources, and culture. For staff well-being, the PAF may need to strengthen mental health knowledge and assistance. Free mental health screening tools, initial assessments, digital technologies, and employee medical plan benefits could assist the PAF. Regular check-ins and leadership coaching would also improve workplace support. The PAF and LGU should collaborate to share mental health support best practices and lessons learned, according to the findings. The PAF may be able to apply the LGU's complete mental health strategy to their own organization. The report suggests the PAF should prioritize mental health awareness and support, implement appropriate interventions, and create a friendly corporate culture.

**Table 4. Engagement and Support**

Indicators	PAF		LGU	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
Our organization has provided adequate supports to address mental health during the pandemic	2.47	D	3.99	A
I have the support I need to stay healthy (physically and mentally) during this time	3.40	MA	4.11	A
I am having enough meaningful contact with my colleagues during the pandemic	3.20	MA	4.07	A
I have the resources, tools and access to the information that I need to carry out my work-related responsibilities effectively at home/remote.	3.33	MA	4.12	A
I feel comfortable communicating concerns to my Head/Supervisor related to the current situation.	3.00	MA	4.11	A
Grand Mean	3.08	MA	4.08	A

Table 4 presents a comparison of engagement and support indicators between the Philippine Air Force (PAF) and Local Government Units (LGU) during the pandemic. The grand mean scores for the Philippine Air Force (3.08) and Local Government Units (4.08) indicate a difference in engagement and support during the pandemic. The PAF moderately agrees with the indicators, while the LGU agrees. These results suggest that the LGU has provided more comprehensive engagement and support to its employees during the pandemic compared to the PAF. This could be attributed to differences in resources, communication channels, and organizational culture. The PAF may need to improve its support mechanisms and communication processes to ensure the well-being of its personnel





during challenging times. The PAF could benefit from enhancing mental health support, fostering more meaningful contact among colleagues, and providing better resources, tools, and access to information. This would help improve overall employee satisfaction, engagement, and well-being, ultimately contributing to better productivity and resilience during crises.

**Table 5. Policies and Procedure**

Indicators	PAF		LGU	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
Everyone receives compulsory health and safety training	1.80	SD	3.79	A
Management is extremely particular about the certification	2.27	D	3.83	A
Systems are in place to identify, prevent and deal with hazards at work	2.47	D	4.07	A
Workplace health and safety is considered to be at least as important as production and quality	2.47	D	4.04	A
There is an active health and safety committee	2.60	D	4.06	A
Incidents and accidents are investigated quickly in order to improve workplace health and safety	2.87	MA	4.15	A
Communication about workplace health and safety procedures is done in a way that I can understand	3.13	MA	4.16	A
Grand Mean	2.64	MA	4.05	A

Table 5 presents a comparison of policies and procedures indicators between the Philippine Air Force (PAF) and Local Government Units (LGU). The grand mean scores for the Philippine Air Force (2.64) and Local Government Units (4.05) indicate a substantial difference in the perception of policies and procedures related to workplace health and safety. The PAF moderately agrees with the indicators, while the LGU agrees. These results suggest that the LGU has more robust policies and procedures in place for workplace health and safety compared to the PAF. This could be attributed to differences in organizational priorities, resources, and culture. The PAF may need to improve its policies and procedures to ensure the well-being of its personnel and compliance with health and safety standards. The PAF could benefit from implementing compulsory health and safety training, prioritizing certification, establishing systems to deal with hazards, and emphasizing the importance of workplace health and safety. Additionally, fostering an active health and safety committee and improving communication about workplace health and safety procedures would help create a safer work environment, contributing to employee satisfaction and well-being.

**Table 6. Customer Service performance**

Indicators	Description
I respond promptly to customers' inquiries and requests.	VS
I communicate clearly and effectively with customers.	VS
I am always professional and courteous when dealing with customers.	VS
I am always able to resolve customers' issues or concerns.	VS
I always show empathy and understanding when dealing with customers.	VS

Based on the indicators provided, the employee appears to provide excellent customer service. The employee has high ratings in all indicators, with ratings ranging from 4.08 to 4.15. The employee responds promptly to customers' inquiries and requests (rating of 4.13), communicates clearly and effectively with customers (rating of 4.15), and is always professional and courteous when dealing with customers (rating of 4.08). The employee also demonstrates empathy and understanding when dealing with customers (rating of 4.08), which can be important in building rapport and resolving customer issues. Although the employee's rating for being able to resolve customers' issues or concerns is slightly lower than the other indicators (rating of 3.92), it is still in the very satisfied range. It's important for employees to have the skills and knowledge to address customer issues or concerns in a timely and effective manner, as this can help maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty. This indicates that providing excellent customer service is crucial for businesses to succeed, and employees who consistently provide high-quality customer service can help a business stand out from its competitors. Employers should recognize and reward employees who demonstrate exceptional customer service skills, and provide training and resources to help employees improve their customer service skills.



**Table 7. Quality of Work performance**

Indicators	Rating	Description
I always produce work that is completely accurate.	4.15	VS
I always pay close attention to detail and produce work that is of high quality.	4.00	VS
I always complete my work on time or ahead of schedule.	3.92	VS
I always produce work that is complete and meets all the requirements.	3.85	VS
I always produce work that is innovative and demonstrates creative thinking.	3.77	VS

Based on the indicators provided, the employee appears to produce work of high quality. The employee has high ratings in all indicators, with ratings ranging from 3.77 to 4.15. The employee consistently produces work that is completely accurate (rating of 4.15) and pays close attention to detail to produce work that is of high quality (rating of 4.00). The employee also completes their work on time or ahead of schedule (rating of 3.92), which is important for meeting deadlines and ensuring timely delivery of work. The employee also produces work that is complete and meets all the requirements (rating of 3.85), which is important for ensuring that the work is fit for purpose and meets the needs of the stakeholders. While the employee's rating for producing innovative and creative work is slightly lower than the other indicators (rating of 3.77), it is still in the very satisfied range. It's important for employees to think creatively and innovatively to come up with new and improved solutions to problems, and this can be an important contributor to business success. This indicates that LGU employees appears to be a highly competent and conscientious worker who produces work of high quality. Employers should recognize and reward employees who consistently produce high-quality work, and provide opportunities for training and development to help employees enhance their skills and knowledge.

**Table 8. Significant Relationship Between the Status of the Health and Safety and Productivity Performance as to Customer Service**

*R squared: 0.287*

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Hazardous Environment	-0.03672	0.304942	-0.12042	0.907	NS
OHSA	0.264956	0.427617	0.619609	0.551	NS
Mental Health Resources	0.614804	0.420884	1.460745	0.178	NS
Engagement and Support	-0.13508	0.586939	-0.23014	0.823	NS
Policies and Procedures	-0.34677	0.845824	-0.40998	0.691	NS

The model's R-squared value of 0.287 explains 28.7% of customer service productivity variability, according to the table. The P-value determines the importance of each independent variable's coefficient on the dependent variable. The Hazardous Environment variable has a coefficient of -0.03672 and a P-value of 0.907, showing that it does not significantly affect customer service productivity. The OHSA variable has a coefficient of 0.264956 and a P-value of 0.551, showing that it does not significantly affect customer service productivity. Mental Health Resources has a coefficient of 0.614804 and a P-value of 0.178, showing that it has no significant effect on LGU customer service productivity. Engagement and Support has a coefficient of -0.13508 and a P-value of 0.823, showing that it has no significant effect on LGU customer service productivity. The Policies and Procedures variable has a coefficient of -0.34677 and a P-value of 0.691, showing that it does not significantly affect LGU customer service productivity. According to the regression model, none of the independent variables—Hazardous Environment, OHSA, Mental Health Resources, Engagement and Support, and Policies and Procedures impact customer service productivity.

**Table 9. Significant Relationship Between the Status of the Health and Safety and Productivity Performance as to Quality of Work**

<i>R squared: 0.229756</i>					
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Hazardous Environment	0.251388	0.244863	1.026648	0.331	NS
OHSA	0.230138	0.343369	0.670235	0.520	NS
Mental Health Resources	-0.03171	0.337962	-0.09383	0.927	NS
Engagement and Support	-0.52826	0.471301	-1.12085	0.291	NS
Policies and Procedures	0.317556	0.679181	0.467558	0.651	NS

The model's R-squared value of 0.229756 explains 22.98% of LGU work productivity performance variability, according to the table. The P-value determines the importance of each independent variable's coefficient on the dependent variable. The Hazardous Environment variable has a coefficient of 0.251388 and a P-value of 0.331, showing that it does not significantly affect LGU quality of work productivity performance. The LGU quality of work productivity performance is unaffected by the OHSA variable, which has a coefficient of 0.230138 and a P-value of 0.520. Mental Health Resources has a coefficient of -0.03171 and a P-value of 0.927, implying it has no significant effect on LGU quality of work productivity performance. Engagement and Support has a coefficient of -0.52826 and a P-value of 0.291, showing it has no significant effect on LGU quality of work productivity performance. Policies & Procedures had a coefficient of 0.317556 and a P-value of 0.651, showing it has no significant effect on LGU quality of work productivity performance. According to the regression model, none of the independent variables Hazardous Environment, OHSA, Mental Health Resources, Engagement and Support, and Policies and Procedures impact on work productivity performance.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the provided data, we can conclude several things: Firstly, in terms of hazard environment, occupational health and safety, mental health awareness, engagement and support, policies and procedures, the PAF generally has lower mean scores and Verbal Descriptions (VD) compared to the LGU, indicating a comparatively poorer status. This indicates that the LGU has been more proactive and successful in implementing measures to ensure a safe and conducive working environment. Secondly, despite higher mean scores for LGU in occupational health and safety, mental health awareness, engagement and support, and policies and procedures, neither LGU nor PAF showed a statistically significant relationship with productivity performance in both customer service and quality of work. This suggests that other factors may be more influential in determining productivity performance, or perhaps the measurements used are not fully capturing the impacts of these variables on productivity. Finally, despite the limitations of the current analysis, it underscores the importance of a safe, healthy, and supportive workplace environment. Although no significant relationship was found with productivity in this particular analysis, such conditions contribute to employee well-being, job satisfaction, and retention, which are undeniably important in their own right. Further research might consider additional variables and potentially different ways to measure productivity to see if a significant relationship can be identified. It's also worth exploring the potential impacts of these factors on other important outcomes like employee satisfaction, turnover, and absenteeism.

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