

The impact of LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services on their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance: A basis for developing feedback-based wellness programs

Heaven Alexis B. Coria

heavencoria25@gmail.com

Laguna State Polytechnic University, Sta. Cruz Campus, Laguna, Philippines, 4009

Abstract

This study examined the impact of LGU Liliw employees' perceived access to mental health support services (i.e., accessibility, availability, adequacy, and awareness of services) on their stress, quality of life, and work performance from the last quarter of 2025 to the first quarter of 2026. It tested the hypothesis stating that no significant relationships exist among these variables. A cross-sectional, quantitative design was used, involving randomly selected regular and casual employees with at least one year of service. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), the WHOQOL-BREF, and ICF Performance Ratings, and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that mental health services were only slightly accessible, with an overall weighted mean of 2.14, having notable gaps in awareness and service consistency. Employees experienced moderate stress with an overall weighted mean of 18.23, characterized by higher perceived helplessness than coping capacity. Despite this, respondents reported a generally good quality of life, with an overall weighted mean of 67.40, strong social relationships, but relatively weaker physical health. Work performance remained consistently very satisfactory with an overall mean of 4.19 across all employees. Statistical analysis reveals that access to mental health services had no significant relationship with stress and work performance, indicating that these outcomes are more strongly influenced by organizational conditions, social support, and personal coping mechanisms. Access to these services is observed to have minimal impact on quality of life, with only a weak influence observed in physical health, indicating that broader life and workplace conditions play a larger role. Overall, while employees demonstrate good resilience and maintain high performance, they remain at risk due to moderate stress and uneven wellness support. These findings highlight the need for a comprehensive, feedback-based wellness program that goes beyond improving service access and instead adopts a holistic, responsive approach to employee well-being.

Keywords: Mental health support services; perceived stress; feedback-based wellness program

1. Introduction

Mental health has emerged as a central pillar of public welfare and an essential concern in public administration. With global recognition that psychological well-being influences productivity, community resilience, and human development, governments are increasingly called upon to integrate mental health within local governance systems. In the Philippine context, Republic Act No. 11036, or the Philippine Mental Health Act of 2018, mandates that mental health services be accessible at all levels of government.

Tapnio et al. (2025) cited that as local government units are increasingly recognizing the importance of employee mental health in maintaining effective public service delivery amidst the new landscape of

economic, cultural, political and environmental challenges, LGU employees are increasingly facing heightened work demands brought about by expanding administrative responsibilities, increased public expectations, and the continuing pressure to deliver efficient and transparent services. These conditions have intensified stress levels among employees, making mental health support a pressing concern rather than a secondary consideration.

Local Government Unit (LGU) employees play a critical role in delivering public services that uphold community welfare, particularly during times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly intensified the demands placed upon these workers, amplifying existing stressors and revealing critical gaps in mental health support systems. As frontline responders and administrative leaders, many LGU personnel were required to operate under extreme conditions including limited resources, extended work hours, and continuous exposure to health risks. These circumstances placed considerable strain on their emotional and psychological resilience (Tapnio et al., 2025).

In the post-pandemic period, LGU employees continue to experience elevated levels of occupational stress, often leading to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and diminished job satisfaction. These mental health challenges not only compromise individual well-being but also negatively affect productivity and the quality of public service delivery. Employees in leadership and frontline roles remain particularly vulnerable due to persistent workloads, tight deadlines, and frequent, emotionally charged interactions with the public. Leaders bear the burden of complex decision-making responsibilities and organizational accountability, while frontline personnel face the physical and emotional strain of service implementation.

The cumulative effect of these pressures substantially increases the risk of psychological distress. Recent studies have highlighted the association between high job demands in public-facing roles and increased levels of emotional exhaustion, reduced psychological well-being, and greater intentions to leave the job (Molina & Padilla, 2023). Accordingly, there is a growing consensus regarding the urgent need to strengthen workplace mental health frameworks, particularly for employees in high-stress roles. Such initiatives are essential to fostering resilience, improving job satisfaction, and sustaining the long-term viability of public service delivery (Zacher & Rudolph, 2022).

Although other researchers had examined general occupational stress within the public sector, there remains a notable gap in the literature addressing the specific mental health needs of LGU employees in the Philippine context. Current interventions often lack specificity and fail to account for the unique and contextual challenges faced by this workforce, including stress and fatigue, limited wellbeing support, and chronic resource limitations.

Liliw, a third-class municipality, is grappling with the realities faced by many Local Government Units (LGUs): limited access to mental health professionals, inadequate community awareness, and the absence of relevant, context-specific psychosocial support and feedback-based wellness programs to improve employees' quality of life and alleviate stress. These gaps pose significant implications for both residents and municipal employees, affecting well-being, productivity, and overall quality of life, particularly in environments where access to mental health support and institutional mechanisms remains limited (World Health Organization, 2024).

The study is also timely as LGU Liliw continues to strengthen its workforce and organizational performance. Understanding the current state of employees' perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance provides an opportunity to intervene early and prevent burnout, disengagement, and declining productivity. The findings can inform the immediate development of a feedback-based wellness program that is responsive to present needs rather than relying on generalized or outdated approaches.

Furthermore, increased openness to discussing mental health in professional settings creates an environment conducive to honest feedback and meaningful employee participation. Capturing these insights now ensures that wellness interventions are grounded in current realities and can be implemented while organizational momentum toward employee-centered initiatives is strong. Overall, conducting this study at this point in time is crucial to ensuring that LGU Liliw adopts a proactive, evidence-based approach to mental health support, safeguarding employee quality of life while sustaining high-quality public service.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the distinct mental health challenges encountered by LGU Liliw employees, from the assessment of their access to mental health support services and its impact to their level of stress, quality of life and their work performance. The findings are intended to propose the development of a feedback-based wellness program designed to enhance institutional psychological support systems, improve employee well-being, reduce their stress, and ensure that LGU personnel can continue delivering essential services with resilience, effectiveness, and sustained motivation.

1.1. Background of the Study

Workplace mental health has become a critical concern in organizational and human resource research due to its significant influence on employee stress levels, quality of life, and work performance. Mental health challenges in the workplace are often linked to excessive workloads, role ambiguity, emotional labor, and limited access to psychological support services. When these factors remain unaddressed, they can lead to increased stress, burnout, reduced productivity, and diminished quality of service delivery (World Health Organization: WHO, 2024).

Studies consistently show that perceived stress among employees negatively affects both quality of life and job performance. According to Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress, stress arises when individuals perceive that the demands placed upon them exceed their coping resources, including organizational support systems. Empirical research confirms that employees who experience high stress levels report lower job satisfaction, impaired concentration, and decreased work efficiency (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). These outcomes highlight the importance of accessible mental health support services in mitigating workplace stress.

Access to mental health support services plays a crucial role in promoting employee quality of life. Perceived access to counseling, psychological services, and wellness programs has been found to significantly reduce stress and enhance emotional resilience among workers (LaMontagne et al., 2014). Furthermore, organizational support theory suggests that when employees believe their organization values their wellbeing, they are more likely to demonstrate improved work performance, commitment, and engagement (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

In the public sector, particularly within local government units (LGUs), employees face distinct stressors associated with public accountability, administrative workload, and direct service to diverse communities. Research on government employees indicates that prolonged exposure to these demands, combined with limited mental health resources, can contribute to heightened stress and reduced wellbeing (Kim et al., 2022). Despite the implementation of national mental health policies in the Philippines, empirical studies focusing on employees' actual experiences and perceptions of mental health service accessibility within LGUs remain limited.

The passage of Republic Act No. 11036 in 2018 marked a milestone in Philippine mental health policy, mandating the integration of mental health promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery services into the public health and local governance systems. However, many municipalities remain unprepared to operationalize the law due to inadequate resources, a lack of mental health structures, and limited awareness among local officials and constituents.

Local government employees are essential in ensuring effective governance and public service delivery. However, existing studies on LGU personnel in the Philippines have largely focused on job satisfaction, work-life balance, and organizational commitment, with less emphasis on the accessibility of mental health support and its direct relationship with stress, quality of life, and work performance. This gap suggests the need for localized, evidence-based research that captures employees' perspectives and contextual realities.

Given these considerations, examining the impact of LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services on their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance is both relevant and necessary. Understanding these relationships will provide a strong empirical basis for crafting a feedback-

based wellness program that is responsive to employees' actual needs. Such a program can improve employee quality of life, enhance performance, and sustain the delivery of quality public service, making this study a valuable contribution to public administration and organizational psychology research.

In Liliw, Laguna, these challenges are evident. Government employees, and ultimately residents, have limited access to mental health care, typically requiring travel to nearby cities for psychiatric or psychological services. Municipal employees face increasing workloads and psychosocial stressors, yet receive inadequate institutional support. The absence of a local wellness system contributes to underreported mental health concerns, reduced work performance, and unaddressed community psychosocial needs.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the distinct mental health challenges encountered by LGU Liliw employees, from the assessment of their access to mental health support services and its impact on their level of stress, quality of life, and work performance. The findings propose the development of a feedback-based wellness program to enhance institutional psychological support systems, improve employee well-being, reduce stress, and ensure that LGU personnel can continue delivering essential services with resilience, effectiveness, and sustained motivation. Furthermore, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on workplace mental health within local government settings. It also aims to provide evidence-based insights that may guide organizational policies and future wellness initiatives for LGU employees.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), Perceived Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), and Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001). Together, these theories provide a comprehensive explanation of how employees' assessment of access to mental health support services influences their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance.

1.2.1. Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping posits that stress is not merely a result of external demands but arises from an individual's cognitive appraisal of their ability to cope with those demands using available resources. In this study, LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services represents a critical coping resource. When employees perceive mental health support services as accessible and adequate, they are more likely to appraise work-related demands as manageable, resulting in lower perceived stress. Conversely, limited or inaccessible support services may intensify stress perceptions, negatively affecting quality of life and performance.

1.2.2. Perceived Organizational Support Theory

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) Theory asserts that employees develop beliefs regarding the extent to which their organization values their contributions and cares about their quality of life. Access to mental health support services is a tangible indicator of an organization's concern for employee welfare. In the context of this study, employees' assessment of such access influences their quality of life and work attitudes. Higher perceived organizational support is expected to enhance quality of life, reduce stress, and promote positive work behaviors, including improved performance and commitment.

1.2.3. Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model

The JD-R Model explains how job demands (e.g., workload, emotional labor, public accountability) and job resources (e.g., mental health support services, wellness programs) interact to influence employee

outcomes. According to this model, mental health support services function as job resources that buffer the negative effects of job demands on stress and burnout while fostering wellbeing and motivation. In LGU settings, where employees frequently encounter high demands, adequate access to mental health support can sustain quality of life and enhance work performance.

1.2.4. Integration of Theories in the Study

Integrating these theories, the framework proposes that LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services directly influences their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance. Perceived stress is a psychological response shaped by both individual appraisal and organizational resources, while quality of life and work performance are key outcomes of effective coping and organizational support. The findings of this study will serve as the empirical basis for crafting a feedback-based wellness program aimed at strengthening mental health resources, reducing stress, enhancing quality of life, and promoting employee well-being within LGU Liliw.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the assumption that employees' perceptions of organizational support, particularly access to mental health support services, influence their psychological experiences and work-related outcomes. The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services as the independent variable and their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance as the dependent variables. The framework also highlights the role of study findings in serving as a basis for crafting a feedback-based wellness program.

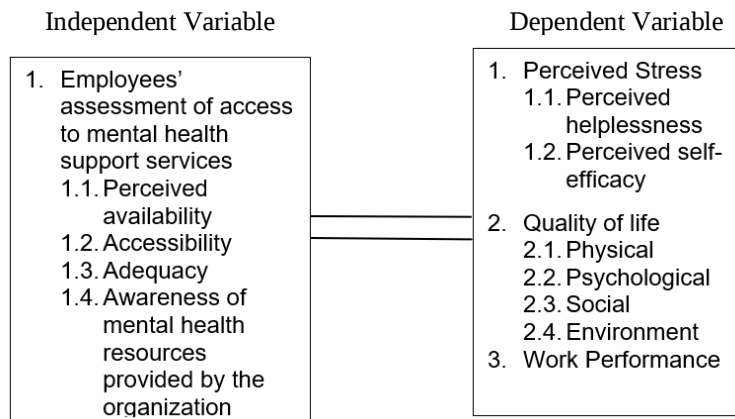


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

Through this framework, the study posits that the independent variable, employees' assessment of access to mental health support services, refers to their perceived availability, accessibility, adequacy, and awareness of mental health resources provided by the organization. This assessment reflects how employees evaluate existing support mechanisms within LGU Liliw.

The dependent variables include perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance. Perceived stress refers to employees' appraisal of work-related pressures and their ability to cope with job demands. Quality of life encompasses physical, social, environmental and psychological states that contribute to overall mental health and job satisfaction. Work performance pertains to employees' effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of task accomplishment in fulfilling their roles within the organization.

The study's results are expected to provide empirical evidence to inform the development of a feedback-based wellness program. This program is conceptualized as an output of the study, utilizing employees' feedback and identified needs to improve mental health support systems, promote employee quality of life, and enhance work performance within LGU Liliw.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to quantitatively assess the level of access of the LGU Liliw Employees to Mental Health Support Services and its impact on their stress level, quality of life, and work performance. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the level of LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services in terms of:
 - Perceived availability,
 - Accessibility,
 - Adequacy,
 - Awareness of mental health resources provided by the organization?
- What is the LGU Liliw employees' level of stress in terms of:
 - Perceived helplessness,
 - Perceived self-efficacy?
- What is the LGU Liliw employees' level of quality of life in terms of:
 - Physical,
 - Psychological,
 - Social,
 - Environment?
- What is the LGU Liliw employees' level of work performance?
- Is there a significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their level of stress?
- Is there a significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their quality of life?
- Is there a significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their work performance?
- What feedback-based wellness program can be proposed based on the result of the study?

1.5. Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their level of stress.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their quality of life.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their work performance.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are of substantial significance as it examines the relationship between Local Government Unit (LGU) Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and its impact on their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance. In the public sector, where employees are often exposed to high workloads, emotional labor, and community-driven demands, understanding how mental health support systems influence employee outcomes is crucial to sustaining

effective, responsive governance.

For LGU Liliw Employees - The findings of this study will help give voice to their experiences regarding the availability, accessibility, and adequacy of mental health support services. By identifying how these services affect stress levels, quality of life, and job performance, the study can encourage greater awareness of mental health concerns in the workplace and reduce stigma associated with seeking psychological support. Ultimately, this study is important in promoting a proactive, data-driven approach to employee wellness in LGU Liliw, recognizing that mentally healthy employees are essential to delivering quality public service and achieving organizational effectiveness.

For LGU Liliw Administrators and Policymakers - This research will provide evidence-based insights to guide decision-making on employee welfare and human resource management. The results will serve as a concrete basis for crafting a feedback-based wellness program that directly addresses employees' needs, promotes resilience, enhances productivity, and fosters a supportive, mentally healthy work environment.

For the Field of Organizational Psychology and Public Administration - The study contributes to existing literature by highlighting the role of mental health support accessibility within local government settings, which are often underrepresented in mental health research. It underscores the importance of integrating employee feedback into wellness program design to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.

For Policymakers and Development Planners - The research may offer a feedback-based mental health support program contextualized for the LGU Liliw Employees' mental health needs that they can benchmark. The study showcases how evidence-based and feedback-driven approaches can strengthen community health structures at the grassroots level.

For Future Researchers - The study serves as a foundational reference for investigations on mental health in local governance contexts. Its methodological approach may guide subsequent studies involving contextualized wellness programs, mental health service integration, or psychosocial support in rural settings.

1.7. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study examines the impact of LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services on their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance. The respondents are randomly selected regular and casual employees of the Local Government Unit of Liliw who have been employed for at least 1 year during the period of data collection, regardless of department or position.

The study focuses on LGU Liliw Employees' perceived access to mental health support services in terms of availability, accessibility, adequacy, and awareness, which will be measured through a researcher-made questionnaire. Perceived stress and quality of life are measured using standardized self-report instruments to capture employees' subjective experiences. Their work performance will be measured through their Fiscal Year 2025 rating in the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF). The research adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional design, with data gathered at a single point in time and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods to determine relationships among variables. The study's results serve as the basis for crafting a feedback-based wellness program tailored to the identified needs of LGU Liliw employees.

Several limitations are acknowledged in this study. The reliance on self-reported data may result in response bias due to social desirability, recall errors, or personal interpretation of standardized self-report items, despite assurances of confidentiality. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between access to mental health support services and employee outcomes, allowing only for the identification of associations. In addition, the study measures employees' perceptions of access to mental health services rather than the objective availability or actual utilization of such services.

External factors such as personal life circumstances, health conditions, and socio-economic influences are not controlled for and may affect perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance.

Furthermore, while the respondents are randomly selected, the possibility of non-response bias cannot be entirely eliminated, as those who choose to participate may differ in meaningful ways from those who do not. In addition, the reliance on the Fiscal Year 2025 IPCRF ratings as a measure of work performance may not fully capture all dimensions of employee productivity, as such evaluations may be influenced by supervisor subjectivity or organizational standards. Lastly, temporal factors, such as workload variations or organizational changes during the data collection period, may have influenced respondents' perceptions, which are not fully accounted for in the study. Finally, since the study is limited to LGU Liliw, the findings may not be generalizable to other local government units or organizations with different contexts and resource capacities.

1.8. Review of Related Literature and Studies

This chapter synthesizes current literature and empirical research directly related to the study. The review points out empirical gaps that the present study fills.

1.8.1. Related Literature

In recent years, a growing body of literature has examined the intricate relationship between employment types and mental health outcomes. While, in a complementary disposition, Ervin et al. (2025) demonstrated that cumulative exposure to job insecurity predicts subsequent increases in depressive and anxiety symptoms. Their emphasis on the detrimental effects of repeated short-term contracts compared to single, short-lived episodes underscores the need to screen not only for current employment status but also for a history of job instability. Furthermore, Chopra, as cited by Chen et al. (2022), emphasized that evidence from developing countries highlights similar concerns, showing that workplace stress is associated with increased risk of mental health problems, which, in turn, adversely affects productivity and emotional wellbeing.

Additionally, Pires et al. (2025) further reinforced the established link between perceived job insecurity and poor mental health, suggesting that coping resources and social support can modulate these effects. Her recommendations for organizational and policy interventions highlight the role of local governance in these dynamics. As there are three categories of government employment status, which include permanent-regular, casual, and job order, the status of employment that an individual possesses poses a significant impact on their economic security and thus gravely affects their mental health quality.

In light of these findings, Liu et al. (2025) specifically highlighted the significant mental health disparities between permanent and contractual workers. The study revealed that contractual workers experienced increased anxiety and depressive symptoms, driven largely by income shocks, limited social protection, and restricted access to health services. Additionally, Lundqvist et al. (2025) found that occupation type and employment status are associated with distinct clinical presentations.

Specifically, those in manual and low-autonomy occupations exhibit a higher prevalence of somatic-presenting depression and anxiety, while professional occupations display more instances of burnout and stress-related disorders. This underscores the importance of considering employment type as a factor that affects stress and quality of life, and the development of contextualized government and organizational programs that may alleviate their stress and improve their quality of life.

Theorists of organizational behavior argue that when employees perceive their workplace as supportive of mental health needs, they are better able to cope with stress and sustain performance levels (Job Demands–Resources Model, 2023, as cited by Laud et al., 2025). This model posits that job resources, including organizational support structures, mitigate the adverse effects of job demands, including but not limited to workload or emotional strain; thus, influencing wellbeing and work engagement (Laud et al., 2025). Ultimately, within public service environments, where employees often face heavy workloads and direct community pressures, accessible mental health support services have been discussed as significant

organizational resources that contribute to positive work and life outcomes (Manansala, 2025).

These factors and the systemic gaps in the delivery and provision of relevant and fitting mental health services, intensified by limited access, staff shortages, and persistent social and cultural stigma, create conditions where individuals are left to survive the psychological burdens on their own. In such environments, everyday pressures from work, family, cultural, and community demands can accrue without adequate support, aggravating vulnerability to adverse mental health outcomes. This implication stresses the importance of also examining stress as a critical factor in understanding individuals' psychological experiences, thereby situating it as a key focus in the review of related literature.

Lazarus and Folkman, as cited by the World Health Organization (2022), asserted that stress has long been theorized as a psychological and physiological response to demands that challenge or outstrip an individual's normal adaptive capacities. Early stress theories focused on stress as a stimulus or response; however, modern perspectives emphasize stress as a cognitive evaluation process. Within this framework, perceived stress refers to the degree to which individuals perceive their situations as unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overwhelming. This perception may influence an individual's emotional and behavioral responses to daily challenges.

Perceived stress is inherently subjective and mirrors how adults interpret, navigate, and respond to environmental demands rather than the objective presence of stressors. Cohen et al., as noted by the American Psychological Association (2025), found that perceived stress captures the psychological meaning of stressors, making it a stronger predictor of physical and mental health outcomes than event-based stress measures. This concept is particularly pertinent in adulthood, where individuals simultaneously manage personal, occupational, familial, financial, and social responsibilities.

As perceived stress is ascertained as an individual's subjective evaluation of how much stressors exceed their capacity and ability to cope, frequently leading to emotional strain and performance declines, international studies show that workplace stressors including but not limited to high job demands, role ambiguity and conflict, and inadequate support, are considerably associated with poor mental health outcomes and diminished productivity (Hu et al., 2025).

Presently, the most widely used instrument for assessing perceived stress is the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) developed by Cohen et al. The PSS measures the degree to which individuals perceive their lives as stressful over the previous month. It has been validated across diverse adult populations and cultural contexts worldwide, revealing strong reliability and construct validity (Lee, 2012, as cited by Ferreira et al., 2026).

Exploring the dynamics of stress, among the prominent and durable theories that explains stress and coping is the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping. It posits that stress results from the interaction between the individual and its environment, mediated by cognitive evaluation and coping processes (Lazarus and Folkman as cited by Kaveh et al., 2023). Adults first evaluate whether an event is threatening (primary appraisal) and then assess whether they possess sufficient resources to cope (secondary appraisal). When perceived coping resources are inadequate, perceived stress upsurges.

Another foundational theory that explains the interplay of factors that affect stress is the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. It describes perceived stress as a reaction to the perceived and anticipated threat or loss of valued resources, including time, perceived power, and relative energy, money, health, and social supports and relationships (Hobfoll as cited by Farkash et al., 2022). In adulthood, when individuals juggle multiple roles, cumulative resource loss may lead to prolonged perceived stress. Hobfoll et al. (2018) highlighted that prolonged exposure to stressors without adequate resource recovery and time allowance for recovery leads to stress accumulation and burnout.

Thus, chronic perceived stress has been linked to allostatic load, referring to the cumulative physiological burden of repeated stress responses (McEwen as cited by Palix et al., 2025). This research shows that adults with persistently high perceived stress exhibit dysregulation in cardiovascular, metabolic, and immune systems, which increases vulnerability to physical illness and psychological disorders.

Moreover, financial stressors, including debt, income instability, and economic insecurity, are consistently

associated with heightened perceived stress among adults. Research indicates that financial strain contributes to feelings of uncertainty and loss of control, key components of perceived stress (Ryu et al., 2022). Family-related demands significantly influence perceived stress in adulthood. Parenting stress, caregiving for elderly family members, and marital conflict are strongly associated with elevated perceived stress (Rusu et al., 2022). Caregivers, in particular, report sustained stress due to emotional demands, time constraints, and limited personal resources.

Social support, however, is a well-documented protective factor against perceived stress. Adults with strong emotional and instrumental support networks experience lower stress even in high-demand situations (Manansala, 2025). Conversely, social isolation and interpersonal conflict exacerbate perceived stress by reducing coping resources. While individual differences such as neuroticism, low self-efficacy, and maladaptive cognitive styles (e.g., rumination) are associated with higher perceived stress. Emotional regulation and mindfulness have been shown to buffer perceived stress by improving cognitive appraisal and reducing emotional reactivity (Brandt et al., 2022).

Perceived stress is a key factor affecting mental health outcomes. The existing literature stresses that it is not simply the presence of stressors, but how these stressors are perceived, that shapes psychological wellbeing. Higher levels of perceived stress have been constantly associated with heightened risks of anxiety, depression, and diminished overall sense of wellbeing. Thus, studying perceived stress provides an essential framework for understanding differences in mental health outcomes and emphasizes its role as a substantial predictor of mental and psychological distress.

As perceived stress reflects an individual's cognitive appraisal of life demands exceeding available coping resources. Studies in diverse occupational groups confirm that heightened stress is inversely related to quality of life. For instance, research using WHOQOL-BREF showed that workers with higher job demands and lower social support reported significantly elevated stress levels, which were associated with poorer outcomes across physical health, psychological wellbeing, social relationships, and environmental domains of quality of life (Rusli et al., as cited by Mahirah et al., 2022). This indicates that perceived stress not only influences emotional functioning but also affects broader life satisfaction and wellbeing.

1.8.2. Related Studies

Maravilla et al. (2021) critically reviewed the implementation challenges of the Philippine Mental Health Act, documenting uneven rollout across local governments, insufficient resources, and persistent access gaps especially in rural areas. The article argues that implementation requires local operational plans, clear service pathways, and municipal-level capacity building. These findings imply that the effectiveness of the Philippine Mental Health Act is greatly dependent on the capacity and readiness of LGUs to operationalize its provisions.

The imbalanced rollout and persisting access gaps imply that national-level policies alone are insufficient without resilient local implementation mechanisms. This underscores the need for LGUs to develop contextual operational plans, establish clear and easily accessible mental health service pathways, and invest in capacity-building mechanisms among municipal health workers and service providers for an even and all-encompassing roll-out.

Moreover, the identified resource limitations and rural access discrepancies highlight the importance of equitable resource allocation and distribution, inter-agency collaboration, and sustained funding to ensure that mental health services reach the underserved employee and manpower populations. Without these targeted efforts, the objectives and tenets of the law to provide inclusive and accessible mental healthcare may remain unmet, particularly in geographically isolated and resource disadvantaged areas.

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unmet, particularly in geographically isolated and resource-disadvantaged areas.

Puyat et al. (2021), in their study entitled "Rising prevalence of depression and widening sociodemographic disparities in depressive symptoms among Filipino youth: findings from two large nationwide cross-sectional surveys," investigated depressive symptoms among Filipino young adults aged 18–35. Interestingly, findings exhibited that younger age groups presented significantly higher emotional distress and lower help-seeking behavior compared to older adults.

In another study conducted by Teng-Calleja et al. (2024), they examined how Filipino workers experienced job demands and resources approximately one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, using the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) framework. The key stressors comprised health/safety concerns, excessive workloads, role ambiguity, and lack of support, while resources included social support and organizational coping structures. This local evidence underscores that psychosocial risks at work (workload, job demands, and lack of control) are very real in the Philippine context.

To shed a brighter light on the connection between work and mental health, Sterud et al. (2025) provided a systematic review of pooled evidence on the association between employment, including status and type, and mental health. The authors report generally positive mental health effects of stable formal employment compared with unemployment, but it should be noted that certain employment types (precarious contracts, informal employment, and high-demand/low-control jobs) are associated with poorer mental health outcomes. They also highlight bidirectionality and call for refined measurement of employment type when utilized in studies. This review, nevertheless, provides methodological and empirical bases for measuring employment types (formal vs. informal; permanent vs. precarious; self-employed/gig) and identifies employee groups that may be prioritized for mental health and psychosocial support.

Montini et al. (2024) further synthesized some evidence regarding permanent and contract-based work and their impact on the mental health of employees, documenting significant core stressors such as income volatility, algorithmic control, and social isolation. These factors have been linked with anxiety, depressive symptoms, and burnout, particularly among workers lacking social and psychological protection. Notably, the review highlights that while some workers value the flexibility of work, the overall mental health impacts of flexible work setup and income volatility aggravated by social isolation and lack of social support are concerning.

Nevertheless, public-sector and municipal employment is widely recognized as psychologically demanding, given the complexity of roles and responsibilities involved. In a study conducted in Northern Sweden municipalities, Asplund et al. (2022) found that employees frequently experience pressure from heavy workloads, time constraints, and expectations from both supervisors and the public, ultimately contributing to chronic stress and reduced work sustainability.

While there are studies that support the development and deputation of mental health programs, there are also studies that highlight the interplay of social support from relatives, significant others, coworkers, and the broader organizational environment in influencing employees' mental health. A study by Evelyn F. Acoba (2024) found that perceived social support significantly affects levels of anxiety, depression, and psychological wellbeing, particularly through its role in reducing perceived stress. However, the impact of social support is not uniform across age groups.

Several studies have stressed that the effectiveness of mental health support services depends largely on employees' perceived access, confidentiality, and organizational commitment. Municipal employees who perceive their organizations as supportive of mental health are more likely to seek help and demonstrate better coping and resilience. In the Philippine context, however, research on mental health support services within LGUs remains limited but emerging. A study conducted by Resurreccion (2024) suggests that although some mental health initiatives exist, awareness, accessibility, and utilization remain challenging. Employees' perceptions of support availability significantly influence their willingness to engage with mental health services and their ability to manage work-related stress.

Vinson et al. (2024) in their research entitled "Workplace mental health" underscored that various studies clearly show that when employees perceive higher accessibility and adequacy of mental health

services, they are more likely to experience improved psychological wellness and job engagement. Studies on sustainable workplace mental health also suggest that early intervention and organizational support systems are essential to reducing stress and preventing attrition, as poor mental health contributes significantly to absenteeism, burnout, and productivity loss.

Furthermore, Manansala (2025), in his study of a medium-sized publishing house in the Philippines, revealed that employees' perceptions of organizational mental health services influenced their stress levels, receptivity to support systems, and workplace engagement, emphasizing the importance of culturally sensitive wellness initiatives. Such local literature underscores the need to investigate how access to mental health services shapes employees' experiences, particularly in public sector institutions like LGUs where organizational support systems can be varied and under-utilized.

Alibudbud (2023) further investigated the Philippines' service landscape, highlighting limited community provision, the concentration of specialists in urban centers, and the persistent stigma surrounding mental health issues. To address these challenges, he proposed concrete reforms, such as establishing wellbeing programs, strengthening preventive mental health care, establishing workplace wellness hubs, assessing employees' needs, and accelerating workforce development.

The findings of Alibudbud (2023) entail that the current mental health system in the Philippines remains largely reactive, urban-centered, and inadequately equipped to meet the needs of the bigger population. The concentration of mental health specialists in urban areas and the limited availability of community-based services and mental health professionals suggests an operational imbalance that leaves many individuals particularly those in rural and underserved communities without timely and relevant care. This highlights the urgent need to decentralize mental health services and intensify community-based interventions.

Nevertheless, the persistence of stigma implies that access barriers are not only structural but also socio-cultural, requiring integrated approaches that integrate service delivery with mental health education and awareness initiatives. The proposed reforms underscore a shift toward preventive and proactive care, implying that organizations and institutions must take a more active role in promoting mental wellbeing. In particular, the recommendation to institutionalize workplace wellness services and assess employees' needs underscores the importance of embedding mental health support within everyday environments, such as workplaces and communities.

This also underscores the need for continuous staff development to ensure that both specialists and non-specialists are equipped with the competencies to deliver accessible, culturally responsive mental health services. Overall, these implications underscore the need for a multi-level, system-wide approach to achieving sustainable and inclusive mental health care and psychosocial services in the Philippines.

Subsequently, Chupanich et al. (2024) in their meta-analysis/cross-sectional study of healthcare worker stress found a considerable prevalence of severe stress, with risk factors including occupational role, work environment, family responsibilities, and environmental experiences. Their results underscore that even outside pandemic surges; healthcare workers remain a high-stress group that require dedicated support. Additionally, Tito (2024) reviewed climate-related stressors and mental health impacts in the Philippines, presenting that climate change, disasters, and livelihood jolts increase chronic stress and compound prevailing vulnerabilities. The report emphasized that environmental stressors result in both acute trauma and long-term psychological burden, particularly in rural and coastal communities in the Philippines.

Consequently, perceived stress and life satisfaction are essentially interwoven and interdependent constructs that shape an individual's overall psychological wellbeing. Perceived stress reflects the degree to which individuals assess life situations as overwhelming or beyond their coping ability, while life satisfaction denotes a cognitive evaluation of a person's quality of life and gauge of personal fulfillment. When stress is experienced as persistent and insurmountable, it can weaken positive life evaluations, diminishing one's sense of purpose, strength, and satisfaction.

In line with this, Teke et al. (2025) examined perceived stress and life satisfaction in a large sample and found that perceived stress strongly predicts lower life satisfaction, with hope and beliefs mediating this

relationship. Their findings imply that interventions targeting cognitive appraisal (e.g., cognitive reframing, personal empowerment, and personal meaning formation) can reduce perceived stress and improve subjective wellbeing.

This relationship implies that higher levels of perceived stress are often associated with lower levels of life satisfaction, as persistent psychological strain disrupts emotional balance, problem-solving, decision-making, and the ability to derive meaning from daily encounters and personal challenges. Consequently, examining the dynamic interaction between perceived stress and life satisfaction is essential for understanding how individuals navigate challenges and maintain wellbeing, particularly in high-demand, resource-constrained environments.

Coherently, a study on mental health at work conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), through the Institute for Labor Studies, and authored by Castillo et al. (2024), documented key workplace stressors. It recommended employer-level interventions, including psychosocial risk assessment, middle-management training, mental health workshops and access to counseling. In addition, a systematic review of healthcare workers during pandemic determined that factors such as work-related stress, lack of support, exhaustion, and anxiety are directly correlated with declined work performance and mental health concerns (Nowrouzi-Kia et al., 2022).

Studies consistently indicate that higher Perceived Stress Scores (PSS) scores are associated with poorer mental health, diminished quality of life, and compromised work performance among adults (Schneider et al., 2020). The scale's emphasis on general assessment rather than specific events makes it especially useful for understanding stress in diverse adult populations. Finally, the work of Milo et al. (2025) on the translation and validation of the Perceived Stress Scale-10 (PSS-10) across Non-English languages and various cultural contexts confirms the instrument's robustness in measuring stress across diverse populations when appropriately validated. The review further recommends careful local validation before implementation. Empirical analyses among adult populations consistently support this, demonstrating that coping strategies, self-efficacy, and cognitive appraisal considerably influence perceived stress levels of individuals (Folkman and Moskowitz, as quoted by Rafiei et al., 2024). Accordingly, adults who employ adaptive coping strategies such as scaffolded problem-solving and regular cognitive checks report lower perceived stress as compared to those who rely on avoidance, evasion, passive-aggressive mechanism or emotion suppression.

Based on the conducted multicultural studies, work demands are among the strongest predictors of perceived stress in adulthood. High workload, low job control, role ambiguity, and lack of supervisory support have been linked to elevated perceived stress (Mat Halif et al., 2025). Nevertheless, a research on burnout further highlights that perceived stress mediates the relationship between job demands and emotional exhaustion (Maslach et al. 2016). It was further correlated that adults with persistent financial stress are also more vulnerable to depression and anxiety.

In a study spearheaded by Rusu et al. (2022), he cited the findings of Hammen in his 2005 study of stress and depression that there is a strong relationship between perceived stress and mental health outcomes in adults. High perceived stress is associated with depression, anxiety, psychological distress, and reduced well-being.

Longitudinal studies also indicate that perceived stress does not only predict mental health symptoms but also mediates the relationship between life stressors and psychological outcomes (Schneiderman et al., 2005 as cited by Barros, 2024). Acoba et al. (2024) further examined how perceived stress mediates the relationship between social support and mental health outcomes including anxiety, depression, and positive effects. The results of this study show that perceived stress is a key pathway linking low support to worse mental health across ages, and that strengthening social support reduces stress and improves outcomes. With these assertions, how an individual perceives stress directly influences the impact of life stressors on their overall psychological well-being. Perceived stress acts as the primary "pathway" between social support and mental health outcomes like anxiety and depression. The data suggests a clear inverse relationship that while low social support leads to higher perceived stress and poorer mental health, strengthening social support effectively reduces stress levels and improves psychological outcomes across all age groups. Hence,

perceived stress is the "middle man" that dictates how external factors like social support or life events ultimately affect our mental health.

Ocampo et al. (2024) synthesized that evidences of pandemic-era increases in stress, anxiety, and depression among Filipinos. It documents stressors including economic loss, schooling disruption, caregiving burdens and identifies vulnerable groups of students, frontline workers, and low-income households. The findings of Ocampo et al. (2024) highlight how the pandemic worsened the existing socioeconomic and role-related burdens, leading to amplified psychological distress among Filipinos. By identifying the key stressors and the vulnerable groups that are affected by the corresponding stressors, the study stresses the unequal burden of stress and the necessity for targeted, context-specific mental health interventions.

In a different population group, Martinez et al. (2022) uncovered that stress is prevalent among Filipino migrant domestic workers. Yet, their willingness to seek help is hindered by limited awareness of available resources, concerns about confidentiality, and reliance on informal support networks. This study reveals that while stress is prevalent among Filipino migrant domestic workers, help-seeking remains constrained due to social, structural and cultural barriers. This emphasizes a serious gap between mental health needs and service utilization, underscoring the importance of advocating awareness, improving accessibility, and promoting trust in formal support systems.

Expanding on the theme of access to care, Khanal et al. (2024) propose a meta-synthesis that highlights the barriers to mental health care access in South Asian settings, including stigma, organizational limitations, structural policy gaps, and individual factors. Local researches further support this association. A study conducted by De Leon (2025) entitled "The influence of workplace stress and psychological safety on the well-being of Filipino employees" revealed moderate levels of daily stress and a significant negative relationship between workplace stress and psychological safety, indicating that higher perceived stress corresponds with lower emotional safety and wellbeing at work. Another Philippine study among teaching personnel reported that higher stress negatively influenced productivity, reinforcing the link between perceived stress and performance outcomes (Rubio et al. 2025).

In contemporary adult research, however, quality of life (QoL) is treated as a multidimensional construct that encompasses individuals' subjective evaluation of how well their lives are going across the key domains of physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environmental satisfaction. Recent works continue to anchor QoL in the World Health Organization framing which includes quality of life as an individual's perceived position in life as compared to his/her ideal position in life within cultural/value contexts and in consonance to personal goals and expectations while emphasizing that QoL extends beyond physical and biological disease outcomes to include social, economic, and environmental functioning (Watts et al., 2025).

A study of police officers in the Philippines found that quality of life and resilience were strong predictors of mental health, suggesting that life satisfaction plays a crucial role in buffering stress and promoting psychological stability among public service employees (Resurreccion, 2024). Additionally, studies and interventions aimed at improving psychosocial support among Filipino nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic were associated with favorable professional quality of life outcomes, emphasizing the role of workplace support in shaping QoL measures (Castillejos et al., 2025).

Across adult samples, anxiety, depression, and stress-related symptoms consistently correlate with poorer QoL. Another population-based normative work in Mongolia (adult general population, 2020 field data) found WHOQOL-BREF domains inversely associated with anxiety and depression scores, indicating that psychological distress meaningfully erodes multiple life domains not only the mental aspect of quality of life but also physical, social, and environmental domains (Bat-Erdene et al., 2023). While in other studies conducted during the pandemic period, reviews mapping general-population evidence conclude that QoL declines were often concentrated in mental/psychological domains and were unequally distributed; frequently worse among women and younger adults depending on context and phase of the pandemic (Watts et al., 2025).

Adult Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQoL) is strongly shaped by functional health and symptom

burden. A study using a large Swedish population-based cohort (ages 50–64), machine-learning importance analyses identified physical activity, employment, pain, sleep, and sense of control among the most influential factors for physical HRQoL; for mental HRQoL, sense of control, physical activity, depression, pain, and employment ranked highly (Olsson et al., 2023). These findings, therefore, reinforce that physical and mental HRQoL are intertwined and influenced by both bodily symptoms and psychosocial resources.

Health behaviors, however, are repeatedly implicated in adult QoL. Large-sample analyses show physical activity and sleep quality as prominent correlates of both physical and mental HRQoL, with physical inactivity and poor sleep frequently aligned with worse HRQoL profiles (Olsson et al., 2023). Thus, in an Asian working population in Singapore, determinants analyses using SF-36-based outcomes linked HRQoL to demographic and occupational/lifestyle factors, supporting the view that workplace context is a key setting for HRQoL monitoring and intervention (Mahirah et al., 2022). Similarly, among Malaysian government employees, HRQoL research emphasizes work-related and personal factors associated with HRQoL differences reinforcing that adult QoL in employed populations is influenced by both health status and the psychosocial/organizational environment (Ashri et al., 2021).

Adult QoL is also shaped by household structure and social resources. Using nationally representative Korean data (KNHANES 2021) focused on one-person households, research documented HRQoL differences by life-cycle stage (young, middle-aged, older adults) and by socioeconomic and health-related characteristics highlighting that living arrangement (e.g., living alone) can be a structural vulnerability for HRQoL depending on age and resources (Chae, 2024). Coherently, a recent general-population work also ties QoL to environmental and place-based factors. In coastal communities in central Vietnam, a general-population study using WHOQOL-BREF examined factors impacting QoL in a setting shaped by environmental risk and livelihood conditions, illustrating how community context and exposure to environmental stressors can be incorporated into adult QoL models (Nguyen et al., 2024).

1.8.3. Synthesis of Literature and Research Gap

The reviewed literature and studies collectively support that mental health outcomes are formed by a complex interplay of work conditions, perceived stress, perceived access to mental health and social support systems, and factors that affect the quality of life. Across global and local studies, employment type emerges as a fundamental determinant of psychological wellbeing.

Stable and formal employment is generally linked with better mental health outcomes, whereas precarious, informal, and high-demand/low-control jobs and career instability are consistently linked to heightened stress, increased anxiety, burnout, and depression (Sterud et al., 2025; Montini et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2025). These findings are further supported in the Philippine context, where workplace stressors such as excessive workload and demands, role ambiguity, and limited organizational support significantly impact employees' mental health (Teng-Calleja et al., 2024).

The literature also emphasizes that job insecurity and aggregated employment instability worsen psychological distress over time (Ervin et al., 2025; Pires 2025), while the type of occupation influences not only the severity but also the symptoms of mental health conditions (Lundqvist et al., 2025). In the public sector settings, predominantly among municipal employees, the nature of work characterized by organizational demands, public accountability, and limited resources further aggravates their vulnerability to stress and psychological strain (World Health Organization, 2024; Manansala, 2025).

Central to these dynamics is the concept of perceived stress, which serves as a crucial psychological mechanism connecting external stressors to mental health outcomes. Unlike identified objective stressors, perceived stress reflects individuals' cognitive and perceptive appraisal of their ability to cope with the demands and vicissitudes of life. Empirical evidences consistently exhibit that higher perceived stress is linked with heightened risks of anxiety, depression, diminished psychological safety, and poorer job performance (Acoba et al., 2024; De Leon, 2025). Moreover, perceived stress intercedes the relationship between numerous factors including familial and social support, employment conditions, and mental health

outcomes, emphasizing its role as an important explanatory pathway.

The literature further highlights the protective role of collective social support and mental health services. Hence, access to organizational support systems, including counseling and group processes, stress management programs, mental health workshops and employee assistance initiatives, has been shown to alleviate the negative effects of workplace stress and boost wellbeing and productivity (Vinson et al., 2024; Manansala, 2025). However, both global and local studies uncover pressing barriers to access, involving stigma, limited awareness, and structural constraints, particularly in underserved, underattended and public-sector settings (Resurreccion, 2024; Khanal et al., 2024).

In the Philippine context, systemic challenges such as the uneven implementation of the Mental Health Act, limited community-based mental health services, financial inaccessibility of the rates of these services, and concentration of mental health professionals in urbanized areas further limit access to care (Maravilla et al., 2021; Alibudbud, 2023). These gaps are intensified by socio-cultural stigma, stemming in underutilization of available services despite increasing mental health needs. Studies on particular populations further exhibit how structural variations and contextual stressors contribute to heightened psychological vulnerability and skepticism in seeking help (Ocampo et al., 2024; Martinez et al., 2022).

Additionally, the literature emphasizes the multidimensional and broad nature of Quality of Life (QoL), which comprises physical, psychological, social, and environmental domains. Evidences dependably show that high perceived stress is inversely related to the quality of life, while supportive and compassionate work environments and wide access to psychosocial resources significantly contribute to improved life satisfaction and wellbeing (Watts et al., 2025; Olsson et al., 2023). Furthermore, mental health and QoL are closely intertwined to work performance, with unmanaged stress leading to diminished productivity, lower job satisfaction, and poor organizational engagement (Corrente et al., 2024; Vinson et al., 2024).

The theoretical frameworks such as the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping and the Conservation of Resources Theory provide durable conceptual foundations for understanding these relationships. These models posit how stress arises from the interplay between individuals and their environment, mediated by their cognitive appraisal, relative coping mechanisms, and may be aggravated or mitigated resource availability or unavailability. Overall, the literature and several studies stress that mental health outcomes are influenced by systemic factors.

Despite the extensiveness of existing literature, several important gaps remain:

Limited Integrated Studies in LGU Contexts. While numerous studies scrutinize employment conditions, stress, quality of life, and mental health independently, there is still a lack of integrated research focusing exclusively on local government unit (LGU) employees in the Philippines. Existing studies rarely examine the collective influence of employment type, perceived stress, accessibility of mental health services, quality of life, and work performance within a single paradigm.

Inadequate Focus on Perceived Access to Mental Health Services. Although mental health support services are deemed as important, there is limited empirical research investigating how employees' perceived access influences their level of stress, wellbeing, and work performance, particularly in the public sector.

Scarcity of Contextualized, Localized Measurement Tools. Many studies rely heavily and solely on available standardized instruments developed in Western contexts while there is a need for culturally contextualized and locally validated assessment tools that capture the unique personal, cultural, social and normative experiences of Filipino workers, specifically those in LGUs and rural communities.

Underrepresentation of All Categories and Types of Municipal and Public-Sector Employees. Compared to private-sector and those in healthcare populations, municipal employees remain underrepresented in mental health researches, despite evidences indicating that they experience keen levels of job-related stress due to the nature and demands of public service work.

2. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological framework employed in the study, detailing the research

design, population, sampling procedures, research instruments, data-gathering processes, and the statistical treatments used to analyze the quantitative data.

2.1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative-cross-sectional correlational research design to systematically determine the relationships among the assessed level of access to mental health support services, level of stress, quality of life and work performance of the randomly selected municipal employees in Liliw, Laguna. Descriptive correlational research is a research design that describes the relationship between two or more variables without making claims about cause and effect. It incorporates collecting and analyzing data on at least two variables to determine if there is a link between them.

The researcher utilized a non-experimental research method. The chosen research method implies that the researcher does not need to manipulate variables with scientific methodology to agree or disagree with the hypothesis. It purports to provide empirical evidence for a better understanding of the study. Furthermore, with the goal to measure and observe the relationship among the variables without altering them or subjecting them to external conditions, a correlational research design was chosen.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population for this study comprises randomly selected municipal employees from the departments of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Liliw with a tenure of at least 1 year. To ensure adequate representation across demographic and occupational categories, the study employed stratified random sampling, with strata defined by employment classification (regular-permanent, casual). This approach minimizes sampling bias and enhances the precision of the results. The final sample size will be determined using Slovin's formula at the 95% confidence level, based on the most recent population data from the LGU and the Philippine Statistics Authority. This ensured that the sample was sufficiently large and reflective of the municipality's demographic composition.

Research Instrument

The study used four primary instruments to collect quantitative data. The first instrument is the Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services (AAMHSS). It is a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure reliability, clarity, and suitability for the local context. It aims to measure participants' personal assessments of access to mental health support services. The second instrument is a highly standardized tool, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), a validated 10-item measure, which assesses respondents' stress levels based on their experiences over the last month.

The third instrument is another highly standardized and validated tool. It is the World Health Organization Quality of Life-Brief Edition (WHOQoL-BREF), comprising 26 questions that assess the test-taker's quality of life over the past 4 weeks, covering physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environmental conditions. In addition, the researcher sought permission and consent to access and use the participants' Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) rating in the Fiscal Year 2025 as a basis for their work performance.

2.2. Research Procedure

The research procedure began with securing approval from the Municipal Mayor, through the Human Resource Office, to conduct data collection within their respective jurisdictions. Once permissions were granted, the researcher-made questionnaire underwent validation by experts in psychology, public administration, and research, followed by a pilot test to refine wording and assess reliability. After validation, respondents were informed of the study's purpose, ethical safeguards, and confidentiality, and of their voluntary participation; informed consent was then obtained.

Surveys and standardized tools were administered personally by the researcher to ensure data privacy compliance and to ensure the ethical administration of standardized assessments and researcher-made

questionnaires. The Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings were obtained with consent personally and in full confidentiality. Completed instruments are retrieved, screened for completeness, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis. The final stage involved data analysis using appropriate statistical tools to generate findings that served as the basis for the feedback-based wellness program.

2.3. Statistical Treatment

In this study, Coefficient Alpha (α) or Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of the self-made questionnaire.

The researcher also used mean and standard deviation. Mean is intended to compute the sum of all the observed outcomes from the sample divided by the total number of events, and standard deviation is a measure of the differences of each observation from the mean.

The data were organized and analyzed using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to determine whether there is a significant relationship between personal assessments of access to mental health support services, level of stress, quality of life, and work performance.

For interpretation, the stronger the association of the two variables, the closer the Pearson correlation coefficient, r , will be to either +1 or -1, depending on whether the relationship is positive or negative, respectively. It can describe the strength of the correlation using the following guide for the absolute value of:

Degrees of Correlation

± 0.9 to ± 1.0	Very High
± 0.7 to ± 0.89	High
± 0.4 to ± 0.69	Moderate
± 0.2 to ± 0.39	Small
Less than 2	Negligible

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the findings from the data collected in this study. It presents the results of the study on the Impact of LGU Liliw Employees' Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services on their Perceived Stress, Quality of Life, and Work Performance. Additionally, the results are organized and discussed in a logical order to ensure clarity and coherence in data interpretation.

The data from 40 permanent employees and 40 casual employees of LGU Liliw, who served as respondents, were analyzed and interpreted using appropriate quantitative statistical methods. The study used structured questionnaires to assess employees' perceptions of access to mental health support services across selected dimensions, while standardized instruments were employed to measure perceived stress and quality of life. Furthermore, employees' work performance was evaluated based on their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings.

The respondents in the study were LGU Liliw employees, classified by employment status. The collected data were organized, tabulated, and analyzed to determine the level of access to mental health support services and its relationship and impact on the respondents' perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance. The results are presented in the order of the research questions stated in Chapter 1 to facilitate a clear, systematic interpretation of the findings. The presentation and discussion of the results likewise served as the basis for the formulation of the proposed feedback-based wellness program for LGU Liliw employees.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services Among Permanent Employees (n = 40)

Domain	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range Label	Verbal Interpretation
Accessibility	40	2.46	0.94	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Adequacy	40	2.41	0.93	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Availability	40	2.34	0.95	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Awareness	40	2.24	0.96	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Overall	40	2.46	0.94	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of permanent employees' assessments of access to mental health support services across four domains: accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness. The overall mean score of 2.46 (SD = 0.94) falls within the "Slightly Accessible" range, indicating that employees mainly perceive mental health services as present but insufficiently reachable, usable, or optimized. According to the World Health Organization (2022), accessible mental health support in the workplace can mitigate psychosocial risks, enhance employee wellbeing, and improve organizational outcomes. Among the domains of access to mental health support services, accessibility (M = 2.46, SD = 0.94) had the highest mean, suggesting that employees somewhat perceive services as reachable when needed. Hence, since the score stands within the "*slightly accessible*" category, this shows that barriers such as procedural complications, time constraints, and even stigma may still be hindering full utilization.

Vinson et al. (2024) also supported this data in their study. While workplace mental health support, such as counseling, stress management programs, and psychosocial resources, can buffer the negative impact of work stressors and improve overall workplace outcomes, the implementation of such services varies across sectors and contexts. Evidence suggests that greater perceived access to supportive resources is linked to better psychological wellbeing, reduced stress, and enhanced work outcomes.

Similarly, adequacy (M = 2.41, SD = 0.93) indicates that employees perceive the services as partially sufficient in addressing their needs, but not at an optimal level. This suggests that while some mental health support mechanisms may exist, they may be insufficient and lacking depth, responsiveness, or personalization.

In contrary, availability (M = 2.34, SD = 0.95) and awareness (M = 2.24, SD = 0.96) obtained lower mean scores. The results of the availability domain show that some services may not be consistently provided and may not be consistently present across all departments, schedules, or employee categories and groups. Meanwhile, awareness at the lowest mean suggests a critical gap in communication and advocacy, implying that employees may not be fully aware of the existing services, how to access and avail them, or their benefits. Moreover, the standard deviations across all domains (ranging from 0.93 to 0.96) indicate moderate variability, suggesting that employee experiences are not uniform. Some employees have relatively better access, while others encounter significant limitations. This dispersion may be attributed to inconsistencies in implementation, which are possibly influenced by departmental and bureaucratic differences, leadership support, and even geographic and organizational factors among employees, their departments and the LGU in general.

Overall, this data suggests that the mental health support services among permanent employees are present but underdeveloped, unevenly distributed, and may be insufficiently communicated. Addressing these gaps may require not only increasing the number of services but also improving visibility, ensuring consistency, and empowering the service to build employee trust. Without these improvements, the mental health initiatives may remain underutilized and fail to produce significant improvements in employee wellbeing.

A study conducted by Resurreccion (2024) supports this result. He claimed that although some mental health initiatives exist, awareness, accessibility, and utilization remain challenging. Employees' perceptions of support availability significantly influence their willingness to engage with mental health services.

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services Among Casual Employees (n = 40)

Domain	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range Label	Verbal Interpretation
Accessibility	40	2.00	0.98	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Adequacy	40	1.89	0.97	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Availability	40	1.89	0.96	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Awareness	40	1.88	0.99	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Overall	40	1.91	0.98	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible

Table 2 reveal the mean and standard deviation of casual employees' assessment of access to mental health support services across these four domains, namely: accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness. The overall mean score of 1.91 (SD = 0.98) falls within the range of "*Slightly Accessible*," but it is significantly lower than the score obtained by permanent employees, indicating a mainly weaker perception of access among casual workers.

Within the domains, accessibility (M = 2.00, SD = 0.98) obtained the highest mean. This suggests that casual employees perceive some ability to reach or use mental health services; hence, the score remains at the lower end of the "*slightly accessible*" range, implying that access is still limited and potentially hindered by significant structural or procedural barriers.

The domains of adequacy (M = 1.89, SD = 0.97) and availability (M = 1.89, SD = 0.96) both yielded low mean scores. This indicates that casual employees perceive mental health services as insufficient in providing the mental health support that they need and are not consistently present or offered by the organization. This may be reflected in the gaps in mental health program coverage, limited service hours, or possible exclusion of casual employees from certain benefits usually available to permanent staff.

The lowest mean was observed for awareness (M = 1.88, SD = 0.99), suggesting that casual employees are among those least well-informed about the available LGU mental health services. This highlights a critical communication gap because advocacy materials and information dissemination may not effectively reach this working group, or organizational efforts may not fully address the needs of non-permanent staff. The findings further imply the need for more inclusive and targeted communication strategies to ensure that all employees, regardless of employment status, are adequately informed about available mental health support services. Improving awareness may also encourage greater utilization of wellness resources and strengthen employees' perception of organizational support.

The standard deviations across domains (SD = 0.96–0.99) indicate moderate variability, similar to that observed among permanent employees. This suggests that while the overall perception is low, the experiences still vary among individuals. Some casual employees may encounter slightly better access, while others experience greater limitations, rooted in possible inconsistencies in service delivery.

The lower overall mean compared to permanent employees implies that casual workers are at a disadvantage in accessing mental health support services in the LGU. This indicates structural inequities in the workplace, where employment status remarkably influences access to well-being resources. In light of these results, Liu et al. (2025) specifically highlighted the significant mental health disparities between permanent and casual workers. The study revealed that casual workers experienced increased anxiety and depressive symptoms, driven largely by income shocks, limited social protection, and restricted access to health services.

The low scores in adequacy and availability hint that mental health services may not be fully extended to casual employees. This suggests that some existing programs may be designed primarily for permanent staff, leaving casual workers overlooked and deprived.

Overall, the data indicate that while mental health services are perceived as slightly accessible, casual employees experience notably lower and more limited access compared to their permanent counterparts. The combination of low awareness, limited availability, and perceived inadequacy implies that

mental health support systems are not only underdeveloped but also inequitably served.

This calls for a shift from selective provision to inclusive, well-communicated, and consistently implemented mental health programs that ensure all employees, regardless of status, can access the support they need. In light of this result, Lundqvist et al. (2025) underscore the importance of considering employment type as a factor that affects stress and quality of life and the development of contextualized government and organizational programs that may alleviate their stress and improve their quality of life.

Table 3. Overall Mean and Standard Deviation of the Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Accessibility	80	2.23	0.983	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Adequacy	80	2.15	0.936	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Availability	80	2.11	0.901	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Awareness	80	2.06	0.903	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible
Overall	80	2.14	0.931	1.76-2.50	Slightly Accessible

Table 3 presents the overall mean and standard deviation of the assessment of access to mental health support services among LGU Liliw employees (N = 80) across the domains of accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness.

The overall mean score of 2.14 with a standard deviation of 0.931 indicates that employees primarily perceive access to mental health support services as slightly accessible. This data suggests that while services exist within the organization, these are not sufficiently accessible to fully meet the employees' overall mental health needs. The standard deviation indicates moderate variability, suggesting that employees' experiences with access to mental health services differ. Some may have relatively better access, while others experience significant limitations.

Among the domains, accessibility (M = 2.23, SD = 0.983) had the highest mean, indicating that employees perceive mental health services as reachable or available when needed to some extent. However, the relatively high standard deviation suggests that access is not consistent across all employees. This variability implies that certain individuals or groups of employees may encounter barriers such as limited programs and services, scheduling conflicts, or even lack of clear procedures in accessing services.

Adequacy (M = 2.15, SD = 0.936) reflects the employees' perceptions of whether the mental health support services provided are sufficient in both quantity and quality. This mean indicates that the aforementioned services are only slightly adequate, while the standard deviation shows moderate dispersion, which suggests uneven satisfaction with the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of available support. Some employees may find services helpful, while others perceive them as lacking depth or responsiveness. Similarly, availability (M = 2.11, SD = 0.901) indicates that mental health services are only somewhat present or limitedly operational within the organization. The moderate standard deviation suggests that availability may vary depending on timing, department, or resource allocation. This inconsistency may prevent employees from accessing services when they are most needed.

Lastly, awareness (M = 2.06, SD = 0.903) had the lowest mean across the domains, indicating that employees have limited knowledge of mental health support services. Despite having a slightly lower standard deviation compared to other domains, the results still suggest variability in awareness levels, meaning that some employees are informed, while many remain unaware of existing services. This points to gaps in communication, promotion, and information dissemination within the organization.

Khanal et al. (2024) propose a meta-synthesis that highlights the barriers to mental health care access in South Asian settings, including stigma, organizational limitations, structural policy gaps, and individual factors. Local research further supports this association.

Overall, the combination of low mean scores and moderate standard deviations across all domains

indicates that access to mental health support services is not only limited but also inconsistently experienced among employees. While some individuals may benefit from available services, others face barriers related to accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness. These findings highlight the need for the organization to strengthen its mental health support system by improving service delivery, ensuring consistent availability, enhancing communication strategies, and promoting equitable access for all employees.

Maravilla et al. (2021) critically reviewed the implementation challenges of the Philippine Mental Health Act, documenting uneven rollout across local governments, insufficient resources, and persistent access gaps especially in rural areas. The article argues that implementation requires local operational plans, clear service pathways, and municipal-level capacity building. These findings imply that the effectiveness of the Philippine Mental Health Act depends heavily on LGUs' capacity and readiness to operationalize its provisions.

The imbalanced rollout and persisting access gaps imply that national-level policies alone are insufficient without resilient local implementation mechanisms. This underscores the need for LGUs to develop contextual operational plans, establish clear and easily accessible mental health service pathways, and invest in capacity-building mechanisms among municipal health workers and service providers for even and all-encompassing roll-out.

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceived Stress of Permanent Employees (n = 40)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Perceived Helplessness (PH)	40	11.58	4.02		
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PE)	40	6.08	2.94		
Overall	40	17.65	3.48	14-26	Moderate Stress

The results indicate that permanent employees experience moderate levels of perceived stress, as reflected by the overall mean of 17.65, which falls within the moderate stress range (14–26). The standard deviation of 3.48 suggests a moderate variability in stress levels, indicating that while many employees experience similar levels of stress, there are still noticeable differences in individual experiences.

Financial strain contributes to feelings of uncertainty and loss of control, key components of perceived stress (Ryu et al., 2022). Family-related demands significantly influence perceived stress in adulthood. Parenting stress, caregiving for elderly family members, and marital conflict are strongly associated with elevated perceived stress (Rusu et al., 2022).

In terms of domains, the mean obtained by perceived helplessness ($M = 11.58$, $SD = 4.02$) suggests that employees more frequently experience feelings of being overwhelmed or unable to control stressful situations. The moderate standard deviation indicates that these feelings are somewhat common but vary among individuals. On the other hand, perceived self-efficacy ($M = 6.08$, $SD = 2.94$) reflects employees' perceived ability to cope with stress. The lower mean suggests that coping confidence is present but not particularly strong. The minimal standard deviation implies more consistent responses in coping perceptions.

As Teke et al. (2025) examined perceived stress and life satisfaction in a large sample. This study found that perceived stress strongly predicts lower life satisfaction, with hope and beliefs mediating this relationship. Moreover, financial stressors, including debt, income instability, and economic insecurity, are consistently associated with heightened perceived stress among adults.

Overall, the combination of a moderate mean and moderate variability suggests that permanent employees generally experience manageable stress levels, but a portion of the group may be at risk of higher stress due to increased feelings of helplessness and lower coping confidence.

Table 5. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceived Stress of Casual Employees (n = 40)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Perceived Helplessness (PH)	40	11.43	3.78		
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PE)	40	7.38	3.36		
Overall	40	18.80	3.57	14-26	Moderate Stress

The findings show that casual employees also experience moderate levels of perceived stress, with an overall mean of 18.80, which is slightly higher than that of permanent employees. The standard deviation of 3.57 indicates moderate variability, suggesting that stress levels differ among employees but are still relatively clustered within the moderate range.

Regarding the domains, perceived helplessness ($M = 11.43$, $SD = 3.78$) indicates that casual employees also experience considerable difficulty managing stressors. However, the slightly lower mean compared to permanent employees suggests marginally lower feelings of helplessness. Meanwhile, perceived self-efficacy ($M = 7.38$, $SD = 3.36$) is higher than that of permanent employees, indicating that casual employees may perceive themselves as having slightly better coping abilities. However, the higher standard deviation suggests more variability in coping confidence, meaning that while some casual employees feel capable of handling stress, others may struggle significantly.

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping explains this result as this model posits that stress results from the interaction between the individual and their environment, mediated by cognitive evaluation and coping processes (Lazarus and Folkman, as cited by Kaveh et al., 2023). Adults first evaluate whether an event is threatening (primary appraisal) and then assess whether they possess sufficient resources to cope (secondary appraisal). When perceived coping resources are inadequate, perceived stress upsurges.

The combination of a higher overall mean and moderate variability suggests that casual employees experience slightly greater stress overall, with uneven coping abilities across individuals. This highlights the need for support systems that strengthen coping mechanisms and reduce perceived helplessness.

Table 6. Overall Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceived Stress of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Perceived Helplessness (PH)	80	11.50	3.789		
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PE)	80	6.73	2.672		
Overall	80	18.23	3.230	14-26	Moderate Stress

Table 6 presents the overall mean and standard deviation of the perceived stress levels of LGU Liliw employees ($n = 80$), measured across two domains: Perceived Helplessness (PH) and Perceived Self-Efficacy (PE).

The overall mean score of 18.23, with a standard deviation of 3.230, falls within the 14–26 range, interpreted as moderate stress. This indicates that, at an average, employees experience a significant level of stress in their daily work and personal functioning, though it remains within a manageable range. The relatively moderate standard deviation suggests that, while most employees cluster around this level of stress, there is still some variation, indicating that some individuals may experience either lower or higher stress levels than the group average.

In terms of specific domains, perceived helplessness ($M = 11.50$, $SD = 3.789$) reflects the extent to which employees feel overwhelmed, unable to control situations, or unable to cope with demands. The relatively higher mean indicates that employees frequently experience these feelings, which significantly contribute to their overall stress levels. The standard deviation of 3.789 suggests moderate variability, indicating that while many employees report similar levels of helplessness, others experience either considerably higher or lower levels. This variability suggests that some employees may be more vulnerable to stress due to job demands, workload, or a lack of control over work conditions.

On the other hand, perceived self-efficacy ($M = 6.73$, $SD = 2.672$) reflects employees' confidence in their ability to manage and cope with stressful situations. The lower mean compared to helplessness suggests that, while employees possess some coping capacity, it may not be sufficiently strong to counterbalance their stress. The smaller standard deviation indicates relatively less variability, suggesting that employees have more consistent perceptions regarding their coping abilities. This implies that while coping mechanisms are present across the group, they may be uniformly moderate rather than strong.

As municipal employees perform critical roles in public service delivery, including administrative governance, regulatory enforcement, social services, health, disaster response, and community development. Unlike private-sector employees, municipal workers operate within bureaucratic systems characterized by public accountability, political influence, limited resources, and continuous interaction with citizens. These conditions often expose municipal employees to heightened job demands, role ambiguity, and emotional labor, thereby increasing their vulnerability to work-related stress (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024). Overall, the combination of a moderate mean and moderate variability indicates that stress is a common experience among LGU Liliw employees, but it is not equally distributed. The higher mean for perceived helplessness than for perceived self-efficacy suggests an imbalance, with feelings of being overwhelmed outweighing employees' confidence in managing stress. This imbalance may contribute to sustained stress levels and could potentially affect both well-being and work performance.

While the preceding studies conducted by World Health Organization (2022) in European municipalities report that employees frequently experience pressure from workload, time constraints, and expectations from both supervisors and the public, contributing to chronic stress and reduced work sustainability; these findings highlight the need for organizational interventions that focus on reducing feelings of helplessness such as workload management, clearer role expectations, and supportive supervision while simultaneously strengthening employees' coping capacities and self-efficacy through resilience training, counseling services, and mental health programs.

In light of these findings, a study conducted by Teng-Calleja et al. (2024) found that stable and formal employment is generally linked with better mental health outcomes, whereas precarious, informal, and high-demand/low-control jobs and career instability are consistently linked to heightened stress, increased anxiety, burnout, and depression (Sterud et al., 2025; Montin et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2025). These findings are further supported in the Philippine context, where workplace stressors such as excessive workload and demands, role ambiguity, and limited organizational support significantly impact employees' mental health.

Table 7 shows that permanent employees generally have a good quality of life, as reflected by the overall mean of 69.01 and standard deviation of 10.59. This mean indicates that, on average, permanent employees experience a favorable level of well-being across the four WHOQoL domains, while the standard deviation suggests a moderate spread of scores, meaning that although many respondents cluster around the average, some employees report notably higher or lower quality of life than others. This implies that, as a group, permanent employees tend to enjoy satisfactory living conditions and psychosocial functioning, but their experiences are not entirely uniform.

Table 7. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Transformed Scores of the World Health Organization Quality of Life of Permanent Employees (n = 40)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Transformed Score</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Physical Health	40	64.10	11.34	51-75	Good Physical Health
Psychological Health	40	68.75	10.51	51-75	Good Psychological Health
Social Relationships	40	73.13	16.45	51-75	Good Social Relationships
Environment	40	70.05	12.99	51-75	Good Environment Satisfaction
Overall	40	69.01	10.59	51-75	Good Quality of Life

In terms of specific domains, Social Relationships obtained the highest mean of 73.13 with a standard deviation of 16.45, indicating that permanent employees generally perceive their interpersonal relationships, social support, and personal connections positively. However, the relatively large standard deviation shows substantial variability in responses, suggesting that while many permanent employees experience strong and satisfying social ties, others may have weaker support systems or less satisfying relationships. Environmental satisfaction was 70.05 (SD = 12.99), indicating that permanent employees generally view their physical surroundings, financial resources, safety, and access to services as favorable. The moderate variability implies that environmental conditions are generally positive, though not equally experienced by all.

Psychological Health posted a mean of 68.75 and a standard deviation of 10.51, indicating that permanent employees generally maintain a good level of emotional well-being, self-esteem, and positive thinking. The relatively smaller standard deviation compared with other domains suggests more consistency in psychological health perceptions among permanent employees. Physical Health had the lowest mean of 64.10, with a standard deviation of 11.34, though it still falls within the good-quality-of-life range. This suggests that permanent employees generally perceive their energy, mobility, and capacity for daily activities positively, but physical well-being may be the most vulnerable aspect of their quality of life among the four domains.

A study by McEwen, as cited by Palix et al. (2025), found that chronic perceived stress is linked to allostatic load, a cumulative physiological burden of repeated stress responses. This research shows that adults with persistently high perceived stress exhibit dysregulation in cardiovascular, metabolic, and immune systems, which increases vulnerability to physical illness and psychological disorders and would ultimately impact the person's overall quality of life. This implies that the respondents' vulnerability to physical health may be due to chronic stress and may worsen over time when stressors are not managed and when physiological symptoms are not properly addressed.

Overall, the combination of good mean scores and moderate standard deviations suggests that permanent employees experience generally favorable quality of life, although some domains, especially social relationships, vary more widely across individuals. This indicates that while employees generally maintain positive well-being, differences in personal experiences and workplace interactions may influence certain aspects of their quality of life.

Table 8. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Transformed Scores of the World Health Organization Quality of Life of Casual Employees (n = 40)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Transformed Score</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Physical Health	40	60.60	12.73	51-75	Good Physical Health
Psychological Health	40	67.15	11.99	51-75	Good Psychological Health
Social Relationships	40	70.00	15.64	51-75	Good Social Relationships
Environment	40	65.43	13.03	51-75	Good Environment Satisfaction
Overall	40	65.79	10.90	51-75	Good Quality of Life

Table 8 reveals that casual employees also demonstrate a good quality of life, as indicated by the overall mean of 65.79 and standard deviation of 10.90. The mean indicates that casual employees, on average, still fall within the good-quality-of-life category, suggesting they generally perceive their living conditions and well-being favorably. However, the slightly lower overall mean compared with permanent employees suggests that casual employees may face somewhat greater challenges in their day-to-day quality of life. The standard deviation indicates moderate variation, implying that casual employees' experiences are somewhat dispersed, with some enjoying considerably better conditions than others.

Among the domains, Social Relationships obtained the highest mean of 70.00 with a standard deviation of 15.64, indicating that casual employees generally experience positive social support and satisfactory interpersonal relationships. Yet, the relatively high standard deviation suggests that the quality of these social experiences differs considerably across respondents. Psychological Health had a mean of 67.15 and a standard deviation of 11.99, indicating generally positive emotional well-being, though with moderate differences in how employees perceive their mental and emotional states. This suggests that while many casual employees feel psychologically well, others may experience more strain or emotional difficulty.

The Environment domain yielded a mean of 65.43 and a standard deviation of 13.03, implying that casual employees generally perceive their safety, access to resources, and surrounding conditions as acceptable, but not consistently so. The moderate-to-high variability suggests unequal experiences in environmental quality. Physical Health recorded the lowest mean of 60.60 with a standard deviation of 12.73, indicating that physical well-being remains in the good category but is the weakest area among casual employees. The size of the standard deviation suggests that physical functioning and health-related experiences vary notably within the group. Overall, the means and standard deviations show that casual employees generally have a good quality of life, but their scores are slightly lower and somewhat more varied than those of permanent employees, indicating possible differences in stability, resources, and overall living conditions.

The findings of Teke et al. (2025) imply that interventions targeting cognitive appraisal (e.g., cognitive reframing, personal empowerment, and personal meaning formation) can reduce perceived stress and improve subjective wellbeing. This relationship implies that higher levels of perceived stress are often associated with lower levels of life satisfaction, as persistent psychological strain disrupts emotional balance, problem-solving, decision-making, and the ability to derive meaning from daily encounters and personal challenges. Consequently, examining the dynamic interaction between perceived stress and life satisfaction is essential for understanding how individuals navigate challenges and maintain wellbeing, particularly in high-demand, resource-constrained environments.

In line with the work of Teke et al. (2025), these disparities underscore the critical role of perceived stress in shaping life satisfaction, as inconsistent conditions may heighten psychological strain and disrupt

overall functioning. Consequently, the results imply a need for targeted interventions that enhance coping mechanisms, such as cognitive reframing and empowerment strategies, while simultaneously addressing structural inequities in workplace support. Strengthening both individual resilience and organizational provisions is essential to ensure that casual employees can maintain stable, equitable, and sustainable well-being despite the demands and uncertainties of their employment context.

Ultimately, the results suggest that although casual employees primarily maintain a good quality of life, their relatively lower and more variable scores compared to permanent employees suggest underlying vulnerabilities connected to instability in resources, working conditions, and support systems. The strength in social relationships highlights the protective role of interpersonal, collective, and social support, yet the significant variability across domains, specifically in physical health and environmental conditions, points to probable unequal access to resources and differing capacities to support wellbeing.

Table 9. Overall Mean and Standard Deviation of the Transformed Scores of the World Health Organization Quality of Life of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

<i>Domain</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Transformed Score</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Range Label</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Physical Health	80	62.35	12.105	51-75	Good Physical Health
Psychological Health	80	67.95	11.229	51-75	Good Psychological Health
Social Relationships	80	71.56	16.024	51-75	Good Social Relationships
Environment	80	67.74	13.137	51-75	Good Environment Satisfaction
Overall	80	67.40	10.80	51-75	Good Quality of Life

Table 9 presents the overall mean and standard deviation of the transformed scores of the World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQoL) of LGU Liliw employees (n = 80) across four domains: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment.

The overall mean score of 67.40, with a standard deviation of 10.80, falls within the 51–75 range, which is interpreted as Good Quality of Life. This indicates that, on average, employees experience a generally favorable level of wellbeing across multiple dimensions of life, including physical functioning, emotional stability, social support, and environmental conditions. The standard deviation suggests moderate variability, meaning that while most employees report a good quality of life, there are noticeable differences in individual experiences, with some employees experiencing higher or lower levels of wellbeing.

Among the domains, social relationships (M = 71.56, SD = 16.024) obtained the highest mean score, indicating that employees generally have strong interpersonal relationships, social support, and positive interactions with others. However, the relatively high standard deviation reflects greater variability, suggesting that while many employees enjoy strong social connections, others may experience weaker or less satisfying relationships.

In line with this result, the study conducted by Acoba et al. (2024) observed that perceived social support affects anxiety, depression, and psychological wellbeing differently depending on age group. Younger working individuals rely greatly on peers and family, while older working adults rely more on service networks.

Psychological health (M = 67.95, SD = 11.229) also falls within the good range, indicating that employees generally maintain positive mental and emotional states, including self-esteem, optimism, and coping ability. The moderate standard deviation suggests that psychological well-being is relatively consistent across employees, though some variation remains.

Environmental satisfaction (M = 67.74, SD = 13.137) reflects employees' perceptions of safety,

financial resources, access to services, and overall living conditions. The mean indicates a generally good perception, while the standard deviation suggests moderate variability, implying that employees' environmental experiences differ depending on personal and contextual factors.

On the other hand, physical health ($M = 62.35$, $SD = 12.105$) had the lowest mean among the domains, although it still falls within the good-quality-of-life range. This suggests that employees generally perceive their physical functioning, energy levels, and ability to perform daily activities as satisfactory, but this domain may be relatively more vulnerable compared to others. The moderate standard deviation indicates variability in physical well-being, with some employees potentially experiencing fatigue, health concerns, or physical strain.

Overall, the combination of good mean scores and moderate to high standard deviations across domains indicates that LGU Liliw employees generally experience a positive quality of life, but not uniformly. While many employees enjoy favorable conditions, others may face challenges, particularly in areas such as physical health and social relationships where variability is more pronounced.

Research using WHOQoL-BREF showed that workers with higher job demands and lower social support reported significantly elevated stress levels, which were associated with poorer outcomes across physical health, psychological wellbeing, social relationships, and environmental domains of quality of life (Rusli, et al., as cited by Mahirah, et al., 2022). This indicates that perceived stress not only influences emotional functioning but also affects broader life satisfaction and wellbeing.

These findings suggest that while the organization maintains a generally supportive environment that promotes employee well-being, targeted interventions may still be needed to address disparities in experiences. Programs focused on physical wellness, mental health support, and strengthening social connections may help ensure a more consistent, higher-quality of life for all employees.

Table 10. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) of LGU Liliw Employees by Employment Status (n = 80)

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range Label	Verbal Interpretation
Permanent Employees	40	4.29	0.37	3.50-4.49	Very Satisfactory
Casual Employees	40	4.09	0.24	3.50-4.49	Very Satisfactory
Overall	80	4.19	0.342	3.50-4.49	Very Satisfactory

Table 10 presents the mean and standard deviation of the Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings for LGU Liliw employees, categorized by employment status (n = 80; permanent and casual employees), along with the overall performance rating.

The overall mean score of 4.19, with a standard deviation of 0.342, falls within the range of 3.50–4.49, which is interpreted as Very Satisfactory. This indicates that, in general, employees consistently exceed performance expectations and achieve outputs beyond the required standards. The relatively low standard deviation suggests minimal variability, with performance ratings among employees closely clustered around the mean. This reflects a high level of performance consistency across the organization.

Based on this data, multicultural studies indicate that work demands are among the strongest predictors of perceived stress in adulthood. High workload, low job control, role ambiguity, and lack of supervisory support have been linked to elevated perceived stress (Halif et al., 2025).

When grouped by employment status, permanent employees had a higher mean score of 4.29 (standard deviation = 0.37), indicating a Very Satisfactory level of performance. The slightly higher mean suggests that permanent employees tend to perform better than their casual counterparts. The standard deviation, although slightly higher than that of casual employees, still indicates low variability, meaning that

most permanent employees consistently perform at a similarly high level, with minor differences in individual performance.

On the other hand, casual employees had a mean score of 4.09 and a standard deviation of 0.24, both of which fall within the Very Satisfactory range. While their mean is slightly lower than that of permanent employees, it still indicates that casual employees effectively meet and often exceed performance expectations. The lower standard deviation suggests greater consistency among casual employees, indicating that their performance ratings are more tightly clustered and uniform across individuals.

Comparing the two groups, both permanent and casual employees demonstrate strong, consistent performance, with only a slight advantage observed among permanent employees in mean scores. The combination of high mean values and low standard deviations across both groups indicates that high performance is not isolated but is a shared characteristic among employees regardless of employment status.

Nevertheless, according to Vinson et al. (2024), employees with sufficient work-related mental health resources, such as access to support services and psychosocial resources, are more likely to maintain high performance despite workplace stressors and job demands. Empirical evidence consistently shows that higher perceived stress is linked with heightened risks of anxiety, depression, diminished psychological safety, and poorer job performance (Acoba et al., 2024; De Leon, 2025).

Overall, the findings suggest that LGU Liliw maintains a high-performing, stable workforce, with employees consistently delivering quality outputs and meeting organizational standards. The low variability further implies effective performance management, clear expectations, and a supportive work environment that promotes uniform excellence. These results highlight the organization's strength in maintaining both productivity and consistency among its employees. Moreover, this consistency in performance may reflect the effectiveness of existing human resource policies and supervisory practices within the organization. It also indicates that employees are adequately guided and supported to sustain their level of performance over time. These findings may serve as a basis for strengthening current strategies while identifying areas for further improvement. Furthermore, the results imply that employees are able to remain resilient and committed despite the presence of moderate stress levels within the workplace. This may also suggest that organizational support systems and established workplace practices contribute positively to employee motivation and work engagement. Ultimately, sustaining employee well-being alongside high performance remains essential in ensuring long-term organizational effectiveness and workforce stability.

Table 11 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients examining the relationship between the domains of access to mental health support services, namely accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness and the level of perceived stress among LGU Liliw employees, measured in terms of perceived helplessness (PH) and perceived self-efficacy (PE).

In terms of perceived helplessness (PH), all domains of access to mental health support services exhibited negative correlation coefficients, specifically accessibility ($r = -0.176$, $p = 0.119$), adequacy ($r = -0.118$, $p = 0.298$), availability ($r = -0.147$, $p = 0.192$), and awareness ($r = -0.159$, $p = 0.159$). These negative values indicate that as employees' perceived access to mental health support services increases, their level of perceived helplessness tends to decrease. However, all relationships are weak in magnitude and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the observed inverse relationships are minimal and may have occurred by chance. This implies that although access to services may slightly reduce feelings of helplessness, it is not a strong or reliable predictor in this sample.

Table 11. Correlation Between Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services and Perceived Stress of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

Domain	PH (r)	p-value	Interpretation (PH)	PE (r)	p-value	Interpretation (PE)
Accessibility	-0.176	0.119	Negligible, Not Significant	0.106	0.350	Negligible, Not Significant
Adequacy	-0.118	0.298	Negligible, Not Significant	0.125	0.269	Negligible, Not Significant
Availability	-0.147	0.192	Negligible, Not Significant	0.086	0.450	Negligible, Not Significant
Awareness	-0.159	0.159	Negligible, Not Significant	0.047	0.677	Negligible, Not Significant

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

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

Legend:

PH – Perceived Helplessness

PE – Perceived Self-Efficacy

r – Pearson Correlation Coefficient

p-value – Significance level (2-tailed)

Significant at $p < 0.05$

This result does not support the findings of Chopra as cited by Chen et al. (2022) which emphasized that there are evidences from developing countries showing that workplace stress is associated with increased risk of mental health problems, which, in turn, adversely affects productivity and emotional wellbeing.

On the other hand, for perceived self-efficacy (PE), all domains showed positive correlation coefficients, namely accessibility ($r = 0.106$, $p = 0.350$), adequacy ($r = 0.125$, $p = 0.269$), availability ($r = 0.086$, $p = 0.450$), and awareness ($r = 0.047$, $p = 0.677$). These results suggest that higher levels of perceived access to mental health support services are associated with slightly higher perceived self-efficacy among employees. However, similar to PH, these relationships are also weak and statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating that access to services does not substantially influence employees' perceived ability to cope with stress.

Overall, the findings reveal that none of the domains of access to mental health support services have a significant relationship with perceived stress, whether in terms of helplessness or self-efficacy. The consistently low correlation coefficients and non-significant p-values indicate that employees' perceived access to mental health services is not a strong determinant of their stress levels.

Nevertheless, the systematic review of healthcare workers during the pandemic determined that factors such as work-related stress, lack of support, exhaustion, and anxiety are directly correlated with declined work performance and mental health concerns (Nowrouzi-Kia et al., 2022).

This integration of literature and results suggest that other factors beyond access to mental health support services may play a more critical role in influencing employees' stress, such as workload demands, organizational climate, leadership support, job security, and personal coping mechanisms. While access to services remains important, its impact alone may not be sufficient to significantly reduce stress or enhance coping among employees.

Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between access to mental health support services and perceived stress is accepted. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to employee mental health, beyond simply improving access to support services.

Despite this negligible correlation, a study on mental health at work conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) through the Institute for Labor Studies, and authored by Castillo et al. (2024), highlighted and documented key workplace stressors. It recommended employer-level interventions,

including psychosocial risk assessment, middle-management training, mental health workshops, and access to counseling. International studies show that workplace stressors, including but not limited to high job demands, role ambiguity and conflict, and inadequate support, are considerably associated with poor mental health outcomes and diminished productivity (Hu et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, Liliw employees experience moderate levels of perceived stress despite maintaining very satisfactory work performance. This suggests that the occupational realities of public service may contribute to a persistent baseline of stress that is not easily mitigated by the mere presence of mental health support services. The bureaucratic constraints, limited resources, and ongoing public interaction described in the literature may explain why access to mental health services alone does not significantly affect stress levels, as evidenced by the study's correlation results.

Social support, however, is a well-documented protective factor against perceived stress. Adults with strong emotional and instrumental support networks experience lower stress even in high-demand situations (Manansala, 2025).

Thus, access to organizational support systems, including counseling and group processes, stress management programs, mental health workshops and employee assistance initiatives, has been shown to alleviate the negative effects of workplace stress and boost wellbeing and productivity (Vinson et al., 2024; Manansala, 2025). However, it still remains challenging to fully operationalize a holistic organizational support system as both global and local studies uncover pressing barriers to access, involving stigma, limited awareness, and structural constraints, particularly in underserved, underattended, and public-sector settings (Resurreccion, 2024; Khanal et al., 2024).

Table 12. Correlation Between Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services and Quality of Life of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

Domain	Physical Health			Psychological Health			Social Relationships			Environment		
	(r)	p-value	Interpretation (PH)	(r)	p-value	Interpretation (PH)	(r)	p-value	Interpretation (PH)	(r)	p-value	Interpretation (PH)
Accessibility	0.18	0.11	Weak, Not Significant	0.123	0.279	Weak, Not Significant	0.112	0.323	Weak, Not Significant	0.075	0.51	Weak, Not Significant
Adequacy	0.174	0.123	Weak, Not Significant	0.104	0.358	Weak, Not Significant	0.105	0.355	Weak, Not Significant	0.083	0.466	Weak, Not Significant
Availability	0.268	0.016	Weak, Significant	0.082	0.467	Weak, Not Significant	0.194	0.085	Weak, Not Significant	0.175	0.122	Weak, Not Significant
Awareness	0.184	0.103	Weak, Not Significant	0.058	0.608	Weak, Not Significant	0.107	0.343	Weak, Not Significant	0.134	0.236	Weak, Not Significant

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

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

Legend:

r – Pearson Correlation Coefficient

p-value – Significance level (2-tailed)

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 12 presents the Pearson correlation analysis examining the relationship between employees' assessment of access to mental health support services, specifically accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness, and their quality of life across four domains: physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment, among LGU Liliw employees (n = 80).

In terms of physical health, all domains of access show positive correlations, indicating that better access to mental health support services is associated with better physical health outcomes. Among these, availability shows a statistically significant relationship ($r = 0.268$, $p = 0.016$), suggesting that greater availability of mental health services is associated with improved physical health. However, the strength of this relationship is weak, indicating that while availability contributes to physical health, its effect is limited. The other domains which include accessibility ($r = 0.180$, $p = 0.110$), adequacy ($r = 0.174$, $p = 0.123$), and awareness ($r = 0.184$, $p = 0.103$) also exhibit weak positive relationships but are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), implying that their influence on physical health is minimal and not reliable.

For psychological health, all correlation coefficients are positive but weak, including accessibility ($r = 0.123$, $p = 0.279$), adequacy ($r = 0.104$, $p = 0.358$), availability ($r = 0.082$, $p = 0.467$), and awareness ($r = 0.058$, $p = 0.608$). These results indicate that improved access to mental health services is slightly associated with better psychological health; however, none of these relationships are statistically significant. This suggests that access to services alone does not strongly influence employees' psychological well-being.

Similarly, in the domain of social relationships, all correlations are weak and positive, namely accessibility ($r = 0.112$, $p = 0.323$), adequacy ($r = 0.105$, $p = 0.355$), availability ($r = 0.194$, $p = 0.085$), and awareness ($r = 0.107$, $p = 0.343$). Although availability shows a relatively higher coefficient compared to other domains, it remains statistically non-significant. This indicates that access to mental health support services has limited impact on employees' social interactions and relationships.

In the case of the environment domain, which includes factors such as safety, financial resources, and access to services, all relationships remain weak and non-significant: accessibility ($r = 0.075$, $p = 0.510$), adequacy ($r = 0.083$, $p = 0.466$), availability ($r = 0.175$, $p = 0.122$), and awareness ($r = 0.134$, $p = 0.236$). These findings suggest that access to mental health services does not significantly influence employees' perception of their environment.

In contrast with the findings of the study of Vinson et al. (2024) entitled, "Workplace mental health" which underscored that when employees perceive higher accessibility and adequacy of mental health services, they are more likely to experience improved psychological wellness and job engagement overall, the results indicate that only one statistically significant relationship exists, specifically between availability of mental health support services and physical health, while all other relationships are weak and not significant. This implies that although access to mental health services may contribute slightly to certain aspects of quality of life, particularly physical health, its overall impact is limited.

These findings suggest that quality of life is influenced by multiple factors beyond access to mental health support services, such as workplace conditions, economic stability, interpersonal relationships, and personal coping mechanisms. While improving access to mental health services, especially availability, remains important, it may not be sufficient on its own to significantly enhance overall quality of life among employees.

This supports the studies on sustainable workplace mental health that suggest that early intervention and organizational support systems are essential to reducing stress and in preventing attrition, as poor mental health contributes significantly to absenteeism, burnout, and productivity loss (Vinson et al. (2024).

In conclusion, despite evidences from the studies of Watts et al. 2025; Olsson et al. (2023) dependably showing that high perceived stress is inversely related to the quality of life, while supportive and compassionate work environments and wide access to psychosocial resources significantly contribute to improved life satisfaction and wellbeing, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between access to mental health support services and quality of life is partially rejected, as a significant relationship was found only in the domain of physical health through availability. However, for the majority of domains, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant relationship.

Ultimately, within public service environments, where employees often face heavy workloads and direct community pressures, accessible mental health support services have been discussed as significant organizational resources that contribute to positive work and life outcomes (Manansala, 2025).

Furthermore, the literature suggests that the quality of life and work performance among municipal

employees are shaped by broader systemic and organizational factors, rather than solely by access to support services. The weak and non-significant relationships found in the study between access to mental health services and both quality of life and performance reinforce the notion that employees operate within a complex work environment where stressors are embedded in the structure of public service itself.

This highlights the need for a more comprehensive and context-sensitive approach to employee wellness, where interventions go beyond improving access and instead address the unique psychosocial demands of municipal work. It supports the study's conclusion that mental health programs must be integrated, proactive, and responsive to the realities of LGU employees, incorporating strategies such as stress management, emotional resilience, organizational support, and continuous feedback mechanisms.

Overall, the literature supports the study's assertion that LGU Liliw employees constitute a functionally resilient yet at-risk workforce and justifies the development of a feedback-based wellness program tailored to the specific challenges of public-sector employment.

Table 13. Correlation Between Assessment of Access to Mental Health Support Services and Work Performance (IPCR) of LGU Liliw Employees (n = 80)

Domain	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Accessibility	0.054	0.634	Negligible, Not Significant
Adequacy	0.044	0.696	Negligible, Not Significant
Availability	0.107	0.344	Negligible, Not Significant
Awareness	0.032	0.778	Negligible, Not Significant

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

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

Legend:

r – Pearson Correlation Coefficient

p-value – Significance level (2-tailed)

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 13 presents the Pearson correlation analysis examining the relationship between the domains of access to mental health support services, namely accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness, and the work performance of LGU Liliw employees as measured through the Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) (n = 80).

The results show that all domains of access to mental health support services have positive but negligible correlations with work performance. Specifically, accessibility ($r = 0.054$, $p = 0.634$), adequacy ($r = 0.044$, $p = 0.696$), availability ($r = 0.107$, $p = 0.344$), and awareness ($r = 0.032$, $p = 0.778$) all exhibit very low correlation coefficients. These values indicate that as employees' perceived access to mental health support services increases, their work performance tends to increase slightly; however, the magnitude of these relationships is extremely weak.

Furthermore, all p-values are greater than 0.05, indicating that none of the observed relationships are statistically significant. This means that the slight positive associations between access to mental health support services and work performance may have occurred by chance and cannot be considered reliable or meaningful within this sample.

Among the domains, availability shows the highest correlation ($r = 0.107$), although it still falls within the negligible range and remains statistically non-significant. This suggests that even when mental health services are more available, the impact on employees' performance remains minimal. Similarly, accessibility, adequacy, and awareness demonstrate very weak relationships, indicating that these aspects of access do not substantially influence employees' ability to perform their job tasks effectively.

The findings imply that work performance among LGU Liliw employees is not significantly influenced by their perceived access to mental health support services. Instead, performance may be more

strongly influenced by factors such as skills, experience, motivation, supervision, organizational policies, and the work environment. This is consistent with the earlier findings showing that employees already demonstrate very satisfactory performance levels, suggesting that performance remains stable regardless of variations in access to mental health services.

In conclusion, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between access to mental health support services and work performance is accepted. The results highlight that while mental health support services are important for overall well-being, their direct impact on measurable work performance in this context appears to be limited.

Despite these results, the study conducted by Manansala (2025) on a medium-sized publishing house in the Philippines which revealed that employees' perceptions of organizational mental health services influenced their stress levels, receptivity to support systems, and workplace engagement, emphasizing the importance of culturally sensitive wellness initiatives. Such local literature underscores the need to investigate how access to mental health services shapes employees' experiences, particularly in public sector institutions like LGUs, where organizational support systems can be varied and under-utilized. Theorists of organizational behavior argue that when employees perceive their workplace as supportive of mental health needs, they are better able to cope with stress and sustain performance levels (Job Demands–Resources Model, 2023, as cited by Laud K.P., et al., 2025).

Proposed Feedback-Based Wellness Program for LGU Liliw Employees

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher of the study herewith presents her proposed feedback-based wellness program for LGU Liliw Employees:

Project WELL: Workplace Employee Life and Wellness Program

I. Rationale

The proposed Project WELL: Workplace Employee Life and Wellness Program is grounded in the results of the study, which reveal that while LGU Liliw employees demonstrate resilience and maintain very satisfactory work performance, there are underlying gaps in mental health support, stress management, and overall well-being that require a more strategic and comprehensive response.

First, the limited and inconsistent access to mental health support services—particularly the low level of awareness—highlights a critical need for a system that not only improves service delivery but also ensures that employees are well-informed and actively engaged. A feedback-based approach enables the organization to continuously assess employees' awareness, perceptions, and service utilization, ensuring that interventions remain relevant, visible, and responsive to actual needs rather than assumed ones.

Second, the presence of moderate stress levels, coupled with higher perceived helplessness than self-efficacy, indicates that employees may struggle with coping despite maintaining functional performance. This imbalance suggests that simply providing access to services is insufficient. Instead, a program that incorporates regular feedback mechanisms can help identify specific stressors within the organizational environment and guide the development of targeted interventions that strengthen coping skills, enhance self-efficacy, and reduce feelings of helplessness.

Third, although employees report a generally good quality of life, the variability in experiences and the relative vulnerability of physical health underscore the need for a more holistic wellness strategy. A feedback-based program enables continuous monitoring of different well-being domains—physical, psychological, social, and environmental—allowing the LGU to design targeted initiatives that address specific gaps, particularly in physical health, while sustaining strengths such as strong social relationships.

Moreover, the consistently very satisfactory level of work performance suggests that employees are able to meet organizational demands despite existing stress and limited wellness support. While this reflects a high-functioning workforce, it also raises concerns about the sustainability of such performance over time.

Without adequate and responsive wellness interventions, there is a risk of burnout or declining well-being. The integration of feedback ensures that the program evolves alongside employees' needs, helping to preserve both performance and long-term workforce sustainability.

Importantly, the data presented show that access to mental health services alone has no significant relationship with stress, quality of life, or work performance. This underscores the necessity of shifting from a purely service-access model to a more comprehensive, systems-oriented approach. A feedback-based wellness program addresses this gap by incorporating organizational factors such as workload, work environment, leadership support, and employee engagement into the design and implementation of interventions.

Finally, employees remain resilient yet potentially at risk reinforces the importance of proactive and adaptive wellness strategies. By embedding feedback mechanisms—such as regular surveys, consultations, and participatory planning—the proposed program ensures continuous improvement, employee involvement, and evidence-based decision-making.

In summary, Project WELL: Workplace Employee Life and Wellness Program is timely and relevant to the needs of the LGU Liliw employees as it:

1. Responds directly to gaps in awareness, accessibility, and consistency of mental health services;
2. Addresses the imbalance between stress and coping capacity;
3. Promotes a holistic approach to employee well-being;
4. Sustains high levels of work performance while preventing burnout; and
5. Recognizes that employee wellness is multifaceted, requiring ongoing evaluation and organizational responsiveness.

Through this approach, LGU Liliw can move toward a more dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable model of employee wellness that is firmly anchored in the actual experiences and needs of its workforce.

II. Objectives

To develop and implement a responsive, consistent, accessible and sustainable wellness program that enhances the overall wellbeing of LGU Liliw employees by integrating continuous feedback, enhancing coping capacity, and tackling organizational and individual factors that affect stress, quality of life, and performance. Specifically, this program purports to:

1. Increase awareness and improve access to mental health and wellness services through clear communication, consistent delivery, and equitable availability across all employees;
2. Establish a continuous feedback system that regularly gathers employee input to guide, monitor, and improve wellness initiatives;
3. To reduce perceived stress and strengthen coping capacity by addressing sources of helplessness and enhancing employees' self-efficacy and resilience;
4. Promote holistic employee well-being by supporting physical, psychological, and social health, with particular focus on improving physical health; and
5. Sustain high work performance through supportive organizational practices by integrating wellness into workplace policies, leadership approaches, and overall work environment.

III. Program Components

- Monthly Wellness Check-ins. Conduct confidential employee wellness monitoring and consultations for the identification of employee concerns and stressors
- Mental Health Awareness Campaigns. Conduct seminars, orientations, and information dissemination activities to increase employees' awareness and understanding of mental health, wellness resources, and available support services while helping reduce workplace stigma.
- Stress Management and Resilience Workshops. Facilitate workshops and activities focusing on stress management, resilience-building, mindfulness, emotional regulation, coping strategies, and self-care practices to help employees manage work-related pressures effectively.
- Peer Support and Employee Engagement Activities. Organize peer support sessions and employee

engagement activities that encourage communication, teamwork, social connectedness, and a supportive organizational environment.

- **Employee Feedback and Wellness Monitoring System.** Establish confidential feedback mechanisms such as surveys, wellness assessments, and suggestion platforms to continuously monitor employee concerns, assess wellness needs, and improve program implementation.
- **Counseling and Referral Services.** Coordinate with qualified mental health professionals and partner agencies to provide counseling, consultation, and referral services for employees requiring psychosocial support and professional assistance.
- **Physical Wellness and Healthy Lifestyle Activities.** Conduct wellness activities that promote physical health and healthy lifestyle practices, such as exercise programs, wellness breaks, fitness activities, and health education sessions, to support employees' overall physical and psychological well-being.
- **Supportive Workplace and Organizational Development Initiatives.** Promote a healthy and supportive work environment through strengthened communication, supportive supervision, recognition initiatives, and workplace practices that encourage employee well-being, collaboration, and organizational support.

IV. Implementation Plan

1. The implementation of PROJECT WELL may be spearheaded by the Human Resource Office in coordination with the Municipal Health Office and other department heads. To operationalize these strategies, the following program matrix illustrates specific interventions aligned with the Feedback-Based Wellness Program for LGU Liliw Employees objectives:

Program	Strategies	Activities	Objectives (Aligned Variables)	Persons Involved	Budgetary Requirements	Time Frame	Key Result Areas
Mental Health Empowerment and Information Drive	Conduct awareness and advocacy campaigns through orientations, campaign dissemination, and wellness promotion activities	Orientation, IEC Campaigns	Improve Accessibility & Awareness	HR, Dept Heads	₱7,000 for IEC materials, printing, and advocacy materials	January & July	Increased awareness and utilization of mental health support services by 80%
Stress and Burnout Management Sessions	Provide capacity-building activities focusing on stress reduction and coping strategies	Workshops & Seminars	Reduce Perceived Helplessness	Trainer, Employees	₱15,000 for speakers' honorarium, materials, and venue needs	February & August	Reduced stress levels of at least 80% of employees
Work-Life Harmony Workshop	Promote work-life balance and healthy time management practices	Balance & Time Management Training	Improve Physical & Psychological QoL	HR, Trainer	₱10,000 for training materials and facilitator honorarium	March	Improved QoL scores of at least 80% of employees
Emotional Intelligence Training	Strengthen emotional regulation and adaptive coping	EI Workshops	Increase Self-Efficacy	Trainer, Employees	₱13,000 for workshop facilitation and materials	April	Improved coping capacity of at least 80% of employees

	mechanisms						
Team Cohesion Activities	Foster collaboration, communication, and social connectedness in the workplace	Team Building & Group Activities	Enhance Social Relationships	HR, Dept Heads	₱30,000 for team-building activities and supplies	May	Improved social relatedness and team cohesion among 80% of employees
Coaching and Mentoring	Strengthen employee guidance and professional support through mentoring sessions	1:1 Coaching Sessions	Sustain Performance (IPCR)	Supervisors, Employees	₱5,000 for mentoring materials and documentation	June & October	High performance of at least 80% of employees
Routine Check-ins	Conduct regular wellness monitoring and employee consultations	Monthly Wellness Check-ins	Monitor Stress & Access	HR, Counselors	₱5,000 for monitoring forms and documentation	Monthly	Early detection of personal and work-related employee issues of at least 80% of employees that may affect their work performance, level of stress and quality of life.
Resilience and Self-Care	Encourage self-care practices and resilience-building activities	Resilience Month Activities	Improve Overall Well-being	HR, Facilitator	₱18,000 for wellness activities and materials	September & November	Improved overall wellness of at least 80% of employees
Preventive and Therapeutic Measures	Provide counseling support and referral services for employees requiring professional assistance	Counseling and Referral to Higher-Level Mental Health Professionals	Enhance personal coping skills through counseling and further referral to mental health professionals	Consultant Counselor, Psychologist, Psychiatrist	₱35,000 for counseling services, referrals, and treatment planning	As Needed	Personal strengths realization, coping and symptom management and alleviation

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of PROJECT WELL shall be continuously monitored and evaluated to ensure that the program remains relevant and responsive to the needs of LGU Liliw employees. Quarterly feedback assessments and participation monitoring may be conducted to determine employees' experiences, level of engagement, and satisfaction with the implemented wellness activities. Standardized tools such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and WHOQOL-BREF may also be administered periodically to assess changes in employees' stress levels and overall quality of life.

The results of these evaluations shall serve as the basis for improving and strengthening the program's wellness initiatives. Through regular monitoring, the organization may identify areas that require further attention and develop more appropriate interventions for employees. Continuous evaluation may also

help ensure that the implemented activities remain effective, sustainable, and aligned with the program's overall objectives. In addition, the monitoring process may provide valuable data that can guide future organizational wellness policies and decision-making. It may also encourage continuous employee participation by ensuring that their feedback and concerns are recognized and addressed appropriately. Through evidence-based evaluation, the organization may further strengthen its commitment to employee wellness and organizational development.

VI. Expected Outcomes

The implementation of PROJECT WELL is expected to improve employees' awareness and utilization of available mental health support services within LGU Liliw. The program also aims to help reduce employees' stress levels and promote better physical, psychological, and social well-being through holistic wellness activities and supportive interventions. Furthermore, PROJECT WELL is expected to foster a healthier, more supportive work environment that encourages positive workplace relationships, employee engagement, and sustained performance.

Ultimately, the program seeks to contribute to the long-term promotion of employee wellness and organizational well-being within LGU Liliw. It is also expected to strengthen employees' coping abilities and resilience in managing work-related challenges and stressors. By implementing employee-centered wellness initiatives, the organization can further promote a more motivated, productive, and psychologically healthy workforce. The program may likewise contribute to improved organizational morale and stronger collaboration among employees across different departments. Over time, these wellness initiatives may help cultivate a workplace culture that values mental health, employee support, and overall well-being. Such outcomes may further enhance organizational effectiveness and the sustained delivery of quality public service.

4. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter presents the synthesis, analysis, and interpretation of the findings of the study on the relationship between LGU Liliw employees' assessment of access to mental health support services and their perceived stress, quality of life, and work performance, which will serve as a basis for the crafting of a feedback-based wellness program. The discussion integrates the results with the theoretical and empirical literature presented in Chapter 2, highlighting consistencies and divergences. It further provides a summary of findings, draws conclusions based on statistical evidence, and outlines implications for organizational practice. The limitations of the study are acknowledged, and evidence-based recommendations are proposed to strengthen mental health systems and employee well-being.

4.1. Summary of Findings

Based on the data gathered, the following findings are revealed:

- LGU Liliw employees perceive access to mental health support services as only slightly accessible overall ($M = 2.14$), with moderate variability in experiences. Among the domains, accessibility received the highest rating, suggesting services are somewhat reachable, though inconsistently. Adequacy and availability were also rated as slightly sufficient, indicating limitations in the quality, quantity, and consistency of services. Awareness obtained the lowest mean, highlighting significant gaps in employees' knowledge of available support. Overall, the results reveal that mental health services are limited and unevenly experienced, pointing to the need for improved accessibility, consistency, and information dissemination within the organization.
- LGU Liliw employees experience a moderate level of perceived overall stress ($M = 18.23$), with some variation across individuals. Hence, perceived helplessness scored higher than self-efficacy, indicating that employees more frequently feel overwhelmed and unable to manage demands. In contrast, their coping confidence is only moderate and relatively consistent across the group. This

imbalance suggests that feelings of helplessness outweigh employees' coping abilities, contributing to sustained stress levels. Generally, stress is a common but uneven experience, highlighting the need to reduce sources of helplessness while strengthening coping capacity.

- LGU Liliw employees generally experience a good quality of life overall ($M = 67.40$), though with moderate variability across individuals. Social relationships received the highest rating, reflecting strong support systems, while psychological health and environmental conditions were also positively perceived. Physical health obtained the lowest mean, suggesting it is the most vulnerable domain despite still being within the good range. Overall, while employees report favorable well-being, differences in experience highlight the need for targeted support, particularly in physical health and social well-being.
- LGU Liliw employees further demonstrate a Very Satisfactory level of work performance ($M = 4.19$), with minimal variability, indicating consistent high work performance across the organization. Both permanent and casual employees achieved Very Satisfactory ratings, with permanent employees scoring slightly higher on average. Despite this difference, both groups exhibit strong and uniform performance. Overall, the results reflect a relatively stable, well-performing workforce that consistently meets organizational standards.
- The access to mental health support services has no significant relationship with perceived stress among LGU Liliw employees. All domains (accessibility, adequacy, availability, and awareness) showed weak, non-significant correlations with both perceived helplessness and self-efficacy. While increased access is slightly associated with lower helplessness and higher self-efficacy, these relationships are minimal and unreliable. Overall, the results suggest that access to services alone does not significantly affect stress levels, indicating that other factors, such as workload, organizational environment, and personal coping mechanisms, play a more critical role.
- The access to mental health support services has mainly weak and non-significant relationships with employees' quality of life across all domains. Only service availability showed a significant, albeit weak, positive relationship with physical health, suggesting limited influence. All other domains, including psychological health, social relationships, and environment, demonstrated weak and non-significant associations. Overall, the results suggest that access to mental health services alone has minimal impact on quality of life, highlighting the importance of broader factors such as workplace conditions, social support, and personal coping mechanisms.
- The access to mental health support services has negligible and non-significant relationships with work performance among LGU Liliw employees. All domains showed very weak positive correlations, suggesting minimal and unreliable influence on employees' work performance. Overall, the results suggest that employees' work performance remains generally unaffected by access to mental health services and is likely driven by other factors, such as skills, experience, and organizational conditions.
- In view of the findings of the study, a comprehensive employee wellness program may be developed to support the health and well-being of LGU Liliw employees. Despite the absence of a significant relationship between access to mental health support services and work performance, the results indicated that employees continue to experience moderate stress levels while remaining productive in their respective duties. The proposed program may focus on strengthening wellness initiatives through continuous employee engagement, mental health education, stress-reduction activities, and wellness-promotion strategies responsive to employees identified needs. Through this approach, the organization can further enhance employee well-being and maintain a positive, supportive workplace environment.

4.2. Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the findings:

- LGU Liliw employees experience limited and inconsistent access to mental health support services, with significant gaps in awareness and service delivery.
- Employees report a moderate level of stress, with a visible imbalance between higher feelings of helplessness and only moderate self-efficacy and personal coping capacity, indicating vulnerability to sustained stress.
- Despite these challenges, employees generally maintain a good quality of life, specifically in social relationships and psychological health domains, although physical health emerges as the most at-risk area.
- Work performance remains basically and consistently very satisfactory across both categories and among all employees, implying a stable and high-functioning workforce regardless of employment status.
- Access to mental health support services exhibits no significant relationship with perceived stress, suggesting that stress is influenced more by organizational and personal factors than by service access alone.
- Similarly, access to services is observed to have minimal impact on quality of life, with only a weak influence observed in physical health, indicating that broader life and workplace conditions play a larger role.
- Furthermore, access to mental health services has no meaningful effect on work performance, supporting the premise that performance is driven by other factors such as personal and professional competencies, work experience, and organizational systems, among others.
- Overall, the findings suggest that while employees stand resilient against work demands and stress and maintain high performance, they are also potentially at risk due to moderate stress and uneven wellness support, underscoring the need for a more comprehensive, organization-wide approach to employee wellness beyond simply improving access to mental health services.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- To strengthen mental health support services, LGU Liliw may intensify mental health awareness campaigns through orientations, seminars, posters, and information dissemination activities to improve employees' awareness and utilization of available services. Standardizing mental health support through clear referral systems and accessible counseling services across departments is likewise recommended.
- Stress reduction interventions focusing on perceived helplessness may be implemented through resilience training, stress management seminars, and coping workshops to help employees manage work-related stress effectively.
- Promoting physical wellness initiatives such as regular health activities, wellness programs, and ergonomic workplace improvements may help enhance employees' quality of life. Strengthening peer support and team-building activities is also recommended to improve workplace relationships.
- Sustaining high work performance may be achieved through supportive supervision, recognition programs, and continuous professional development opportunities that encourage employee motivation and productivity.
- Conducting periodic assessments of workplace conditions and workload distribution is recommended to identify organizational stressors and implement appropriate interventions that may improve employee well-being and work performance.
- A holistic approach to employee wellness is likewise recommended by addressing organizational culture, leadership support, employee engagement, and personal development alongside mental health service accessibility. Tailored support may also be provided to employees experiencing higher stress levels or lower well-being.

- Integrating mental health and wellness initiatives into organizational policies and wellness planning is highly recommended to promote sustainability and create a more supportive and psychologically safe work environment.
- LGU Liliw is encouraged to implement the proposed feedback-based wellness program focusing on stress management, employee well-being, and organizational support through wellness activities, employee feedback mechanisms, counseling support, and workload management strategies.
- Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies involving a wider scope of respondents from different local government units or organizations. They may also explore other organizational and psychosocial factors affecting stress, quality of life, and work performance using qualitative or mixed-method approaches for deeper analysis.

Overall, these recommendations emphasize the importance of a holistic and organization-wide approach in promoting employee wellness, reducing stress, and sustaining employee well-being and productivity within LGU settings.

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