

Workplace Entitlement, Cognitive Load, and Virtual Team Cohesion in Selected Industrial Institutions in Quezon City: Basis for Focus Teams Intervention Program

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual team cohesion among employees in selected industrial institutions in Quezon City and used the findings as the basis for the FOCUS Teams intervention program. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed among 393 respondents purposively selected from a population of 1,836 employees representing top management, middle management, and rank-and-file personnel engaged in virtual or hybrid work in five institutions. A researcher-developed six-part questionnaire was content-validated by Industrial Psychology, management, and research experts and pilot-tested among 23 comparable participants, yielding Cronbach's alpha of .82. Percentage, weighted mean, one-way analysis of variance, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression were used. Workplace entitlement was highly evident (overall WM =

4.37), cognitive load was very high (WM = 4.49), and virtual team cohesion was very high (WM = 4.56). The three groups did not differ significantly in their workplace-entitlement assessments. Significant positive relationships were found between workplace entitlement and cognitive load ($r = .714$, $p = .003$), workplace entitlement and virtual team cohesion ($r = .582$, $p = .018$), and cognitive load and virtual team cohesion ($r = .636$, $p = .009$). Workplace entitlement and cognitive load jointly predicted virtual team cohesion, $R = .586$, $R^2 = .340$, adjusted $R^2 = .336$, $F(2, 369) = 95.05$, $p < .001$. The most prominent challenges involved mental exhaustion from prolonged digital communication, delayed responses, information overload, task switching, and coordination. The proposed FOCUS Teams program was rated highly suitable (WM = 4.68), highly acceptable (WM = 4.61), and highly feasible (WM = 4.54), supporting its potential use for cognitive readiness, communication clarity, fair workplace expectations, and virtual-team development.

Keywords: *workplace entitlement, cognitive load, virtual team cohesion, virtual work, hybrid work, FOCUS Teams*

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation and the expansion of virtual and hybrid work have changed how employees communicate, coordinate tasks, receive supervision, and maintain workplace relationships. Online meetings, messaging platforms, shared digital workspaces, and continuous task switching can support flexibility and operational continuity, but they also create psychological and organizational demands. In such environments, employees must manage expectations concerning fairness and recognition while simultaneously processing high volumes of information and sustaining effective relationships with colleagues who may rarely interact face-to-face (Cross et al., 2016; Caguiat & Gallardo, 2025).

One concern in contemporary organizations is workplace entitlement, broadly reflected in expectations for recognition, rewards, advancement, or preferential treatment. Campbell et al. (2004) conceptualized psychological entitlement as a relatively stable sense of deserving favorable outcomes, while more recent organizational scholarship shows that entitlement can shape feedback behavior, workplace relationships, and perceptions of fairness (Bizri & Kertechian, 2024; Du et al., 2024; Piotrowski & Besta, 2022). Within organizational settings, entitlement-related expectations may therefore influence how employees interpret reciprocity, recognition, corrective feedback, and promotion.

A second concern is cognitive load. Cognitive Load Theory proposes that working memory has limited processing capacity and may be strained when tasks involve excessive information, simultaneous demands, poorly organized inputs, or rapid switching between activities (Sweller, 1988). Digital work intensifies these conditions through continuous notifications, multiple communication channels, online meetings, and competing responsibilities. Research on digital environments similarly emphasizes that extraneous information and design-related demands can consume cognitive resources and affect attention, performance, and mental effort (Krieglstein et al., 2023; Skulmowski & Xu, 2022; Zeitlhofer et al., 2024).

Virtual team cohesion represents the relational side of digitally mediated work. It refers to the degree to which dispersed team members experience trust, cooperation, shared commitment, coordinated action, and a sense of belonging. Social Presence Theory explains why communication media matter for interpersonal connection in mediated interaction (Short et al., 1976), while empirical evidence indicates that cohesion is positively associated with virtual-team performance and may depend on communication quality and team capabilities (Chaudhary et al., 2022; Tavoletti et al., 2025).

The study was conducted among employees from five selected industrial institutions in Quezon City, including three business process outsourcing companies and two service-oriented organizations that rely extensively on digital communication and collaborative systems. The research gap identified in the source manuscript was the limited empirical examination of workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual team cohesion as interconnected variables in Philippine BPO and service-oriented virtual or hybrid work contexts. Accordingly, the study assessed the three variables, tested group differences and relationships, identified challenges, examined predictive effects on virtual team cohesion, and developed and evaluated an intervention program for organizational application.

Literature Review

Workplace Entitlement, Reciprocity, and Employee Expectations

Workplace entitlement concerns employees' expectations of organizational rewards, recognition, privileges, or favorable treatment and can be understood through psychological entitlement, social exchange, equity, and psychological-contract perspectives. Campbell et al. (2004) demonstrated that psychological entitlement has meaningful interpersonal consequences, while Langerud and Jordan (2020) showed that entitlement at work can be linked with both positive and problematic employee behavior depending on how expectations are expressed and managed. Entitlement is therefore not reducible to a single negative attitude; it is embedded in employees' interpretations of what they contribute and what they believe the organization should provide in return.

Recent studies have extended this concern to feedback, deviance, and organizational relationships. Bizri and Kertechian (2024) examined psychological entitlement in relation to workplace deviance, while Du et al. (2024) incorporated workplace entitlement into a framework explaining feedback-seeking behavior. Piotrowski and Besta (2022) further argued that entitlement must be understood contextually rather than through a universal managerial response. These perspectives support the source study's dimensions of perceived unreciprocated contribution, reward expectations, psychological contract violation, special treatment, overvaluation of contribution, resistance to corrective feedback, and rapid promotion expectations.

Cognitive Load in Digitally Mediated Work

Cognitive Load Theory is founded on the limited capacity of working memory. Sweller (1988) demonstrated that high cognitive demands during problem solving can consume processing resources, while contemporary research continues to distinguish task complexity from unnecessary or extraneous demands. Skulmowski and Xu (2022) emphasize that digital and online environments may generate extraneous cognitive load through interface design and competing information, and Kriegelstein et al. (2023) developed a theory-based instrument that differentiates types of cognitive load.

In work environments, cognitive demands may arise from simultaneous information, complex tasks, retrieval requirements, distractions, and frequent switching of attention. Zeitlhofer et al. (2024) showed that complexity affects cognitive load and performance, while Abeysekera et al. (2024) illustrated the relevance of cognitive-load processes in Philippine digital-learning contexts. Although educational and workplace tasks differ, both bodies of evidence support the proposition that digital environments can place substantial demands on attention, memory, and information processing.

Virtual Team Cohesion, Social Presence, and Communication

Virtual team cohesion depends on members' ability to experience connection and coordinate effectively through technology. Social Presence Theory holds that communication media differ in the extent to which they make other people feel psychologically present during interaction (Short et al., 1976). When nonverbal cues, immediacy, and informal contact are limited, employees may find it more difficult to build interpersonal confidence and maintain a shared sense of team identity.

Evidence nevertheless shows that virtual teams can develop strong cohesion when communication, coordination, and capability are effectively managed. Chaudhary et al. (2022) found a positive relationship between cohesion and virtual-team performance in a meta-analysis. Tavoletti et al. (2025) further demonstrated that technical skills condition the cohesion-performance relationship in global virtual teams, while Caguiat and Gallardo (2025) documented communication, scheduling, and work-life challenges among Filipino virtual-team members. These studies support examining social presence, interpersonal confidence, task coordination, shared commitment, collaborative engagement, media appropriateness, and communication clarity.

Entitlement, Feedback, and Organizational Relationships

Entitlement-related expectations can influence how employees interpret organizational decisions and supervisory feedback. Employees who perceive that rewards, recognition, or advancement do not match their contribution may evaluate work relationships through a fairness lens. Langerud and Jordan (2020) emphasize that entitlement at work can generate complex behavioral responses, while Du et al. (2024) demonstrate that entitlement-related conditions can shape feedback-seeking behavior.

These dynamics are particularly relevant in virtual work because feedback often occurs through mediated channels where tone, timing, and context can be difficult to interpret. Bizri and Kertechian (2024) link psychological entitlement with workplace deviance, and Zaheer et al. (2022) show that psychological entitlement can interact with problematic workplace behavior such as knowledge hiding. Clear performance standards, transparent reward systems, and constructive feedback practices are therefore important organizational mechanisms for managing entitlement-related expectations.

Cognitive Demands, Collaboration, and Team Functioning

Virtual collaboration can itself become a cognitive demand. Cross et al. (2016) describe collaborative overload as a condition in which meetings, messages, coordination requests, and constant availability consume substantial employee time and attention. This type of environment parallels the source study's cognitive-load dimensions, particularly sensory input overload, working-memory strain, extraneous distraction, information retrieval, and task switching.

Because collaboration depends on sustained attention and clear exchange of information, cognitive demand is also relevant to team cohesion. Excessive processing requirements can interfere with communication and

coordination, whereas effective communication practices can reduce ambiguity and support team functioning. The positive association between cohesion and virtual-team performance reported by Chaudhary et al. (2022) reinforces the organizational importance of managing cognitive demands alongside relational processes.

Synthesis, Research Gap, and Intervention Rationale

The reviewed literature indicates that workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual-team cohesion represent distinct but interconnected aspects of digitally mediated work. Entitlement concerns expectations and perceived fairness; cognitive load concerns the mental resources required to manage information and task demands; and team cohesion concerns trust, belonging, communication, and coordinated action. Existing scholarship provides strong evidence for each construct independently, but fewer studies integrate all three within a single organizational model, particularly in Philippine BPO and service-oriented settings.

The source study addressed this gap through a descriptive-correlational examination of the three variables across top management, middle management, and rank-and-file employees. The analysis was designed not only to identify associations but also to generate a practical organizational response. The resulting FOCUS Teams intervention program therefore translates empirical findings into structured activities on cognitive readiness, communication clarity, fair workplace expectations, supervisory coaching, virtual-team cohesion, and continuous monitoring.

The Research Paradigm of the Study

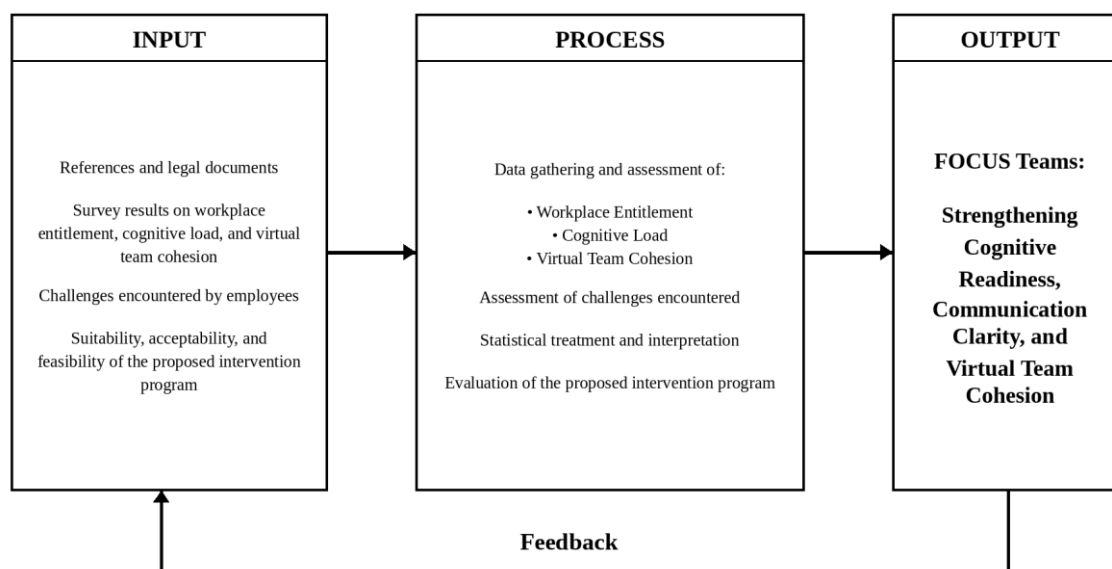


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component determined the prevailing levels of workplace entitlement, cognitive load, virtual team cohesion, and the challenges encountered by employees. The correlational component examined the relationships among the three major variables, while regression analysis assessed the combined predictive contribution of workplace entitlement and cognitive load to virtual team cohesion. Variables were observed as they naturally occurred and were not manipulated (Flick, 2020).

Research Locale

The study was conducted from February to May 2026 in five selected industrial institutions in Quezon City: Alorica Philippines Inc., IntouchCX Manila, Concentrix, Gerry's Grill – Head Office, and Maynilad Water Services Inc. The institutions included three business process outsourcing companies and two service-oriented organizations whose employees regularly participated in virtual or hybrid work arrangements and digitally mediated team processes.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The population consisted of 1,836 employees engaged in virtual or hybrid work across top management, middle management, and rank-and-file levels. Purposive sampling was used to identify 393 respondents who met the inclusion requirement of direct involvement in virtual-team operations. The final sample included 18 top managers, 47 middle managers, and 328 rank-and-file employees. The source methodology justified purposive sampling because respondents needed organizational experience directly relevant to workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual team cohesion.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed six-part questionnaire served as the primary instrument. Part I gathered demographic information. Part II measured workplace entitlement across seven dimensions: perceived unreciprocated contribution, reward expectation without performance, psychological contract violation, special treatment belief, overvaluation of personal contribution, resistance to corrective feedback, and expectation of rapid promotion or advancement. Part III assessed seven cognitive-load dimensions, while Part IV measured seven virtual-team-cohesion dimensions. Part V identified challenges encountered, and Part VI assessed the suitability, acceptability, and feasibility of the proposed intervention program.

The instrument used five-point Likert scales appropriate to each construct. Content validation was conducted by experts holding Doctor of Industrial Psychology degrees, senior management officers with more than 15 years of industry experience, and research-methodology experts. A pilot test involving 23 comparable participants who were excluded from the final sample yielded Cronbach's alpha of .82, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior approval for the conduct of the study was secured, followed by formal permission from the selected industrial institutions. Institutional representatives helped identify qualified respondents based on the established inclusion criteria. The survey was administered personally and through Google Forms. Completed responses were retrieved, organized, encoded, and prepared for analysis, after which the data were processed with the assistance of a statistician and under the guidance of the dissertation adviser.

Data Analysis

Percentage was used to describe respondent characteristics, and weighted mean summarized workplace entitlement, cognitive load, virtual team cohesion, challenges, and intervention ratings. One-way analysis of variance tested differences among top management, middle management, and rank-and-file assessments of workplace entitlement. Pearson's product-moment correlation measured relationships among workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual team cohesion. Multiple regression was used to determine the combined predictive contribution of workplace entitlement and cognitive load to virtual team cohesion. Statistical decisions were made at the .05 level of significance (Field, 2024; Moore et al., 2020).

Ethical Consideration

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their data would be used solely for academic research. The questionnaire assured respondents that they would not be individually identified and that responses would be treated with strict confidentiality. Data handling was aligned with the Philippine Data Privacy

Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). The source manuscript did not provide an institutional ethics-review approval number; accordingly, this article does not claim one.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents by Organizational Level*

Respondent Group	Population	Sample	Sample Share
Top Management	63	18	28.57% of group
Middle Management	127	47	37.01% of group
Rank-and-File	1,646	328	19.93% of group
Total	1,836	393	21.41%

The sample was dominated numerically by rank-and-file employees because this group comprised the largest proportion of the population. Across all respondents, 54.20% were female, 35.88% were aged 30–39, 70.48% were bachelor's degree holders, and 53.18% had less than five years of service. These characteristics indicate that the dataset primarily represented relatively early-career employees working within digitally mediated organizational structures.

The inclusion of three organizational levels allowed the study to compare perceptions across different degrees of authority and responsibility. This was particularly important for entitlement because expectations concerning rewards, feedback, advancement, and organizational obligations can be interpreted differently across hierarchical roles.

Workplace Entitlement

Table 2. *Summary Assessment of Workplace Entitlement*

Dimension	Composite WM	Interpretation
Perceived Unreciprocated Contribution	4.36	Highly Evident
Reward Expectation Without Performance	4.36	Highly Evident
Psychological Contract Violation	4.35	Highly Evident
Special Treatment Belief	4.37	Highly Evident
Overvaluation of Personal Contribution	4.35	Highly Evident
Resistance to Corrective Feedback	4.36	Highly Evident
Expectation of Rapid Promotion or Advancement	4.47	Highly Evident
Overall	4.37	Highly Evident

Workplace entitlement was highly evident overall (WM = 4.37). The highest dimension was expectation of rapid promotion or advancement (WM = 4.47), while all other dimensions clustered between 4.35 and 4.37. Top management produced the highest overall rating (WM = 4.45), followed by middle management (WM = 4.37) and rank-and-file employees (WM = 4.27). These values indicate that entitlement-related perceptions were present across organizational levels rather than concentrated in one group.

The result is consistent with the view that entitlement is expressed through multiple expectations involving contribution, reward, fairness, feedback, and advancement (Campbell et al., 2004; Piotrowski & Besta, 2022). It also supports the need to distinguish entitlement from simple dissatisfaction; the dimensions measured perceptions about reciprocity and organizational responsiveness as well as beliefs concerning preferential outcomes.

Differences in Workplace Entitlement Across Employee Groups

Table 3. *ANOVA of Workplace Entitlement by Respondent Group*

Dimension	F	p	Decision
Perceived Unreciprocated Contribution	1.284	.281	Not Significant
Reward Expectation Without Performance	1.416	.249	Not Significant
Psychological Contract Violation	0.968	.383	Not Significant
Special Treatment Belief	1.527	.221	Not Significant
Overvaluation of Personal Contribution	1.103	.336	Not Significant
Resistance to Corrective Feedback	1.691	.188	Not Significant
Expectation of Rapid Promotion or Advancement	1.235	.295	Not Significant

No statistically significant differences were found among top management, middle management, and rank-and-file employees for any workplace-entitlement dimension. All p-values exceeded .05. The result indicates that differences in organizational level did not produce meaningfully different assessments of contribution, rewards, psychological contracts, special treatment, personal contribution, feedback, or advancement expectations.

The relative consistency across groups supports a system-wide rather than position-specific approach to managing entitlement-related expectations. Organizational policies on recognition, performance standards, corrective feedback, and promotion should therefore be communicated consistently across levels, while still allowing role-specific implementation.

Cognitive Load

Table 4. *Summary Assessment of Cognitive Load*

Dimension	Composite WM	Interpretation
Sensory Input Overload	4.49	Very High
Working Memory Strain	4.47	Very High
Intrinsic Task Complexity Load	4.43	Very High
Extraneous Load from Poor Design or Distractions	4.49	Very High
Schema Construction Effort	4.57	Very High
Information Retrieval Load	4.44	Very High
Task-Switching Load	4.54	Very High
Overall	4.49	Very High

Cognitive load was rated very high overall (WM = 4.49). Schema construction effort obtained the highest dimension mean (WM = 4.57), followed by task-switching load (WM = 4.54). Sensory input overload and extraneous load both obtained WM = 4.49. Top managers reported the highest overall cognitive load (WM = 4.56), followed by middle management (WM = 4.49) and rank-and-file employees (WM = 4.39).

These results reinforce the relevance of cognitive-load theory to virtual and hybrid work. Digital environments can require employees to process multiple streams of information, retrieve details rapidly, maintain task focus, and repeatedly shift attention. Such conditions are consistent with research on extraneous load and the cognitive demands of complex digital environments (Krieglstein et al., 2023; Skulmowski & Xu, 2022; Zeitlhofer et al., 2024).

Virtual Team Cohesion

Table 5. *Summary Assessment of Virtual Team Cohesion*

Dimension	Composite WM	Interpretation
Social Presence	4.56	Very High
Interpersonal Confidence	4.56	Very High
Task Coordination	4.55	Very High
Shared Commitment	4.56	Very High

Collaborative Engagement	4.56	Very High
Media Appropriateness	4.56	Very High
Communication Clarity	4.55	Very High
Overall	4.56	Very High

Virtual team cohesion was very high overall (WM = 4.56). Social presence, interpersonal confidence, shared commitment, collaborative engagement, and media appropriateness each obtained WM = 4.56, while task coordination and communication clarity each obtained WM = 4.55. Top management reported WM = 4.64, middle management WM = 4.56, and rank-and-file employees WM = 4.47.

The high cohesion ratings show that considerable cognitive demands did not eliminate employees' sense of connection and coordinated teamwork. This pattern is compatible with evidence that cohesive virtual teams can maintain effective performance when communication and collaboration are well structured (Chaudhary et al., 2022; Tavoletti et al., 2025). It also emphasizes the importance of social presence and communication quality in digitally mediated teamwork (Short et al., 1976).

Relationships and Predictive Model

Table 6. *Correlations Among Workplace Entitlement, Cognitive Load, and Virtual Team Cohesion*

Variables	r	Description	p	Decision
Workplace Entitlement – Cognitive Load	.714	High positive	.003	Significant
Workplace Entitlement – Virtual Team Cohesion	.582	Moderate positive	.018	Significant
Cognitive Load – Virtual Team Cohesion	.636	Moderate positive	.009	Significant

All three bivariate relationships were statistically significant. Workplace entitlement had a high positive correlation with cognitive load ($r = .714$, $p = .003$). Workplace entitlement was moderately and positively correlated with virtual team cohesion ($r = .582$, $p = .018$), and cognitive load was likewise moderately and positively correlated with virtual team cohesion ($r = .636$, $p = .009$). These findings indicate that the constructs were empirically interconnected in the study sample.

Multiple regression further showed that workplace entitlement and cognitive load jointly predicted virtual team cohesion, $R = .586$, $R^2 = .340$, adjusted $R^2 = .336$, $F(2, 369) = 95.05$, $p < .001$. The reported regression equation was $VTC = 1.287 + (0.302 \times WE) + (0.438 \times CL)$. Thus, the two predictors accounted for 34.0% of the observed variance in virtual team cohesion, with cognitive load showing the larger regression coefficient. Because the design was nonexperimental and cross-sectional, the result should be interpreted as predictive association rather than causal proof.

The observed interconnections are consistent with literature showing that high collaboration demands can drain cognitive resources (Cross et al., 2016) and that cohesion is closely related to virtual-team functioning (Chaudhary et al., 2022). The positive coefficients in the source study should be interpreted within the direction of its scoring and measures rather than as evidence that increasing entitlement or mental strain would necessarily improve cohesion.

Challenges Encountered

Table 7. *Highest-Rated Challenges Encountered*

Challenge	Composite WM
Mental exhaustion after prolonged online meetings or digital communication	4.64
Delayed responses in digital communication slow task coordination	4.61
Difficulty processing large amounts of information within limited time	4.58
Differences in availability or work schedules create coordination challenges	4.57
Dissatisfaction when contributions are not adequately acknowledged	4.56
Frequent task switching reduces efficiency and focus	4.55
Difficulty prioritizing multiple responsibilities	4.53

Challenges were encountered at a high level overall (WM = 4.46). The most prominent problem was mental exhaustion after prolonged online meetings or digital communication (WM = 4.64), followed by delayed digital responses that slowed coordination (WM = 4.61), information-processing pressure (WM = 4.58), differences in availability and work schedules (WM = 4.57), recognition concerns (WM = 4.56), and task-switching difficulties (WM = 4.55).

The pattern shows that the most pressing problems were concentrated in cognitive fatigue, communication timing, information overload, and coordination rather than only in entitlement. This is consistent with documented virtual-team challenges involving flexible schedules, late calls, reduced social interaction, and digitally mediated coordination (Caguiat & Gallardo, 2025), and it provides a direct empirical basis for the FOCUS Teams intervention.

FOCUS Teams Intervention Program and Evaluation

Table 8. *Core Components of the FOCUS Teams Intervention Program*

Component	Primary Focus	Illustrative Strategies
Cognitive Readiness and Load Management	Information overload, task switching, distractions, mental fatigue	Task prioritization, focus management, information filtering, working-memory support, digital wellness
Communication Clarity and Digital Coordination	Clear and timely virtual communication	Meeting protocols, response-time agreements, communication checklists, clear task instructions
Fair Workplace Expectations and Recognition	Entitlement-related expectations	Recognition standards, promotion clarity, constructive feedback, performance expectations
Virtual Team Cohesion and Collaborative Engagement	Trust, coordination, commitment, social presence	Virtual team-building, shared-goal mapping, collaborative activities, recognition of contributions
Leadership Support and Supervisory Coaching	Managerial reinforcement	Workload coaching, feedback systems, coordination support
Monitoring, Feedback, and Continuous Improvement	Program sustainability	Pre/post assessment, observation, feedback forms, quarterly review and improvement

The proposed FOCUS Teams: Strengthening Cognitive Readiness, Communication Clarity, and Virtual Team Cohesion program converted the empirical findings into six interconnected components addressing cognitive demands, communication, workplace expectations, cohesion, supervisory support, and continuous improvement. The source program was designed for a one-year implementation cycle involving management, human resources personnel, supervisors, team leaders, employees, resource persons, and information-technology support.

Table 9. *Evaluation of the Proposed Intervention Program*

Criterion	Overall, WM	Interpretation	Highest Group WM
Suitability	4.68	Highly Suitable	Top Management = 4.74
Acceptability	4.61	Highly Acceptable	Top Management = 4.67
Feasibility	4.54	Highly Feasible	Top Management higher than other groups

Respondents rated the program highly suitable (WM = 4.68), highly acceptable (WM = 4.61), and highly feasible (WM = 4.54). These evaluations indicate that the proposed program was regarded as relevant to the identified needs, compatible with organizational conditions, and practical for implementation. The intervention's

focus on cognitive-readiness practices, clearer digital communication, fairer expectations, and structured team development directly reflects the strongest challenges and relationships found in the study.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that workplace entitlement was highly evident, cognitive load was very high, and virtual team cohesion was also very high among employees in the selected industrial institutions in Quezon City. Workplace-entitlement assessments were statistically comparable across top management, middle management, and rank-and-file employees, suggesting that entitlement-related expectations were shared across organizational levels rather than being confined to a specific hierarchy.

Workplace entitlement, cognitive load, and virtual team cohesion were significantly interconnected. Workplace entitlement showed the strongest bivariate association with cognitive load, while both workplace entitlement and cognitive load were significantly related to virtual team cohesion. Together, workplace entitlement and cognitive load explained 34.0% of the variance in virtual team cohesion in the reported regression model. The practical challenges identified—especially mental fatigue, delayed digital responses, information overload, task switching, workload prioritization, and coordination—demonstrate that strong team cohesion can coexist with substantial cognitive and communication burdens. The FOCUS Teams intervention therefore provides a structured response that aligns employee expectations, cognitive readiness, communication practices, and virtual-team development.

Recommendation

Top management and human resource units should strengthen transparent systems for recognition, rewards, performance feedback, and promotion so that workplace expectations are managed consistently and fairly. Organizations should implement cognitive-readiness activities on task prioritization, information management, focus building, working-memory support, and task-switching control. Supervisors and team leaders should reinforce virtual-team cohesion through regular check-ins, structured meetings, prompt-response protocols, clear instructions, collaborative tasks, trust-building activities, and consistent recognition of employee contributions.

The FOCUS Teams intervention program may be implemented with management support for schedules, personnel, resources, and monitoring. Its one-year phased approach should include baseline assessment, cognitive-readiness activities, communication and digital-coordination interventions, workplace-expectation and feedback sessions, cohesion-building activities, final evaluation, and sustainability planning. Future researchers may replicate the study across other industries and locations, use longitudinal or mixed-method designs, and examine additional variables such as leadership, organizational culture, digital competence, team size, and work-arrangement intensity.

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