Telecommuting as a Sustainability Performance Indicator of Work-Life balance in Philippine Companies

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Abstract

A study on some of the employee conservation HR practices of 132 Philippine companies proves that though most companies espouse Work-Life Balance (WLB) as an employee benefit, they do not necessarily consider telecommuting or working-at-home as a driver of it. The study also postulates that a new model of corporate sustainability should be implemented by local industries for the purpose of adapting to the new global standard of doing well while doing good. Conscious capitalism is fast overtaking conventional business practices, and if Philippine companies do not adapt to developing the new work place and new ways of working, then the economic, social, and environmental prosperity of the country, beginning with the long term well-being of their employees, is at stake.

Keywords: mobile workforce; telecommuting; teleworking; employee conservation; strategic human resource management; humanistic perspective; sustainability performance indicator

Background of the Study

It is safe to say that every commuter in Metro Manila complains about the city’s atrocious traffic congestion and the amount of time they waste having to suffer through it on a daily basis. In fact, office solutions firm Regus published a study in 2010 which revealed that

As traffic congestion in cities, particularly in developing nations, increases, it is disappointing to see that too many workers are still jamming the roads in the rush hour when they could be spending their time more enjoyably or more productively elsewhere, said William Willems, Regus vice president for Southeast Asia and the Australia-New Zealand regions.

Furthermore, “an estimated 20 percent of office workers worldwide spend an average 90 minutes every day going to and coming from their places of work. Although the average commute length is 25 minutes, a disheartening one in 10 commuters travels more than an hour to and from the place of work.” Apart from wasting precious time, there are also serious health hazards caused by commuter-related stress such as “raised blood pressure, musculoskeletal disorders, increased hostility and adverse effects on cognitive performance” (Lucas, 2010)

An employee’s health is not the only standard of living factor affected by extreme urban traffic jams. According to a more recent Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) study published in 2014,

The daily cost of traffic in Metro Manila is estimated at P2.4 billion. With the estimated 20 million population of Metro Manila, that amounts to P120 each resident a day. Without intervention, the cost will increase 2.5 times to P6 billion a day as traffic increases by 13 percent in 2030. That's a per capital figure of P200. (Amojelar, 2014)
Traffic congestion is only one of many challenges facing employees today as regards the attainment of work-life balance (WLB). Leiva, et.al (2015) cite Lobel in defining WLB practices as “those employer-sponsored programmes and policies that are designed to help employees manage work and personal life demands. There are different options of WLB practices such as flexible work arrangements, child care centres, teleworking, etc. (p.45)

Moreover, Chandra (2012) offers,

“In the European discourse on work-life balance (WLB), there has been a recent shift which focuses on socially sustainable work, triggered by fertility changes, rising levels of stress and sickness absence, etc. The time has come to question some of the assumptions of the current forms of competitive capitalism which values economic growth for its own sake, regardless of social factors and quality of life.”

Hence, a new corporate sustainability model must be introduced which will serve as a framework for organizational transformation from competitive to conscious capitalism.

The Corporate Sustainability Model

Some global firms have made business models which include social, environmental, and economic performance indicators as measures of efficiency and effectiveness of work process flows which measure both profitability and sustainability levels.

In their article, “A New Day for Sustainability”, Epstein and Buhovac (2014) provide a comprehensive example of a corporate sustainability framework “to aid companies in identifying, measuring, and integrating social, environmental, and economic impacts into corporate strategy and into management decisions to manage those impacts successfully and increase profitability” (p.26). It demonstrates how sustainability performance and stakeholder reaction is affected by the different inputs and processes, which in turn drives corporate financial performance in the long-term.

Figure 1. The Corporate Sustainability Model, Epstein (2008), p. 26.

![Figure 1. The Corporate Sustainability Model, Epstein (2008), p. 26.](image-url)
The inputs include the broader environment, the internal context, human and financial resources, and the business context, which in turn can act as a driving force for leadership to transform strategy and structure into that which will implement sustainable systems, programs and actions. These processes will necessarily garner outputs (i.e. products or services promised to customers) or outcomes (i.e. sales, profits, customers satisfied) that increase firm sustainability performance. Such corporate activities will not go unnoticed by stakeholders since these will have either positive or negative and immediate or eventual consequences “on the social, environmental, and economic fabric of society” (p. 27). The whole process of revamping the input-process-output business model will then have an effect on long-term corporate financial performance. A more specific example of this model through the causality of sustainability drivers will be threshed out in the theoretical framework of this study.

Meanwhile, how can Philippine companies improve their sustainability performance by administering human resource policies which enrich employees’ work-life balance? One possible solution is to promote and implement telecommuting and working at home.

**Review of Related Literature**

**From Commuting to Telecommuting**

It is in the best interest for Philippine companies to increase the promotion of telecommuting of their workforce. Here are some definitions:

“Telecommuting can be defined as a ‘work arrangement in which employees perform their regular work at a site other than the ordinary workplace, supported by technological connections: (Fitzer, 1997, p. 65)’ (cited by Johnson, 2001)

Teleworking is the commonly used term in Europe while Telecommuting is used in the US: Teleworking according to Duxbury and Higgins (2002, p.157) is “performed by individuals who are employed by an organization but who work at home or at a telecenter for some portion of their working time during regular business hours” (as cited in Bratton and Gold, 2012).

According to Gil Gordon, editor of Telecommuting Review, there are five myths and facts of teleworking presented in Table 1.

**Total Employee Mobility** as defined by Runzheimer International is as follows:

“is a management concept and business strategy that takes a more holistic and integrated approach to the mobile workforce, all with the goal of improving an organization’s talent management results, profitability, and agility, and ensuring employee satisfaction and well-being.” If properly managed, this approach can also lead to “cost savings, improved employee satisfaction and better recruitment and retention, especially among young knowledge workers” (Anonymous, 2009, p. 2).
More specifically though, one might ask, how does a firm through a concrete human resource strategy use technology to reduce environmental emissions of its firm while increasing work-life balance of its workforce?

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myths</th>
<th>Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Telecommuting is just for programmers or others using a computer terminal</td>
<td>It’s world for accountants, writers, analysts, sales people, research staff and many, many more. You are limited only by your own imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Telecommuting is just for parents who want to be at home with young children.</td>
<td>It’s almost impossible to be a full-time telecommuter and a full-time parent. Also people of all ages and personal situations are candidates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Telecommuting is a five-days-a-week deal, with no time in the office</td>
<td>The time at the remote site can – and should – range from one to four days a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Telecommuting means working at home</td>
<td>The home is only one possible workplace. Others include satellite offices, neighbourhood work centers, client’s office and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) The biggest challenges in telecommuting are the technical ones</td>
<td>With few exceptions, the technical aspects are relatively simple. The real challenges are with the human resources employed; selection, supervision, productivity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Mobile and Green Workplace

Van Heck et.al (2012) made an interesting study on how Microsoft Netherlands established ‘new ways of working’ employing state-of-the-art mobile technologies, with improvements in three interconnected areas: people, place and technology.

These innovations transformed traditional office frameworks into an ‘anytime/anywhere workplace’ which triggers flexibility, boosts worker productivity and work-life balance, and diminishes firm and employee carbon footprint. The study provides “guidelines for integrating new ways of working to improve performance through mobile work technologies” (p. 175).

In June 2006, Microsoft NL commenced its 2bPR or “to be People Ready” project with the intention of achieving its vision of ‘new ways of working’. The global firm “specified four top-level long term goals: reduce internal operating costs, optimize employee performance with enabling technologies, retain the best people and become an attractive employer, and build a case for environmental sustainability” (p.177).

The table below provides Microsoft NL’s new ways of working areas vis-a-vis each area’s
corresponding goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People, Place and Technology Goals (Microsoft NL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Ways of Working Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear therefore, that if a company is serious about transforming its business model into one which truly provides the benefits of sustainability to its stakeholders and the environment, then it will pull all the stops to do so. In the case of Microsoft NL, employee performance was optimized by introducing the ‘mobile and green high performance workplace’ to workers for increased agility in terms of where and when they work, coupled with ‘new work practices enabled by mobile work technologies’ that strengthen firm and employee performance:

“These mobile work technologies are integrated for information processing, communication and collaboration in tools such as online document management, online meetings, laptops, tablets and smart phones. Additionally, the mobile and green high performance workplace provides green benefits by reducing the carbon footprint of the firm and its employees, and thus contributing to environmental sustainability’ (Van Heck et.al, 2012, p. 176).

Results of this new practice were very encouraging as perceived productivity (in terms of employee efficacy, efficiency and quality of the executed work) improved by 2.5% from 2007 to 2010.

As for building a case for environmental sustainability, by the end of 2012, Microsoft NL was successful in reducing CO\textsubscript{2} emissions of each employee by 30%. This increase in sustainability performance was attributed to online business processes, reduction of printing requirements and energy consumption due to use of software. Furthermore, “online meetings (instead of flying to meetings), avoiding traffic jams (by using different working hours or taking the train” have also contributed to the reduction of firm and employee carbon footprint (Van Heck et.al, 2012).

**Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Teleworking**

Therefore, if Philippine companies are to adapt to meet the growing concern of employees for better WLB while also promoting sustainable development, it would be best for
them to revisit the law. Article 277 of the Philippine Labor Code (Presidential Decree No.422) states that

“The Ministry shall help promote and gradually develop, with the agreement of labor organizations and employers, labor-management cooperation programs at appropriate levels of the enterprise based on the shared responsibility and mutual respect in order to ensure industrial peace and improvement in productivity, working conditions and the quality of working life. (Incorporated by Batas Pambansa Bilang 130, August 21, 1981).”

According to the research study of Gallup UK for communications company BT regarding the top five reasons for teleworking for individuals are flexibility, increased convenience, saves travel time, reduces commuting and more efficient working (Johnson, 1997). These reasons provide a better quality of life of the employees in terms of their physical health (less environmental pollution factors), mental health (less stress), emotional and psychological health (relationships), and spiritual health (faith & spirituality).

**Theoretical Framework**

As mentioned earlier, apart from the input-process-output-outcomes model of the corporate sustainability framework, sustainability performance indicators should be further discussed using the Causality of Sustainability Drivers as the theoretical framework of this study as seen in figure 2 below:

![Figure 2. Causality of Sustainability Performance Drivers, Epstein & Buhovac (July 2014), p. 27](image)

This strategy map serves as an action plan for the firm to pursue, which eliminates inefficient activities as well. Noteworthy in the model, is the importance of human resources
and how important it is for them to comprehend their critical role in the whole process. “All four elements of the Corporate Sustainability Model connect in a chain of cause and effect. In other words, one category of measurement drives performance in the next. To closely monitor the cause-and-effect relationships, metrics must be developed.” (p.28)

For example, Figure 2 shows that as an input, a firm may have management commitment to develop a sustainability strategy to improve technology (processes) which has as a sustainability performance output: reduced emissions, therefore reduced environmental impact, which garners improved sustainability ratings. These indicators then improve the reputation of the firm as a stakeholder reaction through low employee turnover. This whole effort not only positively increases sustainability performance of the firm, but it also lowers cost and increases profit under the financial performance metrics of the firm. What is an example of a metric for sustainability structure in the context above? A performance measure for the process stage in this case could be the number of senior managers with social and environmental responsibilities.

**Conceptual Framework**

Ruivo & Neto (2010) made a study on the reasons why Enterprise Resource Planning systems or ERPs fail in small and medium-sized enterprises in Portugal. They provided a framework (figure 3 below) which is likewise applicable to this study.

![Figure 3. New set KPIs for enterprise sustainability, Ruivo & Neto (2010), p. 421.](image)

ERP software packages are traditionally selected and implemented through methodologies based on Technology or Functional determinants evaluated by operational managers and key users. They are been chosen with the same approach such as a fixed asset, where Return On Investment is the main figure evaluated by high management (Ruivo & Neto, 2010, p.421).
Ruivo & Neto discussed the disconnect between how firm’s evaluate their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in light of sustainability, by first expounding on how these SMEs, which are supposedly implementing new ways of working, are still stuck in the conventional manner of evaluating KPIs. Apart from considering the creative destruction innate in technology, they enumerate the functional domains monitored and evaluated by these ERPs, namely: Financial Management (accounting values), SCM (Supply Chain Management) engineering figures, and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) statistical information contribution. Therefore, wherein lies the disconnect?

The scholars claim that management tends to miss critical KPIs which are essential to company sustainability, namely: collaboration, scalability, flexibility, satisfaction, employee empowerment, work-life balance, social responsibility, energy efficiency, etc. Therefore, the KPIs monitored by the ERP software are not aligned with critical sustainability performance measures.

For their study, Ruivo & Neto (2010) gathered data from CEOs of 10 SMEs in Portugal using a qualitative, open-ended, in-depth interview method. Since this study focuses on telecommuting, WLB, and sustainability, the 2 KPIs of employee empowerment & WLB, and social & environmental responsibility will be explored by the proponents.

Six out of ten of the interviewees defined the concept of employee empowerment as the creation of an environment in which people at all levels feel they have real influence over standards of quality, service, and business effectiveness within their areas of responsibility. It is a strategy and philosophy that enables employees to make decisions about their jobs. In their opinion, ERP provides guidelines and boundaries so that everyone knows the limits of how they can operate. These six [out of ten] CEOs established a process that allows them to set the direction for the organization and at the same time lets the workforce finds unique ways to achieve these goals and objectives (p.425).

As for social & environmental responsibility,

All ten CEOs claim that they have plans to run their operations fitting into the grand scheme of environmental responsibility at the same time as saving money, and improving their "green" reputation in the eyes of their customers. With fuel costs up and environmental responsibility gaining ground as a moral imperative, companies are increasingly looking for ways to monitor and reduce their energy usage (Montgomery, 2006).

This study’s data will show that this could be the same case in Philippine companies wherein management has a notion of employee conservation and sustainability performance evaluation of human resources, but have yet to seriously inculcate these new ways of working in their long term strategic plans.

**Objective of the Study**

This study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the factors that will reflect a
relationship on mobile workforce telework that will impact on the company’s Human Resource Management. Specifically, this study aims to:

Investigate if the firm size and firm age of Filipino organizations affect the employers telecommuting effects for employee conservation, corporate sustainability, and work-life balance (WLB).

**Statement of the Problem**

Human resources (HR) literature suggests that younger organizations are more likely to adopt innovative HR practices for multiple reasons (Balkin & Gomez-Mejia, 1987; Heneman, Tansky & Camp, 2000, Leung, 2003). Young firms must therefore contemplate alternative HR programs that compensate for this liability without consuming cash (as cited in Mayo, Pastor, Gomez-Mejia & Cruz, 2009).

I thus posit 5 hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The younger the company, the more likely it will offer telecommuting to its employees.

Hypothesis 2: The larger the size of a company, the less likely it will offer telecommuting to its employees.

Hypothesis 3: The larger the size of the company, the more likely it will link individual performance review to sustainability performance.

Hypothesis 4: The younger the company, the more likely it will promote work-life balance.

Hypothesis 5: The larger the size of the company, the more likely it will promote work-life balance.

**Methodology**

The research strategy is survey strategy, which tends to be used for empirical research. The survey allows us to collect quantitative data which you can analyze quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2010). The scope of the study is limited to 132 organizations using the convenience sampling method. The organization is the unit of analysis that will be used in the study. From the survey participants, two entrepreneurs were interviewed by the proponents and observed their practices for triangulation. Based on an unpublished multiple-case study research in the printing industry by Morta (2014), these entrepreneurs described their experiences of telecommuting and working from home and its effect to their business’ sustainability and work-life balance. A news article in Manila Standard Today also highlights “the future of the mobile manager” by Poblador (2015).

Most management and organizational researchers suggest that you are more likely to gain access where you are able to use existing contacts (Buchanan et al. 1988; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Johnson 1975, as cited in Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2010). The first 35 research participants were provided by our colleagues in the Human Resource Management course (DBA880D) and 97 participants from Edralin, Quero, and Tibon, (2015).
The research instrument adopted in this paper is from the Humanistic Sustainability Practices of Private Companies in the Philippines that was tested and developed by Edralin, et al. (2015). The brief information about the companies included are name of the company, type or product/service offered, number of employees, number of years operating and the type of ownership. The survey questions were limited to the employee orientation, employee conservation and human management were provided for this research.

Methodological Limitations

The survey questions were limited to the employee orientation, employee conservation and human management were provided for this research. Most of the respondents are from the fast moving consumer goods and production industry.

The respondents gave their consent to participate in the study and had expressed truthfulness in providing the data. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and they were ensured of the confidentiality of data gathered as requested by the respondents.

Significance of the Study

This study will significantly contribute to the literature on sustainability in the workforce of Philippine companies in the following aspects:

**It will provide a better understanding of the implementation of telecommuting/teleworking or mobile workforce for employee retention, which to the best of our knowledge after a review of literature in various journals has not yet been demonstrated empirically in the Philippines.**

**It will address a research gap in the human resource management literature by empirically examining the constructs.**

Results and Discussion of the Study

Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean are employed in analyzing categorical numerical data for this study. Frequency tables are presented in summarizing categorical data to find out the frequency and percentage of responses to questions per key construct identified in the study. For each variable, the measure or indicators are the answers to the survey and the primary source of data was the survey results. Qualitative data analysis was used for the one-on-one interviews. Moreover, content analysis of existing documents such as HR job descriptions and company profile, for the case studies was utilized.

Figure 4 shows that 51% of all the respondents uses telecommuting from moderate to very large extent. However, there were no remarks as to how they are actually practicing telecommuting.
**Telecommuting**

Figure 4. Extent of Telecommuting  
*Figure 5 depicts that majority of the respondents are not practicing working from home.*

This may be due to the respondents’ type of companies which are mostly manufacturers of fast-moving consumer goods.
Working at Home

Figure 5. Extent of Working at Home

Hypothesis 1: The younger the company, the more likely it will offer telecommuting to its employees.

Table 4A: Age vs. Promoting Telecommuting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Not Practicing</th>
<th>Minimal Extent</th>
<th>Moderate Extent</th>
<th>Large Extent</th>
<th>Very Large Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 years and below</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 25 years</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 25 years</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO DATA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 data missing under 10 to 25 years
Percentage of Minimal Extent to Not Practicing (Promoting Telecommuting) per Age Category
10 years and below 67.86%
10 to 25 years 84.78%
Above 25 years 80.00%

Table 5
Age vs. Encourage Telecommuting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Not Practicing</th>
<th>Minimal Extent</th>
<th>Moderate Extent</th>
<th>Large Extent</th>
<th>Very Large Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 years and below</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 25 years</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 25 years</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO DATA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Minimal Extent to Not Practicing (Encourage Telecommuting) per Age Category
10 years and below 50.00%
10 to 25 years 54.35%
Above 25 years 42.00%

Table 6
Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encouraging</th>
<th>Promoting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see in table 6, there is a positive correlation between age of the company and the company encouraging telecommuting, however the correlation is weak. Same results between age of the company and the company promoting telecommuting.

Hypothesis 2: The larger the size of a company, the less likely it will offer telecommuting to its employees.

Based on the descriptive statistics in table 7 above, we reject our hypothesis as we can see that most of the companies do not practice promoting nor encouraging telecommuting to its workforce no matter the size. It is interesting to note though, that 11 of the large companies in the sample encourage telecommuting with the frequency within that rank being the largest, followed by small companies with 8 of them encouraging workers to telecommute to a very large extent.
Hypothesis 3: The larger the size of the company, the more likely it will link individual performance review to sustainability performance.

Table 8 below presents the frequency distribution of the response in terms of the individual performance review to sustainability performance vs. the size of the company. As we can see, large companies tend to link individual performance review to sustainability performance from a large to a very large extent. Apart from this, majority of the respondents practice linking individual performance review to sustainability performance to a large extent (48%) as presented in figure 6 below.
**Hypothesis 4: The younger the company, the more likely it will promote work-life balance.**

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age vs Work-Life Balance</th>
<th>10 Years and Below</th>
<th>10 to 25 Years</th>
<th>26 and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Practicing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Extent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Extent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Extent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large Extent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Per table 9 above, there is a positive correlation of 0.22 between WLB and years, however the correlation is weak. Our hypothesis is rejected but it is noteworthy that older companies promote WLD from a large extent to a very large extent.
Hypothesis 5: The larger the size of the company, the more likely it will promote work-life balance.

Table 10 presents the frequency distribution of the response in terms of promoting work-life balance across company size. It is apparent that our hypothesis is acceptable seeing as majority of the respondents from large companies promote WLB from a large to very large extent. As a whole sample size, majority of the respondents’ imbibe work-life balance to a large extent (43%) as presented in figure 7.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promote Work-Life Balance</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Extent</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Extent</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large Extent</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Extent of Promoting Work-Life Balance
As mentioned, majority of the respondents are from the fast-moving consumer goods industry which ties individual performance review to sustainability performance, and promotes work-life balance, but not necessarily promotes working from home and telecommuting, because the nature of the industry dictates, physical presence in the company is required. Since the respondents are not necessarily the owners of the company, the perception of the respondent is limited to their respective functional areas.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>Adj. R</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>4.1 2.1, 2.2, and Years</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td>1.532</td>
<td>0.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>4.4 2.1, 2.2, and Years</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>3.793</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12

Model 2: Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>3.688</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>21.799</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>-0.409</td>
<td>0.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.682</td>
<td>0.497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>3.234</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: 4.4 WLB

Table 12 shows that the only statistically significant coefficient in Model 2 is the variable: Years. Thus, we can remove variables 2.1 (working at home) and 2.2 (telecommuting). Therefore, for every unit increase in years, the dependent variable which 4.4 (Work-Life Balance), increases by 0.01 unit.

Roy Alberto is a mobile workforce manager and he is a digital marketing specialist for a small sustainable tourism destination in Laguna. He trained his employees on how to use the internet. “For instance, should there be a particular promotion offered online, the service frontliners must push it onsite as well. He also showed them his Facebook updates, such as posts of food and beverage offerings which essentially tangibilizes the experience for prospects. He reminded them that what is posted online should be consistent with actual product delivery…. Flexibility is a major benefit of mobile workforce management.” (Poblador, 2015)

When we interviewed some of the survey respondents who practices telecommuting, and here are some of the highlights that are vital in their operations as an enterprise. Happy Print Advertising, Inc. President, Ms. Samaco, allocates forty percent (40%) of her work week telecommuting. She goes to here clients and market their products and services to them and attend to the needs of their customers. While in-transit, she frequently use data and mobile services to communicate the needs of her clients to her home office giving a higher turn-around time. Some of her employees are authorized to communicate with their
clients directly using email and mobile services as indicated in their job description.

Similarly, NBA Press, Inc. manager/co-owner, Mr. Alcantara, earmarks his morning schedule for meeting with clients and discussing their requirements and specifications for production. Right after his meeting, he connects with his operations by telecommuting and immediately forwarding his clients’ needs. He also shared that one time he was taking his vacation and a client from Cebu needs a magazine to be printed in a few days, with mobile technology, he was able to prepare the magazine and sent details for approval via email. Once approved by the client online, they were able to print and send the magazines in time for the event.

Mobile technology (telecommuting) is vital in today’s businesses. It helps sustain the business and provide better work-life balance for companies and improve the sustainability of its operations.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The deplorable traffic congestion in the Philippines has recently been ranked as the fourth worst in Asian countries and ninth in the world. Philippine companies should seriously consider this external environment factor as a major threat to the well-being of their employees, as well as to the productivity of their firms. This study merely illustrates that though local industries may have an idea of some of the elements of sustainability performance, and the benefits of promoting telecommuting and working-at-home as drivers of increased WLB, they do not necessarily know how to tangibly inculcate these into their strategic plans.

This is evident in the data above which shows that even if the majority of the respondents believe they use telecommuting to a moderate to large extent, promote WLB as larger and older firms, who likewise tie individual performance review to sustainability performance from a large to very large extent, it is not evident as to how these older firms in fact practice telecommuting. Majority of the all the respondents whether small, medium, or large in size, do not encourage nor promote telecommuting, even if a meager 11 of the large companies promote telecommuting. In this study as mentioned, majority of the firms were from the manufacturing of FMCGs.

The proponents are also aware of the absence of IT firms in the sample of the study, therefore management who will be reading this study may very well be unconvinced of the benefits of developing their IT systems to encompass monitoring and evaluating their sustainability KPIs. In a global economy, this could be to their disadvantage.

As companies increase their locations globally, cloud-based technology platforms and outsourced HR process can update employee data almost instantly (Johnson, 2013). Human Resources (HR) is also evolving by adopting newer technologies, streamlining its work processes, extending services globally and using shared services to increase quality and efficiency.
Cloud technology has enabled HR to move from a transaction-based to a more strategic discipline that creates value for its stakeholders – senior management, business partners and employees.” (Johnson, 2013, p. 11) Shared data allows HR leaders to provide access to global users for an automated or outsourced function that responds to employee’s individual needs. (Johnson, 2013)

The following factors address the ever changing needs of the workforce: compliance requirements, globalization, empowered employees and the social revolution. And cloud-based solutions are now user-focused, process-driven and increasingly cost-efficient. (Johnson, 2013)

Improved data collection methods and updated policies and procedures will have a significant impact on the company’s compliance effort. Perhaps more importantly, they will also help retain a company’s good business standing, help foster employee relations, improve retention and possibly attract more skilled talent ready to become globally mobile. (Zook & Mullaney, 2012, p. 62)

The proponent recommends that further study be made to specific industries that uses mobile workforce extensively and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages presented by Madsen, 2011 in table 14 below. Similarly we can use Appendix 1: Finnish Ministry of Labour
Telework Questionnaire (Johnson, 1997, p. 139-142), to help identify the telework needs and requirements and can be a useful assessment for older managers and supervisors on how teleworking meets the needs of the people and the business for the Philippine setting.

Table 14

Advantages and Challenges of Telecommuting for Organizations and Individuals (Madsen, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages for Organizations</th>
<th>Advantages for Individuals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to government regulations</td>
<td>Avoidance of office politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved employee recruitment</td>
<td>Better work/family balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved employee retention</td>
<td>Can work with disabilities/health problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Improved productivity
- Improved quality
- Improved satisfaction
- Increased morale
- Increased organizational commitment
- Opportunities for better service
- Promoted diversity
- Reduced absenteeism
- Reduced expenses
- Reduced office space requirements

- Child care issues less stressful
- Flexibility to relocate
- Improved morale
- Improved productivity
- Improved quality of life and work life
- Increased autonomy
- Increased family and leisure time
- Increased job satisfaction
- Increased technical skills
- Less distractions
- Less spillover
- Lower stress level
- More community times
- More flexibility
- Reduced commute time
- Saves money on gas and parking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges for Organizations</th>
<th>Challenges for individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alignment with organization goals and mission</td>
<td>Initial financial investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes of in-office employees</td>
<td>Management control and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career promotions</td>
<td>Management and staff training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear common aims and procedures</td>
<td>Measuring productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication concerns</td>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation and benefit packages</td>
<td>Redesign of processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent policies and contracts</td>
<td>Reduced informal mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinating work</td>
<td>Reduced networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate buy-in</td>
<td>Security issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating synergy</td>
<td>Technical support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptions in work teams</td>
<td>Thorough organizational &amp; individual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee accountability</td>
<td>Union concerns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unrealistic</td>
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</table>
expectations

Accessibility to others

Career development and promotions
Development of interpersonal skills
Handling expenses
Interruptions from home
Intrinsic motivation
Isolation and social satisfaction
Lack of management or improper management
Reduced informal communication
Reduced informal mentoring
Reduced informal training and development
Reduced social networking
Remaining “visible”
Self-efficacy
Shared work space in office
Tendency to work more hours
Unrealistic expectations
Work space in remote locations
Work/personal time blurred

In conclusion, the proponent would just like to reiterate that:

Working attitudes and work practices need to change and this is the key to sustainability and performance gains; a work culture that supports this behavioral change in terms of Space, Technology, People and Processes will be more efficient, successful and sustainable than one which does not. (Woolliams and Trompenaars, 2013)
References


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