IMPACT ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE NETWORK MODEL ON ENGAGEMENT AND INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES IN A TRADITIONAL, REMOTE, AND HYBRID WORKFORCE NETWORK

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the impact of different workforce network models, specifically the traditional, remote, and hybrid configurations, on employee engagement and individual performance within the financial technology sector of the small business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in Metro Manila, Philippines. The study aspires to identify noteworthy distinctions in employee engagement and individual performance among these diverse workforce network models. Employing a Stratified Random Sampling technique, the study ensures a proportional representation of three selected companies, resulting in a total sample size of one hundred (100). Survey questionnaires, administered through online forms, were completed by respondents on three occasions: during their tenure in a traditional workforce network, a remote workforce network, and a hybrid workforce network. Data analysis employed various statistical methods, including Frequency Distribution, Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA with repeated measures, and Pairwise Comparison. Demographic insights revealed that most respondents were male, single, aged 31 to 40, and possessed 5-8 years of work experience. Results indicated that employees within the hybrid workforce network demonstrated the highest level of engagement, aligning with Kahn's Engagement Theory encompassing safety, meaningfulness, and availability, surpassing both remote and traditional workforce networks. Moreover, the study found that individuals in the hybrid workforce network exhibited superior individual performance, based on Campbell's Theory of Performance, across various dimensions such as job-related activities, unrelated duties, communication tasks, evidence of effort, personal discipline maintenance, peer and team performance encouragement, supervision and leadership, and management and administration of employees. Finally, the research establishes a significant disparity in the levels of engagement and individual performance among employees engaged in traditional, remote, and hybrid workforce network models.

Keywords: human resource management, workforce network model, employee engagement, individual performance

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the work landscape has transformed significantly, propelled by the surge in online communication and the profound effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted the widespread adoption of remote and hybrid work arrangements. With the easing of pandemic restrictions, businesses faced choices in implementing the most suitable work environment: traditional, remote, or hybrid. The conventional in-office setup, where daily commutes were the norm,

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was predominant, with remote and hybrid work options being relatively unknown before the pandemic (International Labour Organization, 2020). Traditional employment practices involved mandatory thumbprint submissions at designated hours (Abukhadra, 2020), while remote work allowed individuals to operate away from corporate headquarters (Gartner, 2022), and hybrid work entailed a flexible division of time between office and remote locations (Qualtrics, 2022). Despite the benefits of these changes, concerns arose regarding their impact on employee engagement and performance.

In the Philippines, the work dynamics of companies underwent substantial shifts following the declaration of a state of calamity in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (International Labour Organization, 2020) (Official Gazette, 2020). Essential businesses, including hospitals, pharmacies, telecom companies, capital markets, and humanitarian assistance, were permitted to remain open during stringent lockdowns, prompting a shift to remote work arrangements for non-essential sectors to sustain operations (International Labour Organization, 2020). As restrictions eased, businesses gradually reinstated staff, with a prevalent preference for mixed work environments (Talavera, 2022).

The pandemic underscored the effectiveness of remote work for certain industries (CTLink, 2022). Business process outsourcing (BPO) companies, responsible for executing various business functions for other firms (Corporate Financial Institute, 2022), conducted extensive trials and integrations of remote work into their operations over the past two years (Konnektor Technologies, 2022). While recognizing the feasibility of remote work for 1.4 million Filipinos, some companies in the Philippines, despite having the capability for hybrid workforces, still adhere to full office schedules, possibly due to management resistance to change and skepticism about productivity outside the office (CTLink, 2022).

In a recent study by Citrix, titled "Work Rebalanced: The Citrix Hybrid Work Report," which included 567 traditional in-office employees, 867 hybrid workers, and 366 remote workers, engagement and performance levels were compared across different workforce networks (Citrix, 2022). However, the study had limitations, as engagement and performance are multifaceted and can vary across industries and countries due to cultural differences. This international study also included participants from diverse sectors with varying pay scales and types of labor.

Addressing these gaps, the current study, titled "Impact Analysis of Workforce Network Model on Engagement and Individual Performance of Employees in a Traditional, Remote, and Hybrid Workforce Network," focuses on the workforce network model's effects on engagement and individual performance within three selected small business process outsourcing (BPO) companies in Metro Manila. To mitigate bias arising from differences in engagement and performance drivers, the researchers enlisted the same respondents who retained their position, salary range, supervisor, and company while experiencing traditional, remote, and hybrid workforce networks over four years. By comprehending the impact of different workforce networks on employee engagement and individual performance, the study aims to identify the workforce network that fosters higher engagement and superior performance in selected small business process outsourcing (BPO) companies. In this study, the researchers selected three (3) small business process outsourcing (BPO) companies in the financial technology segment located in Metro Manila, Philippines.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the study's objectives, which are meant to help readers better comprehend the subject:
1. To determine the impact of the three-workforce network model on employee engagement and individual performance;
2. To ascertain the difference in employee engagement and individual performance among workforce network models.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research method was used in this study to analyze and determine the

engagement and performance level of the employees in selected business process outsourcing (BPO) companies. The factors of employee engagement used to determine the level of engagement of employees were derived from Kahn's Theory of Engagement, while the factors of individual performance used to determine the level of performance of employees were derived from Campbell's Theory of Performance.

The researchers also used the survey method on a total of hundred (100) employees from the three (3) selected companies in the financial technology segment of the small business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. The survey was answered three (3) times by the respondent. One for when they were in a traditional workforce network, one for when they were in a remote workforce network model, and one for when they were in a hybrid workforce network. The data gathered was analyzed and presented in a frequency distribution table, mean and standard deviation with interpretation table, ANOVA table, and Pairwise Comparison.

Research Instrument. The researchers carefully crafted the query on their own by drawing on the readings pertinent to the investigation to ensure that the validity and precision of the investigation were maintained. The researchers placed a strong emphasis on the accuracy of the questions as well as their relevance to the study and the research. The researchers emphasized the accuracy and significance of the questions with the study; hence, the questionnaire to be used was easy for the respondents to understand. The statements on the survey were conditions and situations that might have given different responses depending on the workforce network model that the respondents were participating in. The factors of employee engagement used to determine the level of engagement of employees were derived from Kahn's Theory of Engagement, while the factors of individual performance used to determine the level of performance of employees were derived from Campbell's Theory of Performance.

The survey questionnaire used was divided into three sections: the first section was about the demographic profile of the respondent. The second section assessed their engagement in the organization, which consisted of 12 questions, and the third section assessed their individual performance, which consisted of 32 questions. The responses to the statements were measured using a Likert Scale of 1-4, with the corresponding meanings: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

Then, the research instrument used in this study was validated by business managers, an English professor, Human Resource professionals, an MBA Professor, and a Psychometrician. The research instrument and research protocol used in this study were finally approved by the Centro Escolar University Institutional Ethics Review Board before undergoing reliability testing consisting of thirty-five (35) participants conducted by the statistician.

Data Analysis. The frequency distribution table was used to conveniently show a glance at collected data. The table also demonstrated the level of the observations, their concentration in one location or throughout the full scale, and their distribution.

To verbally interpret the weighted mean scores of each variable, the size of the scales is computed based on interpolation by subtracting the lowest value in the Likert Scale (1-Strongly Disagree) from the highest value in the Likert Scale (4-Strongly Agree) and dividing it from the number of points in the scale (4 point scale). This produced the equation $(4-1)/4=0.75$. The same equation generated a range that was used for verbal interpretation as follows: 1.00-1.75 for Strongly Disagree, 1.76-2.5 for Disagree, 2.51-3.25 for Agree, and 3.26-4.0 for Strongly Agree.

To determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the measured means of a sample's different subgroups, the ANOVA formula was used. First, the mean for each variable (engagement and performance) was calculated. Then deviation of each of the scores (within the group) from the group and the deviation of each group's mean from the overall mean (between groups) was calculated. Next, the ratio of between-group variation to within-group variation (f-ratio). This statistical method was used to compare the means of two or more groups.

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Pairwise Comparison was also used to compare whether there was a significant difference in engagement and individual performance of employees on different workforce network models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to gender, civil status, age and tenure

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	64	64.00
Female	36	36.00
Civil Status		
Single	59	59.00
Married	41	41.00
Age		
30 and below	33	33.00
31-40 year	55	55.00
41-above	12	12.00
Tenure		
1-4 years	30	30.00
5-8 years	53	53.00
9-above years	17	17.00

Regarding age, 33% of the participants are aged 30 and below, while 55% are aged between 31 and 40. Only 12% of the participants are 41 years old and above. This result suggests that the majority of the participants belong to the mid-career stage. Most participants are male, accounting for 64% of the total participants, while 36% are female. This finding is found in a male-dominated workforce in certain industries. 59% of the participants are single, while 41% are married. This result suggests that most participants still need to settle into their personal lives. 30% of the participants have worked for 1-4 years, 53% have worked for 5-8 years, and 17% have worked for nine years and above. This result suggests that most participants are relatively experienced in their respective fields.

It was revealed that there was a gender gap in the three financial technology business process outsourcing companies. There was also only a small number of people beyond 40 years old. These findings reveal that the stereotype in the IT industry that it is dominated by males is still true. The findings also indicate that fewer older people are working in the same industry. There are instances when the standard deviations were higher in the traditional workforce network while the weighted mean was highest in the hybrid workforce network which created an interest in recommending a correlation of the age of employees with their engagement and performance in different workforce network models for future studies.

2. Employee engagement

The grand mean of employee engagement is highest among hybrid workers with a weighted mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.51, followed by remote workers with a weighted mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of 0.51, then traditional workers with a weighted mean of 1.54 and a standard deviation of 0.54.

The finding suggests that hybrid work may offer the best of both worlds in terms of safety, meaningfulness, and availability. In line with Mann's study, engagement increases when employees can spend some time working remotely and some time working in a traditional office space co-located with their coworkers (Mann & Adkins, 2017). Employees who experience this blended working arrangement have higher levels of engagement than those employees who do not (Mann & Adkins, 2017).

3. Difference Between the Three Workforce Network Models in Terms of Employee Engagement

It can be seen from the results that under the traditional model, the mean is 1.54 with a standard deviation of 0.22. On the other hand, under the remote model, the respondents incurred a higher mean of 2.52 with a standard deviation of 0.11.

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Finally, under the hybrid model, the respondents have the highest mean of 3.50 with a standard deviation of 0.09.

Table 2
Significant Difference Between the Three Workforce Network Models in Terms of Employee Engagement (Repeated Measures ANOVA)

Model	Mean	Std. Deviation	F-ratio	p-value	Interpretation
Traditional	1.54	0.22	5031.789	0.000	Significant
Remote	2.52	0.11			
Hybrid	3.50	0.09			

Using repeated measures ANOVA, it was found that the F-ratio is 5031.789 with a p-value of 0.000, which indicates that the differences are significant.

The finding is in line with a study conducted by Citrix revealing that Hybrid workers reported higher levels of engagement compared to their remote and in-office counterparts. Specifically, 69% of hybrid workers reported feeling engaged, compared to 56% of remote workers and 51% of in-office employees (Citrix, 2022). Additionally, a two-year study by Stanford University found that, on average, remote workers are 13.5% more productive, 9% more engaged in their jobs, and 50% less likely to quit compared to office-based employees (Holeiciuc, 2022). Contrary to the common stereotype, remote workers are not necessarily unproductive individuals who are easily distracted and unprepared for the workday. Instead, they are often a diverse group of empowered, self-directed, and entrepreneurial professionals (Hanover, 2022).

4. Comparisons for Employee Engagement

Table 3
Pairwise Comparisons for Employee Engagement

Variables	Mean Diff	Standard Error	p-value	Interpretation
Hybrid vs. Traditional	1.963	0.025	0.000	Significant
Hybrid vs Remote	0.976	0.017	0.000	Significant
Remote vs. Traditional	0.987	0.016	0.000	Significant

The first comparison, hybrid vs traditional, has a mean difference of 1.963, a standard error of 0.025, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the difference in employee engagement between these two workforce networks is statistically significant. Specifically, employees in the hybrid workforce network have significantly higher levels of engagement compared to those in the traditional workforce network.

The second comparison, hybrid vs. remote, has a mean difference of 0.976, a standard error of 0.017, and a p-value of 0.000, also indicating that the difference in employee engagement between these two workforce networks is statistically significant. In this case, employees in the hybrid workforce network have higher levels of engagement compared to those in the remote workforce network.

The third comparison, remote vs. traditional, has a mean difference of 0.987, a standard error of 0.016, and a p-value of 0.000, again indicating that the difference in employee engagement between these two workforce networks is statistically significant. Employees in the remote workforce network have higher levels of engagement compared to those in the traditional workforce network.

These findings suggest that a hybrid workforce network may be more effective in promoting employee engagement compared to traditional and remote workforce networks. The higher levels of engagement among employees in the hybrid workforce network may be due to the flexibility and autonomy they have in managing their work and balancing their personal and professional responsibilities.

One study by Eiler et al. (2020) found that remote work was associated with higher levels of employee engagement and job satisfaction compared to traditional workforce networks. Similarly, a study by Magnavita et al. (2021) found that telecommuting (a form of remote work) was associated with increased employee job satisfaction and decreased work-family conflict. In addition, a meta-analysis by Grawitch et al. (2017) found that flexible workforce networks were positively associated with employee well-being and job satisfaction. Similarly, a systematic review by Alnaser and Alshahrani (2021) found that remote work was positively associated with employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance.

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5. Difference Between the Three Workforce Network Models in Terms of Individual Performance

Table 4
Significant Difference Between the Three Workforce Network Models in Terms of Individual Performance (Repeated Measures ANOVA)

Model	Mean	Std. Deviation	F-ratio	p-value	Interpretation
Traditional	1.56	0.20	6433.709	0.000	Significant
Remote	2.54	0.16			
Hybrid	3.53	0.08			

The grand mean of individual performance is again highest among hybrid workers with a weighted mean of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.50, followed by remote workers with a weighted mean of 2.54 and a standard deviation of 0.53, then traditional workers with a weighted mean of 1.56 and a standard deviation of 0.53.

The finding suggests that employees in the hybrid workforce network tend to rate themselves the highest in terms of individual performance, while employees in the traditional workforce network tend to rate themselves the lowest. The remote workforce network falls in between the two.

The result of this study is in line with the other studies revealing that flexible work or the hybrid workforce network "has a significant and positive effect on job performance" and "positively affects work engagement" (Naqshbandi, 2023).

The F-ratio for the ANOVA was significant at $p < 0.001$, indicating that there are significant differences in individual performance among the three workforce networks. Specifically, employees in the traditional workforce network had a mean performance score of 1.56 with a standard deviation of 0.20. This was significantly lower than the mean score for employees in the remote workforce network, which was 2.54 with a standard deviation of 0.16, and the mean score for employees in the hybrid workforce network, which was 3.53 with a standard deviation of 0.08.

These results suggest that employees in the remote and hybrid workforce network outperformed their counterparts in the traditional workforce network in terms of individual performance. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown that remote and hybrid workforce networks can lead to increased productivity and job satisfaction among employees (Golden et al., 2020). This finding is also in line with a study conducted by Citrix revealing that Hybrid workers reported higher levels of positivity about their performance. 73% of hybrid workers reported being positive about their personal performance, compared to 69% of remote workers and 65% of in-office employees (Citrix, 2022).

6. Pairwise Comparisons for Individual Performance

The first comparison between hybrid and traditional workforce networks shows a significant mean difference of 1.970 (SE=0.018, p=0.000). This means that employees in the hybrid workforce network outperformed their counterparts in the traditional workforce network by a substantial margin. This finding is consistent with the growing body of research indicating that a hybrid workforce network can be highly beneficial for employee performance (Golden et al., 2020).

Table 5
Pairwise Comparisons for Individual Performance

Variables	Mean Diff	Standard Error	p-value	Interpretation
Hybrid vs. Traditional	1.970	0.018	0.000	Significant
Hybrid vs Remote	0.993	0.016	0.000	Significant
Remote vs. Traditional	0.977	0.018	0.000	Significant

The second comparison, between hybrid and remote workforce networks, also shows a significant mean difference of 0.993 (SE=0.016, p=0.000). This suggests that employees in the hybrid workforce network performed better than those in the remote workforce network, although the difference is not as substantial as that between hybrid and traditional arrangements.

Finally, the third comparison between remote and traditional workforce networks shows a significant mean difference of 0.977 (SE=0.018, p=0.000). This indicates that employees in the remote workforce network outperformed those in the traditional workforce network, although again,

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the difference is smaller than that between hybrid and traditional arrangements.

The table provides valuable insight into the individual performance of employees across different workforce networks and suggests that a hybrid workforce network may be particularly effective in promoting high levels of individual performance in the workplace**.** These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that remote work can be beneficial for employee performance (Kurland & Bailey, 2019). However, the results also highlight the potential benefits of a hybrid workforce network, which appear to offer even greater benefits for individual performance.

CONCLUSIONS
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On the demographic profiles of the respondents, it was revealed that there was a gender gap in the three financial technology business process outsourcing companies. There was also only a small number of people beyond 40 years old. These findings reveal that the stereotype in the IT industry that it is dominated by males is still true. The findings also indicate that fewer older people are working in the same industry. There are instances when the standard deviations were higher in the traditional workforce network while the weighted mean was highest in the hybrid workforce network which created an interest in recommending a correlation of the age of employees with their engagement and performance in different workforce network models for future studies.

This study revealed that there was a significant difference in engagement and individual performance of employees among traditional, remote, and hybrid workforce networks. It was also revealed that a hybrid workforce network has a positive impact on engagement in terms of safety, meaningfulness, and availability. Moreover, on individual performance in terms of job-related activities, unrelated duties, tasks requiring written and spoken communication, evidence of effort, personal discipline maintenance, peer and team performance encouragement, supervision and leadership, and management and administration of employees in the three (3) selected companies in the financial technology segment of small business

process outsourcing (BPO) industry, therefore, should be implemented. However, the implementation of a hybrid workforce network model in applicable industries should be carefully planned to attain positive impacts on individual performance and work engagement.

At the beginning of conducting this research in 2022, there were only a few studies on the impact of workforce network models on employee engagement and individual performance. As this research progressed, more studies were being conducted, ultimately contributing to the analysis presented by the researchers.

By presenting this study to the selected small business process outsourcing companies, they will be able to finally confidently pursue a hybrid workforce network model. Also, by contributing this study to the growing body of knowledge, it will open possibilities for other researchers to deeper investigate the implementation of a hybrid workforce network model in business process outsourcing companies of bigger scale in the Philippines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the study's findings based on those indicated above:

1. In today's extremely competitive business market, many organizations need help to retain talented staff. To improve employee retention and loyalty to their firms, management should implement strategic human resource management policies and practices such as strategic recruitment, training, performance management, and compensation practices. Making sure employees are aware of what to expect from their employers and fostering a work environment where they feel valued and cared for (via both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards) are two things that organizations that wish to retain their top employees can accomplish. Therefore, Human Resource Management's retention strategies should center on ensuring a few key factors, such as the following: giving employees

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meaningful work; ensuring that employees feel respected, valued, and treated fairly; taking care not to overburden employees; creating clear expectations and policies; providing employees with a benefits package that truly meets their needs; investing in employees' career growth and professional development; and providing employees with fair compensation

2. A larger sample would be recommended for future research, and it would be intriguing to learn whether there are outcome variations between other organizational styles. It would be helpful to include employee social and organizational context variables to understand how factors like team motivations and competing interests of organizations and their employees influence where people opt for employment. This study helps us understand the often conflicting preferences and workplace needs for communicative and concentrated work.

3. In order to create a proper balance between working from home and working at the office, organizations need to make clear agreements with employees on any working network models. Employees will also be able to take advantage of both the advantages of working from home (such as higher productivity and greater flexibility) and working in an office (such as knowledge sharing and improved teamwork).

4. To allow the respondents to explain their response in parts of the assessment where standard deviations were highest in another workforce network while the mean score is highest in another.

5. To conduct a case study regarding employee engagement and individual performance of employees in different workforce network models by interviewing the employees, and management of some BPO organizations to establish what other solutions can be done to proceed to a hybrid workforce network.

6. To conduct research in other business process outsourcing (BPO) companies of bigger scale and/or different sectors.

7. To conduct the same study wherein the age of respondents is classified according to generation (Gen X, Gen Z, Generation Alpha).

8. To correlate age with engagement and individual performance on different workforce network models as it could be a factor why some standard deviations were higher in traditional workforce networks even though the weighted mean is higher in hybrid or remote workforce networks.

9. To correlate individual performance and employee engagement in different workforce network.

10. To implement a hybrid workforce network in the three (3) selected companies in the financial technology segment of small business process outsourcing (BPO) industry according to the findings of the study.

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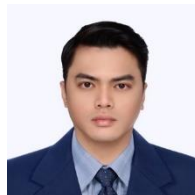
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