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TELECOMMUTING ETHICS AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICTS/ FAMILY-WORK CONFLICTS

by
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Dona Emile Barakat for Master of Human Resources Management
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The objective of the study assesses whether the level of telecommuting ethics will be impacted by the work family conflicts the person is facing. We are also interested in uncovering whether gender plays any role in the variables of interest. The basic proposition is that people who face lots of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts may be more ethically lenient towards telecommuting. The study aims assessing such relationships among a sample of Lebanese business professionals.

This study relies on quantitative data collection and analysis. Quantitative research methods were administered to collect and analyze the data in this field project given the objectives of this study. The data collected through surveys addressed to business professionals in various Lebanese organizations. A convenience sample of about 105 employees was contacted in the greater Beirut area. The information and findings collected from the literature review and through the survey were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics and correlations and analysis of variance and multivariate analysis.

The findings found no link between conflicts and telecommuting, but significant gender differences were found in family-work conflicts and work-family conflicts and telecommuting employer related ethics.

CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT v

ABSTRACT vi

LIST OF TABLES ix

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION 2

II. LITERATURE REVIEW 5

A. Telecommuting 5

B. Work-Family Conflicts and Family-Work Conflicts 18

C. Ethics of Care and Ethics of Justice 21

D. The Link between Telecommuting and Work-Family Conflicts and Family-Work Conflicts 25

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 28

A. Research Objective 28

B. Research Questions 28

C. Specific Research Hypothesis 28

D. Methodology 29

E. Sample 29

F. Recruitment Process 29

G. Data Analysis 30

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 31

A. Work- Family Conflict and Family- Work Conflicts 35

B. Ethics..... 36

C. Hypothesis..... 42

V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS..... 44

Appendix

I. EMAIL INVITATION..... 48

REFERENCE..... 55

TABLES

Table Page

1. Demographics- Gender 31
2. Demographics- Age 31
3. Demographics- Marital Status 32
4. Demographics- Number of Children 32
5. Demographics- Nature of Work 33
6. Total Work Experience 33
7. Positions 34
8. Usage of Domestic help at home 34
9. Telecommuting/flextime availability at your company 34
10. Rotated Component Matrix 1 35
11. Rotated Component Matrix 2 37
12. T-Test / Gender 39
13. Correlation 40
14. T-Test/Children vs. No Children 41

To

My Beloved Family

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

By definition, telecommuting is working as an employee of an organization at home or at a satellite location (Illozor & Illozor, 2001). There is a global increase in the number of people who telecommute, engaged in work away from traditional office site (Illozor & Illozor, 2001). It is a phenomenon that will continue to increase in popularity (Banham, 1996). Moreover, the increase in the number of telecommuters is generally due to developments in technology, a range of political social demographic, economic and environmental factors (Illozor & Illozor, 2001). Still, some organizations are reluctant to adopt telework programs despite statistical evidence indicating that they yield higher productivity, cost savings, and other advantages (Guthrie, 1997).

Teleworking ethics has always been a concern for both employee and employer. More specifically, ethics deals with our morals and values as people; a system of principles that tell people what acts are right and which are wrong. Moreover, these philosophical perspectives provide people with a basis to form ethical decisions (Guthrie, 1997). Teleworking ethics are an evolving code of conduct that dictates employee, managerial, and corporate behavior to do right within a teleworking context (Guthrie, 1997). These refer to how employees and employers should act, what actions are considered to be ethically right or wrong.

Even though telecommuting might seem like a win-win situation for both employers and employees, it still raises concerns regarding corporate risk (Banham, 1996). Various risks are associated with telecommuting, which include significant information risks (Karstadt, 2000). Moreover, loss of data confidentiality and integrity

are important risks. The computers at the home site might be potentially be used by any number of unauthorized parties (Karstadt, 2000). Companies usually adopt strategies for telecommuting which include a telecommunication policy that addresses legal, professional, and social responsibilities – communicating clear goals and objectives, requiring telecommuters to communicate online regularly, and ensuring that communication lines with management are regular and free (Illozor & Illozor, 2001).

Work-family conflicts occur due to the mismatching demands from work and family on a working individual. This is caused because of pressures in one domain hinders the ability to perform well in the other. Researchers distinguished between two related but separate conflicts: work-family conflicts (WFC) and family-work conflicts (FWC). WFC happens when work issues overflow to the family domain and FWC happens when family concerns affect the job tasks and responsibilities (Sidani & Al Hakim, 2012). Little is known about whether the level of telecommuting ethics will be impacted by the work family conflicts the person is facing. This project is thus useful and timely, as it will provide us with a better understanding whether people who face lots of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts may be more ethically tolerant towards telecommuting. The project will uncover whether gender plays any role in the variables of interest.

At the end of this project, we will be able to discover various aspects. The project will inform us to what extent of telecommuting used among a sample of Lebanese respondents. In addition, we will find out the levels of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts among Lebanese respondents. The project will note if there are any demographic differences in levels of work-family conflicts, family-work conflicts and telecommuting ethics. Furthermore, the project will be able to discover if

employees who face higher levels of work family conflicts and/or family work conflicts find scenarios on telecommuting ethics more acceptable.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Telecommuting

Work is not a place to go to but an activity that should be performed. It can be done anywhere and anytime (Crandall & Goa, 2005). In this way, the central work location has become a virtual work location (Robertson, Maynard & McDevitt, 2003). Moreover, Gainey and associates describe telecommuting as working at home, or other locations using computers and telecommunication technology to communicate with the main office, supervisors, co-workers, customers (Gainey, Kelly & Hill, 1999). Telecommuting time span can be a full time away from the office or just a few hours per week (Crandall & Goa, 2005). With telecommuting, employees can work at times that maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses (Rooney, 1999). Telecommuting is associated with the rise of the 'knowledge based organization', where which means, workers will 'direct and discipline their own performance' and where the importance will be on individual responsibility for relationships and communication (Moon & Stanworth, 1997). Furthermore, employees might not be the most effective and efficient during their normal working hours. Thus, telecommuting allows morning people to work at 5 am and night owls to work until 2 am (Rooney, 1999). Telecommuting gives a stronger focus on achieving the required results rather than simply being physically present at work (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Furthermore, Telework was provoked by the introduction of new technologies that increase the speed and quality of coordination while reducing its costs (Ellison, 1999).

Telecommuting offers benefits to employers, employees, society and the

environment. Some benefits include increased productivity, reduced overhead, and operating costs (Robertson *et al.*, 2003). Studies suggest that, in terms of productivity, telecommuters can outperform in-office workers by as much as 16 percent (Piskurich, 1996). The main concern for any employee is the sense of satisfaction that a job provides (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Moreover, one of the most consistent benefits cited in the literature is that of increased employee job satisfaction when telecommuting (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Due to work, employees do not balance their time between family and work and this causes them stress. Employees perceive telecommuting as a means to gain more flexibility in their time management by balancing work and personal responsibilities and diminishing stress (Robertson *et al.*, 2003).

Through telecommuting, organizations now can access a wider pool of candidates from different geographical areas who were inaccessible in the past (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Moreover, Companies now can to hire a right candidate who lives far from the physical location of work site but can manage through telecommuting (Srivastava, 2011). With telecommuting, discrimination is minimized. Companies can avoid discrimination against employees on the basis of appearance because employees may no longer be physically seen (Kurland & Egan, 1999). Telecommuting enhances employment opportunities for disabled individuals and promotes workplace fairness (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Moreover, organizations that suffer highly from absenteeism and turnover can find a solace in telecommuting as it has been shown to reduce absenteeism and turnover (Crandall & Goa, 2005). In addition, telecommuting allows employees to avoid office politics (Kurland & Bailey, 1999) and focus more on working.

Telecommuting also has environmental benefits that affect the public such as reduced traffic and air pollution (Robertson *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, an important

benefit for telecommuting is the reduction of travel time and expenses. Saving time and not commuting to work will result in more time at actually working. Using the concept of displacement theory, one can further assume that time not spent commuting could be translated into more time spent on work, which might help explain the productivity gains (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Weaver McCloskey and Igbaria (2003) explored two dimensions of job performance evaluations to assess the relationship between telecommuting and promotability. They found that neither the task dimension nor the relationship dimension of job performance was negatively impacted by participation in telecommuting (McDonald, Bradley & Brown, 2008).

With telecommuting, however, come various challenges. It has always been difficult to quantify and document the cost savings and productivity benefits of telecommuting (Korzeniowski, 1997). Moreover, telecommuting might make telecommuters feel lonely and frustrated which will result in negative effects (Crandall & Goa, 2005) on both the employee and employer. As Pearson (1995) writes, “your boss, in passing, may tell you to keep up the good work but is less likely to ring you at home just to let you know how you are doing” (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Telecommuters worry about whether their absence from the central work location will cause them to be passed up for promotions (Crandall & Goa, 2005) and career developments like trainings (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Moreover, telecommuters report that their commitment or loyalty to the organization diminishes because they're not "around" the traditional workplace often enough (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Moreover, some employees do not wish to telecommute due to a fear that it will have a negative impact on their career prospects (Crandall & Goa, 2005).

Telecommuters do not know when to stop working at sometimes. Research has investigated how some telecommuters have become ‘workaholics’, struggling against

the temptation to work excessive hours (Habib & Cornford, 1996). In addition, the social life of the employees who telecommute is affected. Employees miss the informal interaction they gain by being in the presence of colleagues and friends at the workplace (Kurland & Egan, 1999). Thus, this phenomenon is labeled as an autistic society where people become socially disconnected from each other (Srivastava, 2011). The home-based workplaces do not offer the right equipment, furniture and lightening that is necessary for employees to be able to work (Habib & Cornford, 1996).Moreover, performance appraisals and other assessments for telecommuters become more difficult as the employee's presence in the workplace decreases (Crandall & Goa, 2005).

In addition, telecommuters in particular may need to be more technically savvy than their office peers, due to the fact that support services are not accessible on-site with them in their homes (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Furthermore, the absence of infrastructure support for the telecommuters such as secretaries, maintenance personnel, and technical/technological support can be an organizational accountability (Srivastava, 2011). Managing telecommuters is challenging. Managers felt that supervising teleworkers needed more work for them, and they did not feel this additional time was particularly beneficial (Ellison, 1999).Moreover, employees may need the transition time between home and work to refocus themselves from home challenges to work challenges and vice versa (Kurland & Bailey, 1999) and to balance their work family conflicts. In simpler words, the daily commute may serve as a "warm-up" period in the morning and a "cool-down" in the evening for the employees. Thus, telecommuting, by placing workers in the home and eliminating the commute to work, serves to blur differences between family life and work life (Kurland & Bailey, 1999).

Moreover, the credibility of teleworkers is sometimes at stake. Often telecommuting is not considered as quite the real thing and the teleworker may have

less credibility than a traditional office worker within the same company (Habib & Cornford, 1996). In addition, many problems result from telecommuting due to the way communication is done. Research explores the problems that arise when employees (and managers) rely on the single-stranded connectedness of electronic communication, whether by telephone or e-mail. Such communication can be problematic when it is divorced from the other information that usually accompanies face-to-face interaction: body language, facial expressions, and nuanced voice tones (Whalley, 2007).

Scholars have suggested that telecommuting employees should be given equal opportunities and should be subject to consistent performance standards (Peltin & Crowder, 2000). Various organizations do not really trust employees to work out of their sight (Whalley, 2007). Effective managers of telecommuters must sometimes forfeit control and just trust their employees focusing on results and not on attendance (Guthrie, 1997). Supervisors need to rely on measures other than physical observation to control and monitor, performance (Kurland & Egan, 1999). Managers should just focus on the out- come, rather than whole process (Kurland & Bailey, 1999).Olson (1982) found that monitoring of telecommuters tended to be “based on results, the quality and timeliness of completed work, rather than observation” for more effective supervision (Kurland & Egan, 1999). The culture of the organization is an important aspect for the success or failure of telecommuting. There lies a difficulty for organizations to transmit their cultures to individuals who telecommute and are away from the traditional office (Kurland & Bailey, 1999).Supportive cultures are necessary for telecommuting (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Hence, managers must support telework so that it will be successful (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Moreover, if telecommuting is going to be adopted on a massive scale, a paradigm shift of managerial norms and attitudes will need to occur first (Ellison, 1999). In addition, it seems to be difficult to create

team synergy and bonds for teams that have telecommuting employees within it. Managers may find it difficult to create this team synergy and to overcome the absence of informal, interactive learning; learning that takes place in the hallways or over lunch at the office (Kurland & Bailey, 1999).

Telecommuting is not for everyone, however, and not for an entire organizational workforce (Robertson *et al.*, 2003). Employees who are better disciplined and self-motivated are better suited for telecommuting (Peltin & Crowder, 2000). Moreover, telecommuters must be employees who can work without much social contact, dependable and honest (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Moreover, employees lower in the organization and with lower salary ware more likely to prefer telecommuting and vice versa (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Moreover, research claims that telecommuting is a bottom-up phenomenon which means that it is not initiated by middle managers but by programmers/technical staff (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). In addition, research to date suggests that the teleworking population may be divided along occupational and gender lines, with a predominantly male professional segment and a largely female clerical segment (Bailey & Kurkland, 2002).

Research points to the lack of trust in unwatched effort as a key reason as why some organizations are hesitant to move towards telecommuting. Research implies that telecommuters and supervisors may be less trustful and committed to each other than are regular employees and supervisors at more traditional workplaces (Long, Kuang & Buzzanell, 2013). However, the great irony is that most of the work in the office is done by employees working independently away from the management watchful eye (Jager, 2008). A main question in telecommuting is “How do you manage people who you do not see? The simple answer is, by trusting them, but the clear simplicity disguises a turnaround in organizational thinking” (Ellison, 1999).In order for the telecommuting

program to succeed, management must trust their telecommuters (Crandall & Goa, 2005). Telecommuting relies on a trust-based relationship between the employee and his/her supervisor (Bloomstone, 1999). Moreover, telecommuting does not demand for more trust; it demands careful assessment and reapplication of the trust that is necessary for organizational performance in the first place (Ellison, 1999). Moreover, in order for supervisor not to lose control of their employees a measure of trust between the supervisor and employee should be created, setting goals and/or making sure that the work done is in some way measurable (Robinson, Sattaluri, Rodriguez, Austin & Squires, 2008).

By definition distributive justice refers to perceptions about the fairness of the outcomes themselves (Kurland & Egan, 1999). Distributive justice can be related to telecommuting both negatively and positively. More specifically, telecommuters can view their option to telecommute as a reward in itself, in which case telecommuting should be positively related to distributive justice. However, telecommuters may perceive they will be denied promotional opportunities because they are physically isolated from the organization (Kurland & Egan, 1999).

For telecommuting to be successful, telecommuting guidelines and policies is integral. Establishing guidelines and requirements for telecommuting may be an easier and helpful to overcome challenges in telecommuting (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). These guidelines can prepare teleworkers and managers to work better together by covering topics various topics such as scheduling, communication expectations, performance expectations, expense policies, and how to maintain healthy collegial relationships (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Research explains that companies that allow telecommuting should to set up corporate policies that are clear in explaining what types of behaviors are acceptable for teleworkers and their managers (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). The clear

description of behavioral expectation may allay of the reluctance to become a teleworker and can reduce perceptual conflicts between traditional and telework employees (Guthrie & Pick, 1998).

Ethics involves the study of the general nature of morals and of specific moral choices individuals make in their relationship with others (Herschel & Hayes Andrews, 1997). Furthermore, ethics is a variety of philosophies that give us a framework to form our ethical decisions and discuss our values as they relate to society as a whole (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Hence, different philosophical views may result in different decisions regarding ethical behavior (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Moreover, technology becomes associated with ethical issues because it is the medium through which many problematic transactions occur. Technology is often mistaken as the reason simply because it acts as a channel through which unethical behavior can be demonstrated at accelerated speeds, on potentially vast audiences, and often without the ability to identify the committer (Herschel & Hayes Andrews, 1997). Computer ethics and business ethics examine ethical dilemmas that occur in computer use (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Computers can intensify many ethical situations by an order of magnitude (Guthrie & Pick, 1998). Moreover, some research argues that computer ethics does not exist (Guthrie & Pick, 1998).

Telecommuting could be ethically problematic. There are several key issues that cause employees and employers to face ethical dilemmas. Many employees view telecommuting as a replacement for daycare services (Robertson *et al.*, 2003), this is an ethical concern. Thus, employees will be saving costs on their daycare services fees. In addition, another ethical dilemma is created if children watch excessive television while a telecommuting parent is working (Guthrie, 1997); this may cause distraction for the working parent. Moreover, teleworking employees might face family and home duties

that conflict with accomplishing their organizational goals and daily tasks goals (Guthrie, 1997). Another ethical concern is the compensation. There may be a difference in compensation between telecommuting employees and office based employees (Guthrie, 1997). There is a concern if those teleworking employees should be compensated equally, less or more to office based employees.

Moreover, another ethical dilemma is the right of the employer to visit the teleworking employee at the house. Some managers think it is acceptable to visit their teleworking employees at their house which raises some concerns. Since in a traditional firm, it is unacceptable for a manager to pay an unexpected visit at the residence of the employee (Guthrie, 1997), ethical concerns rise if managers can pass to the teleworker's house unexpectedly to check on the performance and tasks being executed. Furthermore, it is typical for telecommuters to be contacted by their colleagues outside the scope of the normal working hours (Harpaz, 2002). However, there are ethical questions on whether colleagues can or cannot contact the telecommuters outside the normal working hours. Moreover, several teleworkers continue to work even when they are sick and feel pressured to do so (Crandall & Goa, 2005); this can raise ethical concerns on whether the employee should remain working while sick or not.

When employees telecommute, the computers are exposed to security risks due to the fact that they might be used by children, relatives and friends (Karstadt, 2000). There are questions of legal liability and safety regulations remain unresolved when telecommuting (Whalley, 2007).Moreover, an ethical dilemma exists on if telecommuters allow any other person to use the work related computer and other information technology resources. In addition, management should decide on what information to let out of the office and what information it won't allow outside the office network (Karstadt, 2000). Furthermore, another ethical dilemma is the dismissal

of telecommuters. Employees should have the right to return to the regular workplace should the arrangement be unsuccessful. Thus, employees should not be granted dismissal if the telecommuting arrangement was not successful and should be able to return to the regular work site (Bernardi, 1998).

Moreover, there are ethical concerns if an employee telecommutes for two companies at the same time. Other dilemmas exist when some employees are given the right to telecommute and others not. There are various concerns on who should telecommute, why some have this privilege while others don't. Another ethical issue is that, working at home blurs the boundaries between roles not only for the telecommuter but also for his or her family (Ellison, 1999). Thus, for the telecommuter not knowing when to stop working or not. In addition, Children would mistaken the fact that parents are at home for asking them for help and being demanding during the regular working hours. Moreover, what may be considered an ethical issue at one moment in time may become suggested as laws or behavioral norms for the future (Guthrie, 1997). Moreover, telecommuting ethics may change over time and can be effected by corporate, community and country culture (Guthrie & Pick, 1998).

Work ethic refers to the freedom of employees to make decisions about and manage their own time (Guthrie, 1997). Our ethical standards will be critical determinants of whether we choose to use technology in ways that serve to enhance the general well-being of the organizations of which we are part (Herschel & Hayes Andrews, 1997).In this manner, telecommuters should make decisions and manage their own time. Scenarios that pose ethical issues for telework nowadays may become debatable as policies and acceptable norms are adopted (Guthrie, 1997). Telecommuters should be managed with ethical standards and mutual responsibility.

Moreover, the personality characteristics of both the employee and his/her

supervisor, especially in respects to ethics and responsibility is very important when it comes to telecommuting (Robinson *et al.*, 2008). Employers and telecommuters as well need to address issues openly and take advantage of opportunities fairly (Robinson *et al.*, 2008). Telecommuters should always be responsible at all times. Employees should always ask questions and inquire more information when they are not sure about how should they handle a certain situation. Employees should act responsibly asking questions whenever needed concerning security, intellectual property or other business issues (Robinson *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, telecommuters should behave responsibility; the employee needs to be disciplined about managing and balancing the time between the work and family (Robinson *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, isolated employees such as telecommuters may find it hard to develop an ethical evaluation on their own work because of a lack of interaction with existing organizational culture (Guthrie & Pick, 1998).

Gender differences among telecommuters exist (Ellison, 1999). Men experience less role conflict than women when it comes to telecommuting (Ellison, 1999). In this manner, women (who traditionally bear the primary responsibility for child care) experience the demands of their various roles concurrently (Ellison, 1999). The stress levels of different genders might differ as well. Male telecommuters report that their stress levels decreased and that they did not concurrently work and care for their children. However, women telecommuters report that their stress levels increased when working at home due to the fact that they had child care responsibilities as well (Ellison, 1999). Telecommuting can be stressful sometimes because it disrupts family relationships and causes new roles to be adopted (Ellison, 1999). On another note, women find telecommuting more popular due to the fact that she can spend time with her children and pursue a career (Ellison, 1999).

Moreover, the redistribution of tasks within the household varies greatly according to the gender of the teleworker: women teleworkers usually start out more involved with household matters than their male counterparts (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Some research argues that there are major differences in the way telecommuting is responded to by the family, depending on the gender of the telecommuter (Habib & Cornford, 1996). According to Haddon (1994), teleworking women are more likely to adapt their time to existing domestic routines whereas men are more likely to "impose telework on the home and carve out a distinct place for it" (Habib & Cornford, 1996). . Haddon (1991) notices "both partners and children may actually assist the teleworker with work done at home. Apart from taking messages, other family members often act as a receptionist for callers, or help with proof-reading and the delivery of material" (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Research reports some of the problems arising when a spouse who has always left for work each day is suddenly at home all the time "children want to play - because they are only used to having this parent at home when they are not working" (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Moreover, the fact that a parent is visible may not mean that he/she is available (Habib & Cornford, 1996).

Human resources management is crucial when adopting telecommuting. HR practitioners need to identify the required skills of a person that can telecommute in the recruitment and selection procedure and flow of work. HR should check not only expertise and efficiency of telecommuters but also quality and innovativeness. Due to the fact that telecommuters offer self-management and analytical skills; they deserve recognition and reward and should be involved in key decision-making. Moreover, telecommuters require a real sense of autonomy and control over their work. In addition, HRM practitioners will need to respect the telecommuters' right to privacy and be responsible in making them feel a sense of community and

commitment. HRM practitioners need to monitor any use of electronic surveillance and ensure that at the same time as security is maintained due respect is given to telecommuters' privacy. Furthermore, HRM practitioners need to be in charge of advocating the recognition of telecommuters' rights. HRM practitioners need to facilitate and guide the whole process of telecommuting (Moon & Stanworth, 1997).

When work and family conflicts exist, a person no longer sees situations as black or white but rather in shades of grey. Employees with more conflicts struggle between work and family responsibilities and try to keep a healthy balance. Thus, those employees will view any opportunity that will help make their life easier as more ethically acceptable. Moreover, employees with more conflicts may feel it is unfair and can’t handle the load between the family and work demands thus accept telecommuting scenarios ethically more than others. Due to the lack of support and the need for flexible timing, employees with more conflicts will be more tolerant ethically. In addition, the financial need and family responsibilities are reasons as well for employees with more conflicts to be more ethically tolerant. Employees who have more conflicts want to decrease their work and family conflicts thus viewing certain scenarios as ethically tolerant. Moreover, maybe it is mere human nature that leads people with more conflicts to be more ethical tolerant.

One of the main reasons for telecommuting from home is to benefit from the flexible hours in order to make use of the paid work combined with family duties. This may involve looking after children, caring for an ageing parent or helping a relative (Habib & Cornford, 1996). Flexible work schedule has been considered positive when it comes to managing work-life balance and reduced work- family conflict (Srivastava, 2011).

Work-Family Conflicts and Family-Work Conflicts

Work and family represent two of the most important parts of adult life (Lin, 2013). Work fulfills a person's financial needs and develops sense of accomplishment while the family is a place for attaining happiness and companionship (Lin, 2013). Employees try to seek work family balance and to minimize conflicts that both aspects entail. Work family balance is defined as the extent to which a person is able to concurrently balance the temporal, emotional and behavioral demands of both paid work and family responsibilities (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Work and family responsibilities are important to many individuals and when done together they eventually result in conflict (Iqbal, Iqbal, Ameer & Marium, 2012). Whenever there is an inter-role conflict in which demands from work role conflict with demands from the family role this is described as work family conflict (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, in other words, work family conflict is the degree to which participating in one aspect (work or family) interferes with an individual's capability to effectively meet the responsibilities and obligations in relation to the other role (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, work–family conflicts cause stress and are linked to employees' health and family functioning (Lin, 2013). Furthermore, research has suggested that work–family conflict is higher among those who have family members in the same home (Golden, Simsek & Veiga, 2006).

There is a difference between Work family conflicts (WFC) and family work conflicts (FWC). WFC is when work interferes with family, in other words, when a work activity interferes with a competing family activity. FWC is when family interferes with work, in other words, when a family activity interferes with a competing work activity (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007).

Research states that there are several reasons why conflict occurs. First reason

is the time pressures combined with one role make it more difficult to meet the expectations from the other role. Second reason, the experience to stress in one-domain leads to tension, fatigue, and irritability, which influence one's ability to perform in the other area. Third reason, the behaviors required in one role are mismatched with the behaviors needed in the other role. Thus, work-family conflict occurs when experiences in a role interfere with meeting the requirements and achieving effectiveness in the other role (Lin, 2013).

It has been stated that work–family conflict can take various forms although the emphasis in the literature, has been primarily on time- and strain-based forms of conflict (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, it has been noted that time-related and strain-related processes are often linked, emphasizing that "time involvement in a particular role also can produce strain symptoms" (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

There are two different frameworks that explain WFCs according to Gutek *et al*. (1991). These frameworks are the rational view and the gender role perspective. The rational view states that there is a relation between the level of conflict experienced by the jobholder and degree of the demands that are required by the jobholder. WFCs are linearly affected by time spent in paid work for both men and women. Since, time spent in family work is higher for women than men; women are expected to experience a higher level of FWC. However, since both genders who hold full-time jobs tend to spend a higher number of hours at a work environment than at home, a higher level of WFC than FWC should be expected to be reported by both. Nonetheless, what is usually reported according to the rational view is a higher level of FWC experienced for women since more time is spent doing family work and vice versa for men since more time is spent doing paid work (Sidani & Al Hakim, 2012).

On the other hand, the gender role perspective states that the experienced

conflicts are affected by the person's gender. Each gender will be more comfortable in an environment of their own sex role. Therefore, if men and women spend equal time in a work environment, women are expected to report an advanced level of WFC than men since the work environment is outside of the genders expected domain which is typically the home environment and vice versa for men when they spend more time doing family work. Conflicts are expected not to be affected when the person is spending more time in their expected domain. Therefore, if more time is spent in family work by women, FWC is not expected to rise, and vice versa for men (Sidani & Al Hakim, 2012).

As per the research, women are more affected by work-family conflict, due to the history home tasks have been the responsibility of the females. Even though males are also the helping hands in the tasks of the family but still females are more affected by work-life conflict (Iqbal *et al.*, 2012).

Research states that work has more negative effects on family than the family has on work (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). This is due to the fact that work family conflict is reported more frequently than family work conflict (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, recent research shows that work family conflict increases as one's obligations and responsibilities to the family increase through marriage commitments and birth of children (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, research argues that many of the conflict will decrease or fade as the age of the youngest child increases. As per Staines & O'Connor (1980), working parents with children less than six years of age had the highest levels of work-family conflict. Moreover, employees with no children have reported the least amount of work family conflict (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). As women get promoted to higher level in an organization they experience higher levels of work family conflict because they have to dedicate most of

their time and resources at work and because of this they are unable to give much time to their family at home (Iqbal *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, research states that there is high level of conflict among employees who are extremely involved with their work (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Thus, several researchers have found a positive relationship between job involvement and work conflict (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, work-family conflicts have been linked to negative work attitudes, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving work early, turnover intentions, and other negative work behaviors (Boyar, Carr, Maertz Jr., & Mosley Jr., 2008).

Research has noted that effectively managing work demands in order to accommodate family needs indicates a decrease in WFC, whereas greater family role participation at the expense of work implies an increase in FWC (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

Ethics of Care and Ethics of Justice

Research states that ethics of care focuses on social virtues or character traits such as sympathy, compassion and friendship (French & Weis, 2000). Moreover, ethics of care transforms the society, politics, law, economic activity, the family and personal relations away from the expectations of patriarchy and toward the world of caring (Held, 2014). In addition, as per Gilligan, ethics of care is the ethics of resistance both to injustice and to self-silencing. It is a human ethic, essential for the functioning of a global society. It is said to be a feminist ethic, an ethic that guides the historic battle to free democracy from patriarchy (Held, 2014). Research argues that the care is a matter of theme and not of gender (Bookman & Aboulafia, 2000). Furthermore, an ethics of care spreads to men as well not only women and is influenced by social, political and economic issues (French & Weis, 2000). Also, Tronto (1993) claims that care can serve as both a moral value and the basis of societal accomplishment (French & Weis, 2000).

The ethics of care is established on lived experience, experiences of everyone, and across very different cultures. Ethics of care requires evaluations and judgments, and cannot be based only empirical findings (Held, 2014). Moreover, ethics of care is an issue of taking responsibility for particular other persons in need. For care, ethics can accept and has ways of evaluating our liking toward those we care for and those who care for us (Held, 2014).

Ethics of care was criticized. One of the most frequent criticisms made concerning the ethics of care, including by feminists, is that it is too conservative, even reactionary. It is thought by some to emphasize women's traditional roles of taking care of others, and it is criticized for not lending itself to major social change (Held, 2014). Another objection to the ethics of care is the belief that it encourages paternalism. Instead of the harsh individual of contract theory, what is pretended up is the domineering mother (Held, 2014).

Research states that ethics of justice places importance on individual independent choice and equality. Moreover, ethics of justice is about balancing rights and responsibilities (French & Weis, 2000). Furthermore, Ethics of justice focuses on principles, purposes or results (French & Weis, 2000). The justice aspect highlights issues of fairness, right, and obligation. A person that only has the justice aspect may be able to see a problem as a moral problem only if such issues can be interpreted in it (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987).

Gilligan states an ethics of care as the caring for and sensitivity to the needs of others. This ethics is concerned with the activity of care centers moral development around the understanding of responsibility and relationships. The ethics of care emphasizes on responsibility and relationships rather than on rights and rules, and that what distinguishes the ethics of care from that of justice (Enomoto, 1997). Furthermore,

research states that that Gilligan is not emphasizing the feelings of the other, but the response of care, and concern for the other (Bookman & Aboulafia, 2000).

As per Gilligan, “listening to women’s voices explained the ethics of care, this is not because care is basically linked with women or part of women’s nature, but simply because for mixture of psychological and political reasons relational realities that were otherwise unspoken or as unimportant (Bookman & Aboulafia, 2000). Moreover, Gilligan theorizes the ethic of care as a gendered construct. Women see and experience the world differently than men. Through the life experiences of women, they show on going attachment as the path that leads to maturity (Enomoto, 1997). Moreover, women more than men see ethical requirements as rising from the specific needs of others in the situation of particular relationship. However, men see ethics as established by obligations and rights (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987).

Gilligan’s work understands the attitudes of children, adolescents, and young adults (the ethics of care, new 4, 2014). Gilligan’s investigations show that at adolescence it is patriarchy that leads girls to defeat their own voices, and boys to aspire to self-sufficiency and power over others. Without patriarchy, both might be inclined toward the ethics of care as well as the ethics of justice (Held, 2014).

Gilligan worked hard to keep the idea of justice and care as equally important “bifocalities” but also as “distinct moral orientations that address different moral concerns” both of which constitute mature moral thinking (Bookman & Aboulafia, 2000). Gilligan argued that these two ethics could not be applied concurrently and that an important shift was required, away from the traditional justice perspective to that of care and compassion (Enomoto, 1997).

For Kohlberg, an ethical person is simply a person who reasons and acts on the basis of, principles of justice and fairness (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987). Kohlberg states

the way men see the world is the norm. The male perception strives for individuation and separation. Moreover, Kohlberg argues that the ethic of justice is universal (Enomoto, 1997). However, Gilligan argued that Kohlberg had came up with his theory on the basis of a study entirely of men, thus he excluded any different perspectives of ethical conduct resulting on women (Enomoto, 1997).

An advantage of the ethics of care for those opposed with ethical problems is flexibility. Reitner (1996) states that unlike the ethics of justice, the ethics of care accepts for creative resolution of ethical conflicts (French & Weis, 2000). Moreover, Jos and Hines (1993) contrasted the two ethics and noted six differences. First, field of care might be seen as the intimate relationship of self or other, which is a private field. On the contrary, the field of justice is seen and established with the social or communal, which is a public field. What happens in the public area is judged to be more important and hold more credibility than what might happen in a private space (Enomoto, 1997). The second difference between the two ethics emphasizes the nature of each. The ethic of care stresses on care and compassion; respecting a person's feelings and emotions such as love, joy and generosity of spirit. However, the ethics of justice stresses on human rationality and reasoning, placing more weight on rational thinking and inquiry rather on emotion (Enomoto, 1997). The third difference is about the different rationales of making ethical decisions. The ethics of care values understanding the other person's perspective when deciding on ethical actions. But, the ethic of justice considers the application of universal principles to ethical decisions (Enomoto, 1997). The fourth difference deals with the setting of a given situation. The ethic of care considers the specific context within which judgment is decided. Rather than applying ethical principles generally, one considers the particular individuals within a specific circumstance to offer an ethical decision (Enomoto, 1997). In contrast, the ethics of

justice applies general principle to the specific situation. Here, the situation is not as meaningful in understanding a fair solution; rather, the general principle or law provides guidance for ethical decision making the specific situation (Enomoto, 1997). The fifth and sixth differences between the two ethics deal with purpose and orientation. The ethic of care is oriented toward the nurturing of relationships and emphasizes one's responsibility to others. However, the ethic of justice, on the other hand, is oriented toward rights, with emphasis on responsibility to respect the legally defined rights of other (Enomoto, 1997).

Some research argues that both ethics are needed and one ethic only cannot work. Moreover, Jos and Hines (1993) argue that the two ethics cannot be clearly distinguished from each other. There could be no care without justice. Also, there could be no justice in abstraction without regard for particular others as noted by an ethic of care (Enomoto, 1997). Furthermore, most individuals use both ethics some of the time (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987).

The Link between Telecommuting and Work-Family Conflicts and Family-Work Conflicts

Research argues whether telecommuting helps work family conflict or not. Even though telecommuting has been popularly viewed as a method to help balance competing work and family demands; however, evidence concerning its impact on work–family conflict is both scarce and inconsistent (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Some researchers have suggested that telecommuting offers employees with the opportunity to manage with the challenging demands of work and family domains, thus reducing conflict. Others have opposed that it gives rise to greater conflict because of extra family demands developing from greater proximity and availability result in greater

family-role involvement at the expense of work or that it has no effect on work–life balance (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

Telecommuters have the opportunity by working at home to change their work patters and related strains of the workplace such as reducing or eliminating coworker interruptions, dedicating less effort to preparing to go to work and commuting and reducing the frustration linked with the admixture of an inability to concentrate, the impulse to socialize, and the strain of feeling less focused and unproductive. All of these save time and strain, thus family needs might be better suited for. Moreover, telecommuters may face extra pressures and further expectations for greater family involvement that later could interfere with work and cause several conflicts (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Moreover telecommuters face rising pressures for even more wide family role involvement that could interfere with work. The telecommuter might also have additional strains that result because of the "immediate and often unpredictable needs of others" such as caring for a child sent home sick from school (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, the more employees telecommute, the more time they give to family that result in work interruptions and lost productivity, thus increases the chance of family interfering with work (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

With telecommuting, employees with greater autonomy have more freedom to work on certain tasks that might otherwise be more intensified in the workplace, such as the tasks that need more concentration without any interruption, thus, furthering the savings of time and strain accumulated through extensive telecommuting (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

There is a reduction in work family conflict when there is telecommuting. The reduction in WFC accomplished through extensive telecommuting should be enhanced by job autonomy, since greater autonomy offers the telecommuter even more time to

dedicate to family activities, further reducing the likelihood of work interfering with family. Moreover, job autonomy should also reduce the increase in FWC resulting from extensive telecommuting, because the extra savings of time and energy enabled by autonomy should offset some of the increasing pressures from family that interfere with work (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, with telecommuting, WFC declines more and FWC increases more when the telecommuters have greater job autonomy. In addition, when telecommuters have larger households, they are more likely to experience more demands, expectations, and strains due to their availability and proximity to family members, aggravating the difficulty of accommodating work and family demands (Golden *et al.*, 2006). Moreover, for employees who telecommute more, WFC should decrease more slowly and FWC should increase more rapidly when they have larger households and families, relative to those with smaller households and families (Golden *et al.*, 2006).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Objective

The objective of the study is to assess whether the level of telecommuting ethics will be impacted by the work family conflicts the person is facing. We are also interested in uncovering whether gender plays any role in the variables of interest. The basic proposition is that people who face lots of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts may be more ethically tolerant towards telecommuting. The study aims at assessing such relationships among a sample of Lebanese business professionals.

Research Questions

- To what extent is telecommuting used among a sample of Lebanese respondents?
- What are the levels of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts among Lebanese respondents?
- Are there any demographic differences in levels of work-family conflicts, family-work conflicts and telecommuting ethics?
- Do employees who face higher levels of work family conflicts and/or family work conflicts find scenarios on telecommuting ethics more acceptable?

Specific Research Hypothesis

H1: Females will score higher on FWC and WFC than males.

H2: People with family responsibilities will score higher on FWC and WFC

compared to those with no responsibilities.

H3: Females will be less ethically tolerant on telecommuting ethics than males. This hypothesis has been partially proven.

H4: People with higher conflicts will be more ethically tolerant. This hypothesis was not proven.

H5: The relationship between work-family conflicts/ family-work conflicts and telecommuting ethics is moderated by gender.

Methodology

This study relies on quantitative data collection and analysis. Quantitative research methods were administered to collect and analyze the data in this field project given the objectives of this study. The data was collected through surveys addressed to business professionals in various Lebanese organizations. A convenience sample of about 105 employees were be contacted in the greater Beirut area.

Sample

A sample of 105 business professionals from various organizations in Lebanon was recruited for the proposed study. To be included as a participant in this study, an individual must fit the following:

- Currently employed in Lebanon
- Age between 24 and 64

Recruitment Process

The recruitment process was through email. The email addresses of the employees were obtained from a database of business contacts; people whom I know

and I contacted those individuals. The recruitment sites are from different companies in the Beirut area. All the participants were recruited and notified by email about the study and the questionnaire. The email was used to explain to the respondents the purpose of this study and the importance of their contribution. I already had the contact emails of business professionals who were asked to fill the questionnaire. Because they come from several different companies; I asked permission of the individuals themselves. I did not ask any confidential information that concerns the employer. I contacted people whom I know via email and there was no undue influence on them. They could simply ignore the email or reply with a no.

No written consent was asked due to the fact the questionnaire was an online survey. Online methodology was used to ensure the anonymity of the respondents. Lime Survey was used as the online methodology.

Data Analysis

The information and findings collected from the survey were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics and correlations and analysis of variance and multivariate analysis.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

According to the demographics, it was noted that 60 participants were females and 45 were males (Table 1). As for the age of the participants, 16 participants were 24 years of age or less. Moreover, 72 participants were between the ages of 25 and 35. In addition, 13 participants were between the ages of 36 and 50. Only 4 participants were between the ages of 51 and 65 (Table 2). The marital status of the participants varied between 2 divorced participants, 44 married and 59 single (Table 3). It was noted that 11 of the participants have 1 child and 13 of the participants have 2 children. Moreover, 4 participants have 3 children and another 4 participants have 4 children. However, 73 participants have no children at all (Table 4).

Table 1

Demographics- Gender

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	45	42.9
Female	60	57.1
Total	**105**	**100**

Table 2

Demographics- Age

Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
24 years or less	16	15.2
25-35 years	72	68.6
36-50 years	13	12.4
51-65 years	14	3.8
Total	**105**	**100**

Table 3

Demographics- Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Divorced	2	1.9
Married	44	41.9
Single	59	56
Total	**105**	**100**

Table 4

Demographics- Number of Children

Number of children	Frequency	Percent
1 child	11	10.5
2 children	13	12.4
3 children	4	3.8
4 or more children	4	3.8
None	32	30.5
Not Applicable	41	39
Total	**105**	**100**

As per the data in the survey, the work nature of the participants varied between full-time, part-time and working from home. The results indicated that 65 participants work full-time and 3 participants work part-time. However, only 5 participants indicated that they are working from home (Table 5). From the results of the survey, we were able to note that total work experience of participants varied between 2 participants that have less than 1 year of experience and 29 participants that have 6 to 10 years of experience in total. It was noted that 35 participants have 1 to 5 years of total experience. Moreover, 5 participants have a total of 11 to 15 years of experience. Only 2 participants have 16 or more years of total experience (Table 6).

The positions of participants varied between 14 lower level management, 37 middle management and 40 non-managerial and 14 top management (Table 7). Moreover, 35 participants out of the 105 do not make use of domestic help at their household. Whereas, this shows that 70 participants make use of the domestic help at their households (Table 8).

Table 5

Demographics- Nature of Work

Nature of Work	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Full-time Office	92	87.6
Part-time Office	6	5.7
Working from home	7	6.7
Total	**105**	**100**

Table 6

Total Work Experience

Total Work Experience	**Frequency**	**Percent**
1-5 years	35	33.3
11-15 years	14	13.3
16 years or more	13	12.4
6-10 years	41	39
Less than 1 year	2	1.9
Total	**105**	**100**

Table 7

Positions

Positions	**Frequency**
Lower Management	14
Middle Management	37
Non- Managerial	40
Top Management	14
Total	**105**

Table 8

Usage of Domestic help at home

Usage of domestic help	**Frequency**
Yes	70
No	35
Total	**105**

It was noted through the results of the survey that many organizations in Lebanon allow flextime and/or telecommuting. This was noted due to the fact that 60 participants have flextime/telecommuting available in their organization in Lebanon. Only 45 participants claimed that flextime/telecommuting is not available in their organizations.

Table 9

Telecommuting/flextime availability at your company

Telecommuting/flextime availability	**Frequency**
Yes	60
No	45
Total	**105**

Work- Family Conflict and Family- Work Conflicts

We conducted a factor analysis with a varimax rotation in order to analyze our data that we received from the survey. This action leads to being able to decide that the items (questions) registered in the minds of the respondents the way we intended them to register. After this factor analysis with varimax rotation, we concluded that the items registered like we wanted. The Rotated Component Matrix below explains further (Table 10).

Table 10

Rotated Component Matrix 1

Question	**Work-Family Conflicts**	**Family-Work Conflicts**
Q20: The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities	0.87	
Q24: Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.	0.82	
Q22: My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties	0.80	
Q18: The demands of my work interfere with my home and family	0.79	
Q26: Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.	0.76	
Q23: Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my family or spouse/partner.		0.84
Q25: My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime.		0.79

Table 10

Continued

Question	Work-Family Conflicts	Family-Work Conflicts
Q27: Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties.		0.76
Q21: The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.		0.75
Q19: I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home.		0.66

We computed a single measure for WFC that was comprised of questions 20, 24, 22, 18,26 and another single measure that pertain to the remaining 5 questions concerning FWC which are questions 23, 25, 27,21,19.

Ethics

We conducted a factor analysis of the 14 ethical scenarios; we ran an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. After this factor analysis with varimax rotation, four factors emerged and three items were dropped because of double loadings, which means they load on more than one factor. Below is the Rotated Component Matrix explains further (Table 11).

Table 11

Rotated Component Matrix 2

Scenarios	**Factor 1: Employee Ethics 1**	**Factor 2: Employee Ethics 2**	**Factor 3: Employer Ethics 1**	**Factor 4: Employer Ethics 2**
S1: Sara usually has a few personal things to do in the morning and begins work in a flexible manner between 9:00 to 10:30 each day.	0.76			
S3: On days when Leila finishes her work early, she typically goes to exercise or to do her grocery shopping.	0.72			
S2: When Tarek finishes his work ahead of schedule, he does personal work around the house. He remains available by phone to the office until the close of business.	0.70			
S10: Maha telecommutes three days a week. At 3:00 p.m. on her telecommuting days, Maha picks up her children from school. Maha continues to work from 3:30 to 5:00, (which is the end of the formal work day) while her children are at home.	0.60			
S12: Nabil has a chance to join his wife at a seminar in the North of Lebanon. He plans to take his computer and telework from the hotel room as if he were at his house during work time.		0.82		
S9: Fadia telecommutes three days a week. On days she works at home, she keeps her children at home, saving $500/month in day care fees.		0.74		
S8: Jad needs to connect to his company to complete his work. He has trouble connecting and finds that the network will be down for four hours. Jad decides to play tennis at the club and resume work after the network is available.		0.55		
S6: A recent company report showed that telecommuters were 30% more productive than traditional employees. Consequently, employees who telecommute got higher merit increases.			0.68	

Table 11

Continued

Scenarios	**Factor 1: Employee Ethics 1**	**Factor 2: Employee Ethics 2**	**Factor 3: Employer Ethics 1**	**Factor 4: Employer Ethics 2**
S5: A manager of a group of telecommuters and traditional employees is determining increases for the year. He values the in-house employee efforts more highly and gives many of them higher raises than the telecommuters.			0.49	
S7: A company allows workers to telecommute if they provide their own computers, software, and communications equipment to support their job from home.				0.79
S14: Abdo is the manager of several telecommuting workers. Because he is concerned with how to evaluate their performance. He keeps an ongoing log of their connection time with the company server				0.49

The four factors that emerged were as the following:

- Factor number 1 include scenarios 1,2, 3, and 10
- Factors number 2 include scenarios 8, 9 and 12
- Factors number 3 include scenarios 5 and 6
- Factor number 4 include scenarios 7 and 14

The first factor pertains to ethical scenarios where employees were clearly making use of company time for personal business. This factor relates to scenarios where telecommuting individuals are making use of saved time through doing something else. This includes items making use of improper use of saved hours made

by telecommuting. The second factor, which includes scenario 8, 9 and 12, do not pertain to scenarios where employee is making use of a saved time. They pertain to the ethics flexibility given to telecommuting rather than time saved. Moreover, factors three and four pertain to employer ethics. The third factor pertains to appraising performance of the telecommuters vs. non-telecommuters. And, the fourth factor pertains to the ethics of employers control to telecommuting employees.

Table 12

T-Test/Gender

Gender		**N**	**Mean**
WFC	Male	45	2.90
	Female	60	3.12
FWC*	Male	45	2.06
	Female	60	2.43
Employee Ethics 1	Male	45	2.56
	Female	60	2.35
Employee Ethics 2	Male	45	2.52
	Female	60	2.49
Employer Ethics 1*	Male	45	2.92
	Female	60	3.32
Employer Ethics 2*	Male	45	2.51
	Female	60	2.89

* P <0.05

A t-test was conducted, based on this t-test, males vs. females scored differently on Family-Work Conflicts. It was found that the FWC of females is significantly higher than males. However, no differences were found in perspective to employee ethics.

It was noted from the analysis that females for both factors three and four,

females judged that unethical behavior by employers more significantly harshly then males. Therefore, employer ethics 1 and 2 varied by gender.

As per the below table, the correlation showed that ethical tolerance and conflicts are not related.

Table 13

Correlation

		WFC	FWC	Employee Ethics1	Employee Ethics2	Employer Ethics1	Employer Ethics2
WFC	**Pearson Correlation**	1					
FWC	**Pearson Correlation**	0.57**	1				
Employee Ethics1	**Pearson Correlation**	(-)0.07	(-)0.05	1			
Employee Ethics2	**Pearson Correlation**	0.11	0.02	0.35**	1		
Employer Ethics1	**Pearson Correlation**	(-)0.1	(-)0.08	0.93	0.67	1	
Employer Ethics2	**Pearson Correlation**	0.12	0.07	(-)0.16	(-)0.03	(-)0.15	1

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

A t-test was conducted for children vs. no children, it was noted that people with children compared with people with no children scored higher work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts at a significance level. People with children scored differently than people with no children on work-family conflicts and family- work conflicts. It was found that FWC and WFC of people with 1 or more child is significantly higher than people with no children. However, it was noted that no differences were found in respect to employee ethics; there was no significance.

It was noted through the analysis that people with no children scored

significantly higher on employer ethics than people with children. Thus, employer ethics 2 is varied by number of children a person has.

Table 14

T-Test/Children vs. No Children

Number of Children		**N**	**Mean**
WFC*	No Children	73	2.90
	1 or more child	32	3.3
FWC*	No Children	73	2.19
	1 or more child	32	2.46
Employee Ethics 1	No Children	73	2.48
	1 or more child	32	2.35
Employee Ethics 2	No Children	73	2.56
	1 or more child	32	2.36
Employer Ethics 1	No Children	73	3.16
	1 or more child	32	3.13
Employer Ethics 2*	No Children	73	2.84
	1 or more child	32	2.47

* P <0.05

Another t-test was conducted for education level. We conducted a t-test between bachelor degree and graduate studies to find out whether there are any differences. According to the t-test, no such differences where identified.

In addition, a t-test was conducted for age. We conducted a t-test for older employer and younger employees; older employees where above 35 years old and younger employees where below 35 years old. According to the t-test, no differences were found.

Hypothesis

The study entails five hypothesizes. As per the analysis of the data we concluded which hypothesis was supported, partially supported or not supported. Thus, one hypothesis was supported. And, two hypotheses were partially supported. In addition, two hypotheses were not supported. The hypotheses were as follows:

H1: Females will score higher on FWC and WFC than males. This hypothesis was partially supported. This was partially supported due to the t-test that was conducted on the results, females scored significantly greater than males on FWC and WFC.

H2: People with family responsibilities will score higher on FWC and WFC compared to those with no responsibilities. This hypothesis was supported. This was supported due to the t-test that was conducted on the results, people with children scored significantly greater than people with no children on FWC and WFC.

H3: Females will be less ethically tolerant on telecommuting ethics than males. This hypothesis has been partially supported. This was only partially supported due to the fact employer ethics 1 and 2 only varied by gender; however, employee ethics is not varied by gender according to the analysis. Females judged that unethical behavior by employers more significantly harshly then males.

H4: People with higher conflicts will be more ethically tolerant. This hypothesis was not supported. The correlation showed that ethical tolerance and conflicts are not related. Thus, as per the analysis and correlation table, people with higher conflicts are not more ethically tolerant.

H5: The relationship between work-family conflicts/ family-work conflicts and telecommuting ethics is moderated by gender. This hypothesis was not supported. A series of separate regression tests were conducted where each of (1) WFC and (2) FWC

acted as independent variables and employee and employer ethics acted as dependent variables controlled for gender. The results indicated no significant effects and accordingly the hypothesis was not supported. The employees' gender was not found to be a relevant factor in any potential relationship between WFC and FWC and telecommuting ethics.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, this quantitative study was conducted in April 2014. The data was collected through surveys addressed to 105 Lebanese business professionals in various Lebanese organizations. Through the use of basic descriptive statistics, correlations, analysis of variance and multivariate analysis; the results were 1 out of the 5 hypotheses was supported, 2 hypotheses were partially supported and 2 hypotheses were not supported.

The analysis above partially supports the notion that females score higher on FWC and WFC than males and that people with family responsibilities score higher on FWC and WFC compared to those with no responsibilities. The results showed that family-work conflicts of females are significantly higher than males. Referring to the literature, as per Sidani & Al Hakim's (2012), time spent in family work is higher for women than men; women are expected to experience a higher level of FWC. Moreover, the results showed that FWC and WFC of people with 1 or more child is significantly higher than people with no children. This proves what other researchers have discussed on this point. Recent research shows that work family conflict increases as one's obligations and responsibilities to the family increase through marriage commitments and birth of children (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007). Moreover, as per Staines & O'Connor (1980), working parents with children less than six years of age had the highest levels of work-family conflict. Moreover, employees with no children have reported the least amount of work family conflict (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007).

Moreover, the notion that females will be less ethically tolerant on telecommuting ethics than males was partially supported. The results showed that employer ethics 1 and employer ethics 2 varied by gender. In addition, females judged that unethical behavior by employers significantly harsher than males. This could be related to the fact that females are more compassionate than males in general. As per the literature, this could relate to the ethics of care. Gilligan states an ethics of care as the caring for and sensitivity to the needs of others (Enomoto, 1997). It was noted in the previous literature that women see and experience the world differently than men. Through the life experiences of women, they show on going attachment as the path that leads to maturity (Enomoto, 1997). Moreover, women more than men see ethical requirements as rising from the specific needs of others in the situation of particular relationship. Moreover, the ethic of care stresses on care and compassion; respecting a person's feelings and emotions such as love, joy and generosity of spirit (Enomoto, 1997). In addition, the ethics of care values understanding the other person's perspective when deciding on ethical actions (Enomoto, 1997). However, Employee ethics is not varied by gender according to the results. Results showed the females are less ethically tolerant on telecommuting ethics only with regards to employer ethics.

According to the analysis, the notion that people with higher conflicts are more ethically tolerant was not supported. The correlation showed that ethical tolerance and conflicts are not related. Thus, the results showed that people with higher conflicts are not more ethically tolerant. It was noted in literature, work-family conflicts create serious ethical dilemmas (Marchese, Bassham & Ryan, 2002).

Due to the survey results and data analysis the notion that the relationship between work-family conflicts/ family-work conflicts and telecommuting ethics is moderated by gender was not supported. Thus, results showed that the employees'

gender was not found to be a relevant factor in any potential relationship between WFC and FWC and telecommuting ethics.

We expected that people under pressure would see things more ethical than other people. We thought that they would be more ethically tolerant. Due to the idea that people with more pressures from different domains in life may over see issues when deciding if a situation is ethical or not. Maybe due to the load and the conflicts a person has, he might overlook the ethics and principles, thus be more tolerant. Depending on a certain situation and on the conflicts that he is pressured with, he might be more ethically tolerant.

This study had a few limitations. The size of the sample was small. Moreover, the sample included mostly people that do not telecommute. Thus, people in the survey answered how they would behave in a hypothetical situation. They do not actually experience telecommuting to know how they would actually act and behave.

The results and hypotheses could differ if we have a larger sample of participants for the survey. The demographics would be different thus maybe changing the results. In addition, if we conduct this study for a larger sample, exclusively with people who telecommute, the answers would differ. Currently, the respondents of the survey answered in a hypothetical situation; the respondents are not actually telecommuting. For future studies and research, researchers should ask people who actually telecommute.

As per the survey results that were conducted among a sample of 105 Lebanese businesses professional, 57.1% of the participants of the survey noted that telecommuting is available at their organization. This percentage was not expected. Telecommuting was not understood as it is in the West. This might be understood as only flexibility with the working hours of the organization. Being allowed to arrive late

or leave early perhaps.

The objective of the study assesses whether the level of telecommuting ethics is be impacted by the work family conflicts the person is facing and uncovering whether gender plays any role in the variables of interest. The basic proposition is that people who face lots of work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts may be more ethically tolerant towards telecommuting. The study aims assessing such relationships among a sample of Lebanese business professionals. I hope that this work provides groundwork for future research and theory development for researches and studies concerned with telecommuting ethics and work-family conflicts/family- work conflicts.

APPENDIX I

EMAIL INVITATION

This is Not an Official Message from AUB; Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

Attention to Ms./Mrs. (Name of Participant),

I hope this email finds you well. You are being contacted for the purpose of requesting your help in a study conducted by Dr. Yusuf Sidani from the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at the American University of Beirut.

The purpose of this research is to learn about perceptions of telecommuting and work family dynamics. Moreover, the objective of the study is to assess whether the level of telecommuting ethics will be impacted by the work family conflicts the person is facing. A total of 100 participants will participate in the survey.

This study is purely for research purposes. The time needed to complete the questionnaire will take around 15 minutes.

Participation and Withdrawal: You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences on any kind.

Refusal to participate in this study will not affect your relationship with AUB in any way.

Only the data you provide in the questionnaire will be collected and analyzed. Moreover, the results of the survey will be published in the form of a field project report and will be available by the AUB Library in printed form and electronically.

Though there are no direct personal benefits for participating in this study, you will be contributing to enhancing managerial and organization scholarship. Please note that any information that is obtained in connection with this study remain confidential. Potential risks for participating in the study the risks are minimal. The collected data will remain confidential and anonymous.

If after reading this e-mail and feeling satisfied regarding any questions you might have, you voluntarily agree to take part in the study, please complete follow this link to answer (Link of survey). Otherwise please ignore this invitation to participate in the study.

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact the investigator mentioned above via email ys01@aub.edu.lb or by phone 009611352700.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you can also contact the Institutional Research Board at the American University of Beirut:
PO BOX: 11-0236 F15 Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020 Lebanon
Tel: 00961 1 374374, ext: 5445. Email: irb@aub.edu.lb

The Institutional Review Board at AUB approved this email method for approaching participants.

Sincerely,
Dona Barakat
Master in Human Resources Management Student
American University of Beirut

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
Suliman S. Olayan School of Business

Confidential Survey

You are being asked to participate in a telecommuting and work-study conducted at the American University of Beirut. Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether you want to take part in this study or not. Feel free to ask if you need more information or clarification about what is stated in this form and the study as a whole.

100 business professionals will be recruited to participate in this study. The participant is requested to participate because he/she is a business professional. The participant can discontinue any time without any penalty.

The purpose of this research is to learn about perceptions of telecommuting[1] and work family dynamics. The questionnaire that you are asked to complete will take about 15 minutes of your time. The resulting information will be useful to help us understand issues surroundings telecommuting and the impact on employees.

This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. There are no risks involved in your participation in this study. We are mainly interested in learning about your perceptions. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. No individual respondent will be identified to any other person or in any written form.

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Yusuf Sidani, via email ys01@aub.edu.lb or by phone 009611352700.

Thank You In Advance For Your Contribution.

Dona Barakat
American University of Beirut, deb04@aub. edu.lb

[1] Telecommuting is when an employee of an organizations works from home or from any satellite location.

Section A. Demographics

1. Age
a. 24 years or less
b. 25-35 years
c. 36-50 years
d. 51-65 years
e. More than 65 years

2. Gender
a. Male
b. Female

3. Marital Status
a. Single
b. Married
c. Divorced
d. Widowed

4. Number of children, if married:

a. None
b. 1 child
c. 2 children
d. 3 children
e. 4 or more children
f. Not Applicable

5. If married, does your spouse work?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Not applicable

6. Education

a. Less than Baccalaureate or High School
b. Baccalaureate - High School
c. Bachelors degree
d. Graduate Studies
e. Technical Studies

7. Work Nature

a. Full-time Office
b. Part-time Office
c. Working from home

8. If Married, Spouse's Work Nature
a. Full-time Office
b. Part-time Office
c. Working from home
d. Not Applicable

9. On average, how many hours do you work/day?
a. Less than 6 hours
b. 6 – 7 hours
c. 8 hours
d. 9 – 10 hours
e. More than 10 hours

10. Work Experience in Current Organization
a. Less than 1 year
b. 1-5 years
c. 6-10 years
d. 11-15 years
e. 16 years or more

11. Total Work Experience

a. Less than 1 year
b. 1-5 years
c. 6-10 years
d. 11-15 years
e. 16 years or more

12. Position

a. Top Management
b. Middle Management
c. Lower level Management
d. Non-managerial

13. Business Sector
a. Private
b. Public
c. Non-profit
d. Other

14. Department
a. Marketing
b. Accounting / Auditing
c. Finance
d. Production/e. Operations
f. Customer Relations
g. Human Resources
h. IT
i. Other

15.Do you send your children to daycare?

a. Yes
b. No

16. Do you make use of domestic help at home (maid/ domestic worker)?
a. Yes
b. No

17. Is Telecommuting/ flextime available at your company?
a. Yes
b. No

Section B. Work-family Issues

Using the scale below, please select the number (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) that best describes your disagreement or agreement with each of the following statements:

1- Strongly Disagree	2- Disagree	3- Undecided / Neutral	4- Agree	5- Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
18. The demands of my work interfere with my home and family.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my family or spouse/partner.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties.	1	2	3	4	5

Section C. Scenarios on Telecommuting

Instructions:

Telecommuting is when an employee of an organization works from home but is expected to work as if he/she is working in the office. The employee is usually linked to his employer's computer servers via a secure network.

Following are 14 scenarios, using the scale below, please select the number (from 1 to 5) that best describes your response to the ethical nature of the behavior displayed:

Scenario 1:

Sara usually has a few personal things to do in the morning and begins work in a flexible manner between 9:00 to 10:30 each day.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 2:

When Tarek finishes his work ahead of schedule, he does personal work around the house. He remains available by phone to the office until the close of business.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 3:

On days when Leila finishes her work early, she typically goes to exercise or to do her grocery shopping.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 4:

Ziad has found that he can have two full time jobs by telecommuting full time for two different companies.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 5:

A manager of a group of telecommuters and traditional employees is determining increases for the year. He values the in-house employee efforts more highly and gives many of them higher raises than the telecommuters.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 6:

A recent company report showed that telecommuters were 30% more productive than traditional employees. Consequently, employees who telecommute got higher merit increases.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 7:

A company allows workers to telecommute if they provide their own computers, software, and communications equipment to support their job from home.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 8:

Jad needs to connect to his company to complete his work. He has trouble connecting and finds that the network will be down for four hours. Jad decides to play tennis at the club and resume work after the network is available.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 9:

Fadia telecommutes three days a week. On days she works at home, she keeps her children at home, saving $500/month in day care fees.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 10:

Maha telecommutes three days a week. At 3:00 p.m. on her telecommuting days, Maha picks up her children from school. Maha continues to work from 3:30 to 5:00, (which is the end of the formal work day) while her children are at home.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 11:

Some of the work Karim does at home is highly routine. He found that he can make several personal phone calls while he is making database corrections.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 12:

Nabil has a chance to join his wife at a seminar in the North of Lebanon. He plans to take his computer and telework from the hotel room as if he were at his house during work time.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 13:

Salim periodically spot-checks his telecommuting workers either by stopping at their houses or by phoning them at home to see if they are home.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

Scenario 14:

Abdo is the manager of several telecommuting workers. Because he is concerned with how to evaluate their performance. He keeps an ongoing log of their connection time with the company server.

1	2	3	4	5
Always Ethical	**Ethical most of the time**	**Neutral -Neither ethical nor unethical**	**Unethical most of the time**	**Unethical**

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