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TELEWORKING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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# AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Abdulkarim Jamal for Master of Human Resource Management

Title: Tele-working in the Middle East

*Tele-working* has become a common mode of work in the West. However, in the Middle East this mode of work it is still not very well recognized, noting there are the right resources available that could allow it to flourish. A quantitative study was implemented on a sample of 214 participants to identify the various demographic variables that could affect the willingness to *tele-work*.

Different demographics, such as age, distance to work, gender, marital status, having children, and age, were investigated using a survey. The survey included 35 questions to test 7 hypotheses.

IBM SPSS 24.0 was used as an analytical tool, at the significance of 0.05, to run t-tests and p-tests. These tests were then used to measure the margin of error and the magnitude of the relations between the variables. The results generated showed no statistical significance between demographics and the willingness to *tele-work*. Hence, demographics do not affect the willingness to *tele-work* in the Middle East.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Technology has revolutionized mankind. It has changed the way humans travel, communicate with each other, and most importantly the way they work. The internet has made the transfer, storage, and sharing of information available to anyone that has access to it. The marriage between technology and the internet has made it possible for humans to tele-work. Though not a new concept, tele-working (also known as telecommuting or virtual working) is the ability to work remotely, away from the office environment via the use of technology (such as computers and laptops) and the internet. Telecommuting is defined as “working a significant portion of time away from the conventional workplace, working from home or another location, and communicating by way of computer-based or other technology.” (Clark , Karau, & Michalisin. 2012, p. 31).

According to Forbes, in 2013 it was estimated that one in five Americans tele-work (Rapoza, 2013). “The number of UK teleworkers in spring 2001 was reported as 2.2 million (7.4 per cent of the total labour force of whom three-quarters work in the private sector) with an average 13 per cent increase per year since 1997.” (Harris, 2003, p. 423-424,). Tele-working is clearly a concept that is growing in both Europe and the United States but unfortunately, in this part of the world (focusing on the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf countries) the concept of tele-working is still novel. This may be due to the fact that many people are very integrated with traditional culture (as most people from the Middle East) such concepts face challenge and resistance. However,

there have not been many studies on tele-working in the Middle East and even though benefits of teleworking has not only added value to the individual's career world but it also has effects on the organization itself as well as society at large. The notion of tele-working in the Middle East is still in its infancy and it is important that the benefits are publicized sooner than later. Accordingly, the labour force in the Middle East that is estimated to be in the tens of millions can also benefit and grow to their full potential.

### **A. Defining Tele-working**

“It is difficult to find a single, comprehensive and agreed definition for “telecommuting” (Harpaz, 2002, p.74). The idea of being able to tele-work or telecommute is to be able to have an employee structure his/her work schedule so that they can have a balance between work and personal life. “The demise of the single-income, mom-at-home family, and the concomitant rise of dual-income families to the point of predominance, have led to recognition of the concept of balancing home and work life.” (Sturgeon, 1996, p. 27). Tele-working gives the opportunity for women to work and raise her children at the same without fearing the loss of their job due to not being able to complete the required job tasks. Tele-working makes this possible as it is a concept where an employee, through the use of technology, is able to fulfil their daily work needs from a remote location. There are different factors that trigger employees to tele-work as it “bring about positive changes in their lives, such as having more autonomy over working conditions; increasing work productivity; reducing commuting; decreasing stress and more easily managing child care” (Maruyama & Tietze, 2012, p. 451). There are also financial factors that prompt employers to introduce such a concept in their organizations, whereby its implementation has witnessed an “increase because

of rising fuel prices, employee desires for flexibility, decreased overhead.” (Clark , Karau, & Michalisin. 2012, p. 31). As organizations start witnessing the benefits that tele-working generates for them the concept will be seen more often within organizations, “In fact, the amount of teleworkers in the United States increased by more than 200% from 1992 to 2002” (Smith, Patmos, & Pitts, 2015, p.2).

As technology advances and as more women start entering the labor force it should be anticipated that organizations will start to push more to have tele-working implemented. Moreover, the labor force is going through changes where the Baby Boomers are starting to retire and the labor force is being occupied by Millennials. Millennials are more used to technology as they were born in an era where technology was booming (Richard, 2015). The concept of having a computer in most households was common and that makes it easier for Millennials to work with changing technology. Unlike, other Generation X or Baby Boomers that might find it difficult to adapt to new technology. Thus changes in technology and changes in the generations working in the labor force are factors that might help predict an increase in tele-working. This increase has already been noticed in the United States and in Europe however it is still unclear in the Middle East.

## **B. Defining Tele-working: Advantages and Disadvantages**

### ***1. Advantages***

“Over the past few years, there has been a growing concern for the improvement in quality of life in terms of having greater autonomy in work and leisure time, and increased flexibility in scheduling time between family and work. Teleworking is often seen as a potential solution to this problem.” (S.H. & Lim, 1998, Page 253). Employees

who are given the opportunity to tele-work are more likely to experience a sense of independence and autonomy. As direct supervision is narrowed, there will most likely be an increase in the employee's level of responsibility towards the workplace and towards their role especially since the employee is not physically present in the office. The employee's individual autonomy and their needs for locus of control and will be fulfilled. That as a result will give employee more self confidence in their work (Harpaz, 2002).

In the Middle East and Arabian Gulf Countries, family is considered to be one of the main priorities. Women are sometimes forbidden to work by their husbands for fear that they will not have time to look after their children. Providing an employee with a work station, and the opportunity to work from home would allow him/her to work at any given time of the day, regardless of the usual office hours. This way the employee will have the opportunity to balance between work and family, which will provide women in this part of the world with the opportunity to excel in their careers without failing to attend to their children.

Tele-working helps an employee use their time more efficiently as they would spend less time getting ready for work and commuting, especially in cities like Dubai where traffic is problematic. In addition, the employee would save money on car fuel and parking charges.

Organizations also benefit in many ways because of tele-working and can be used as a motivator for employees. As a result of an employee feeling more autonomous and spending time more efficiently, reports suggest that employees who tele-work will actually increase their productivity, which in turn will increase their

levels of engagement and motivation, which is a mutually beneficial situation for both the employee and the organization. (Harpaz, 2002)

“Teleworking implementation often allows better control over building space, support facilities and costly equipment, especially during periods of business expansion or when customers are geographically very dispersed” (Sánchez, Pérez Pérez Pilar de Luis, Maria, & Jiménez, 2007, Page 47) Organizations spend enormous amounts of money on the actual work facility and rents can vary depending on the location of the organization and the size of the facility. For example in Dubai, a city that attracts many talents globally can cost an organization between \$70 and \$100 per square foot to build a facility (Joy, 2015) and that does not include the municipality costs and the costs of getting a work permit to build the facility. Furthermore, costs of utilities such as water, heating and electricity also add up to the organizational expenses. Thus, having employees work from home will help the organization save costs of renting or enable them to lease smaller work facilities with less utility costs (as fewer employees on site would accumulate fewer costs) (Bharadwaj, 2015).

Teleworking increases the talent pool of candidates which is very important for recruitment in the Middle East where restrictions are very common. Restrictions such as belonging to a specific religious sect, or being from a specific country can automatically disqualify candidates and rob them of career growth opportunities. Examples may include parents with young children, candidates who are from different nationality or religious sect and individuals with disabilities who find the commute to work every day a challenge.

The economy can also benefit from tele-working as it opens up opportunities for many employees who find it difficult to be part of the labour force. This can be due to

not being able to commute to work or find it financially difficult to start a business. Teleworking provides unique entrepreneurial opportunity as individuals can start-up their own organizations without worrying about extra costs such as rent, transport, utilities or the costs related to having in-house employees (Harpaz, 2002).

Finally, as tele-working permits employees to work remotely and not from the workplace itself, employees can eliminate the daily commute to the office. That as a result will cause a decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and more importantly decrease traffic jams, which reduces noise and air pollution. In addition, tele-working can also help save the environment in other ways such as having a decrease in the use of electricity and the use of water at the office venue or work place.

## ***2. Disadvantages***

There are also disadvantages to tele-working which might influence the decision of the employee whether he/she should actually tele-work if they are given the opportunity. In addition, companies might also face difficulty implementing such a notion in the organization. Employees working from home may tend to feel a sense of isolation as they are not surrounded by colleagues as they would be if they were in an office. Further, employees working from home may face difficulties in influencing any decision-making efforts within the organization. This is because since these employees are not physically present at the work place their persuasion power will decline. In addition, since teleworking employees are not physically present in the office, they will find it hard to get promoted at work. As “out of sight” employees it is difficult for their work to be acknowledged and even more difficult to harness any support from the organization. “There is an added disadvantage of carrying this out from a distance the

remote workforces are not just outside the office door, as was the case previously. Time spent with these staff in meetings had to be used wisely to extract information and motivate them. Assessing individuals' strengths, weaknesses and goals is important in determining how to keep the member of staff happy and motivated.” (Ward & Shabha, 2001, Page 63). In addition, it would be difficult to spot the strengths and weaknesses of the so called “out of sight” employees especially if they are not being observed by their direct line manager as often. As a result it would be difficult to provide employees with constructive feedback regarding their performance. As a consequence of not being able to receive constructive feedback an employee would not know if they have to enroll into a specific training program to become more competent in a specific area. This lack of training can have enormous effects on the employee’s career path within the organization (Ward & Shabha, 2001).

Furthermore, an employee working in an organization has access to multiple channels for learning and one of them is directly observing other employees. Employees working from home will not have the opportunity to shadow employees or learn from more experienced peers within the organization. The combination of not having direct support, ability to learn from more experienced employees and most importantly not having the work acknowledged will all contribute making it harder for a tele-working employee to grow within the organization or get a promotion (Harpaz, 2002).

When an employee is working at an office (traditional working) the usual work hours are from 9am to 5pm and when the clock strikes 5:00pm employees usually start packing up as they are done for the day. However, when an employee is working from home or tele-working he/she may not be able to set a time to stop working as they are continuously working. Thus, creating ambiguity between working and having family



time, and that might lead to a loss as focus as they might find it hard to focus to distinguish between their business objectives and home obligations (Harpaz, 2002).

Companies cannot afford to have all employees working from home or tele-working. Thus, naturally an organization would use tele-working as an incentive or as a positive reinforcement for employees that have been performing well. However, this might cause some disputes or create some sort of jealousy and perceptions of unfairness or favoritism between employees, referred to as creating a two- tier system between employees. This can lead to demotivating employees that do not get tele-working as a benefit and lower the organization morale (Bharadwaj, 2015). In turn, if an organization does actually use tele-working as part of their benefit scheme, employees might start experiencing diminishing returns. This is mainly because the joy of working from home or tele-working will eventually diminish and employees will not be as satisfied as they were when they first started tele-working. As a consequence, companies would need to find alternatives benefits which might be an added cost to the organization (Harpaz, 2002).

When an organization starts to implement tele-working as an option for its employees the organization will without a doubt incur extra costs. These costs are mainly to provide the employees with mobility devices such as mobile phones, laptops and portable networks or servers. Financial considerations must be made before such a benefit or option is implemented by an organization (Bharadwaj, 2015).

Finally, ambiguities from an administrative perspective arise when employees are tele-working. In the traditional working method where an employee is always physically present in the office knowing if an employee is on leave whether it is sick leave or any other type of leave is straightforward. The case is different when it comes

to tele-working it may be difficult to determine when an employee is on a sick leave or if the employee is on an annual leave. In addition, the calculation of overtime may also become problematic for tele-workers especially if they are constantly working. Also, problems such as work-related injuries or accidents can become a potential problem. Such ambiguities will potentially create new problems, whether administrative or financial for management. (Harpaz, 2002)

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CURRENT STUDY

#### **A. Arab/Middle Eastern Overview**

The Middle East is home to many opportunities and many expatriate workers move to the region to fulfil their career goals. This is because large multinational companies have opened their doors in the Middle East and started attracting talent from all around the world. Most of these large multinationals are coming from developed countries where tele-working has been already established. (Aboelmaged & Elamin, 2009). Tele-working in the Middle East will make employees more modernized as they will have more access to technology and will make it easier for the employees to fit into a tele-working culture if they were required to do so outside the Middle East. Not having tele-working as an option in the Middle East creates a gap between developed and developing countries when it comes to recruitment and careers. Considering that the multinational organizations operate in developed continents such as Europe and North America, this study would then contribute to bridging the career gap between developed and developing countries. The benefits of tele-working outweigh the negatives, yet in the Middle East very few organizations practice this type of work. This can be problematic since time, money, and resources are being wasted when they can be used more efficiently. Slack such as commuting time or the costs of renting an office can be reduced and help companies grow.

Given that the benefits of tele-working outweigh the negatives, it is logical to assume that tele-working is a common practice in the Middle East. Yet this is not the case and, as a result, organizations, whether local or multinational, are not being as

efficient as they can potentially be. The resources that tele-working requires are only available in some parts of the Middle East such as the Gulf Countries (UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and these Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) are considered to be developed and access to high-speed, secure internet and electricity is available. Thus it safe to rule out that the reason behind not having high level of tele-worker in the labor force in the Middle East is due to the lack of resources. Taking into consideration that the resources for tele-working are available in the Middle East, a study on behavior and attitude towards tele-working in the Middle East ought to be done in addition to demographics.

### **B. Arab/ Middle Eastern Work Ethic**

It is necessary to consider researching or studying the work ethic/ values of Arabs which is the target population in this study, “Some researchers refuse the notion of a prototype of the Arab individual.” (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009, p. 36). There are 22 Arabic speaking countries and people naturally would be classified as “Arabs” thus you cannot have a standard description of an Arab. Different cultures, traditions and religions within the Arabic speaking countries are all factors that have effects on work ethic. Given that the Arab world is diverse it is important to find a shared interest or a “common ground” between Arabs. “Since religion permeates their lives, it could be alluring to attribute the problem of Arab societies to the nature of the religion 80% of Arabs embrace, which is Islam.” (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009, p. 37). Religion is more of a moral compass and shapes the way individuals behave so religion might have an impact on how individuals act at work. So for example a pious Muslim person would probably view tele-working as a burden because during tele-working if that individual is

working on something that is not work related the individual will start doubting the legitimacy of their earnings because Islam encourages efficient time management while working. Schooling and family are the two main values when it comes to Arab work values (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009) however that would not be sufficient enough to help us understand what drives Arabs to tele-working. Thus a suitable way to study tele-working in the Middle East is by studying the behavior and having a closer look at personal characteristics and attitudes.

### ***1. Personality Theory***

OCEAN is an abbreviation for “openness to new experience” “conscientiousness”, “extroversion”, “agreeableness” and finally “neuroticism”. Eysenck (1963) developed these five personality traits but they were based on a general view that these traits apply to all individuals regardless of culture, tradition, education and the way of living. Subsequently, as the study is mainly focused on Arab and Middle Eastern culture, to make the study more reliable and valid the personality traits need to be more aligned to Arab and Middle Eastern culture. Daouk-Öyry (Daouk-Öyry, Zeinoun, Choueiri, & J.R. van de Vijver, 2016) adapted the original big five personality traits and tailored them so that they would portray the Arabic/Middle East culture in a more accurate manner. “They obtained vernacular descriptions of nine target persons and qualitatively analyzed the responses to derive nine dimensions of personality (in decreasing order of size): Soft-Heartedness, Positive Social Relatedness, Integrity, Humility versus Dominance, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Intellect, and Openness.” (Daouk-Öyry, Zeinoun, Choueiri, & J.R. van de Vijver, 2016, p. 23). The nine personality traits that are designed to be more affiliated with the

Arabic/Middle Eastern culture, had more emphasis on kindness, intellect and sympathy. As the study is focused on the Middle East, concentrating on personality traits that are more aligned with the Middle Eastern culture are essential to understanding the Middle Eastern attitudes.

## ***2. Motivation Theory***

In order for a person to do an activity or take action, the person has to be motivated. Motivation is the drive that makes the individual act in a certain way, as Ryan and Deci describe it “To be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, Page 54). Studying motivation is fundamental for this study especially since “the willingness” of a person to tele-work is being investigated. Willingness in other words the driver or the motivator for a person to tele-work. There are 2 types of motivation, indirect motivation and direct motivation. The former “refers to the fact of doing an activity for itself, and the pleasure and satisfaction derived from participation” (Vallerand, Pelletier, Senécal, & Vallières, 1992, Page 1004). Thus, meaning that an individual is willing to do a certain thing because psychologically it would make them happier or feel like they have achieved or accomplished something. For example, an employee at work would be willing to work longer hours in order to feel proud that they have completed a project in less time than budgeted for. On the other hand, direct motivation “pertains to a wide variety of behaviors which are engaged in as a means to an end and not for their own sake” (Vallerand, Pelletier, Senécal, & Vallières, 1992, Page 1006). On the contrary to indirect motivation, direct motivation is doing something because the individual is expected to be rewarded for their actions

once the task is completed. For example, an employee working longer hours to get more overtime benefits.

In addition to “motivation theory” the “needs for achievement” also come into play. “The need for achievement is an unconscious motive that drives individuals to perform well or to improve their performance” (Loon & Casimir, 2008, Page 92). In order for an individual to be successful in tele-working they should have the drive that will push them to adapt to new work styles in order to achieve their work goals. “Individuals with a high need for achievement have a propensity to demonstrate their ability in overcoming difficult tasks whilst maintaining consistently high standards” (Loon & Casimir, 2008, Page 93). Individuals that are willing to go the extra mile and are not afraid to try new challenges according to the needs for achievement theory are the ones that should be given the change to tele-work.

### **C. Demographics**

“Peters et al. (2004) indicate that socio-demographic variables, such as gender and age, are found to influence teleworking adoption and its preference”. (Aboelmaged & Elamin, 2009, Page 20). The Middle East is a region that attracts many foreigners due to many factors such as tax free living, attractive salaries and the various career opportunities. As the number of expats in the Arab counties increased, diversified thought has flourished and interest in new cultures started to emerge. In addition, the fast paced life in cities such as Dubai and Doha started taking effect on lives of many Arabs in the sense that they are now more open to experiences that were once seen as “taboo” or “shameful”. All these dynamics of the Middle East could in return influence the willingness to tele-work. “They conclude that gender, professional status, and age

are influencing factors to the choice to teleworking. For example, older workers are more likely to telework than younger ones, with the exception of lone parents which are seeking for more flexibility.” (Aboelmaged & Elamin, 2009, Page 19) Demographics, such as age, having children, the ages of the children, gender, nationality, marital status and distance to work, may all have an impact on the willingness to tele-work. Men in the Arab world are considered to be the bread winners. Having men stay at home to work may harm the man’s reputation or he might be looked down at. (Valmohammadi, 2012). Fundamentally, men in the Arab world are seen as the bread winners and for them to be at home would affect their superiority in the family if they are seen working from home or tele-working. “Generation X stated that 37 per cent of men and 46 per cent of women want a “job that gives their life meaning” and further that 80 per cent of mothers and 88 per cent of fathers want “more time with their families” (Johnson, 2004, Page 725), an interesting statistic which shows that there is a high percentage of both males and females that are for worklife balance and want to spend more time with their families. With tele-working the employee has the option of staying at home which can increase the chance of the parent being near his children throughout the day.

### ***1. Hypotheses Generation***

Given the restructured personality traits and demographics, generating hypothesis that are associated with demographics will make the study more interesting as it is focused on different demographics and how demographics may effect tele-working in the Middle East. “Similarly, Neufeld and Fang (2005) conduct two-phased research study to point out that teleworker beliefs and attitudes, and the quality of their social interactions with managers and family members, were strongly associated with



productivity. In the similar thought, Thériault et al., (2005) assess differences between home-based working and teleworking behavior among genders and professions considering age groups, household status, car access location within the city and travel distances.” (Aboelmaged & Elamin, 2009, Page 19) Tele-working may be a concept that may be new to an employee and being introduced to tele-working for the first time can be described as starting a new job. This is because the employee will need to adapt to a new way of working and a new environment. This doesn’t necessarily mean that this change is a negative one. For example, if the employee lives far away from his current workplace, being able to tele-work would make the employee use that commuting time to focus more on his work tasks. In addition, if the employee has children then the employee might have a chance to spend more time with his/her children on a daily basis and that can strengthen the family bond of the employee.

The literature review has shown that there are different demographics that might affect an individual’s choice of tele-working, which includes age, gender, marital status, distance from the work place, number of children an individual has and the ages of these children.

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence (if any) of specific demographic traits and to see how that would affect the individuals choice when it comes to tele-working

## ***2. Hypotheses***

For the past 30 years, technology and internet have been changing the everyday life of many individuals. They have also changed the way files were stored, from hard copies to soft copies and how applications are processed from hand written to online.

The older generation or people above the age of 45 may have experienced the change to digital and may have resisted that change from paper-based to computer-based. Whereas the younger generation grew up with technology being an essential factor in their everyday life, for school, university and later on for their daily tasks at work. Thus, the younger generation would not have much of an issue to tele-work since they are accustomed to using technology and rely more on it. Though theory may suggest otherwise “The influence of age suggests that there is no difference in telecommuting choice between old and young individuals; however, among telecommuters, older individuals are likely to be telecommuting more frequently than younger individuals” (Popuri & Bhat, 2003, Page 7) The reason for the above may be because individuals from the younger generation might want to be more physically present more in front of management as that might show more dedication and commitment.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Younger individuals are more likely to be open to tele-working compared to older individuals.*

The concept of “family” in the Arab culture has a very big importance and is one of the most valued notions in the Arab world. When an individual is tele-working they are in most cases staying at home and are spending more time with their families. With tele-working the father or mother can spend more time with their children as they do not have to commute to work; this supports family cohesion by making the family members more available and allows them to be present during memorable moments such as their child’s first steps or first words. Popuri & Bhat also claimed that “A multinomial logit estimation revealed that telecommuting was positively correlated with larger household sizes, the presence of small children in the household, more vehicles in the household,

higher degrees of family devotion” (Popuri & Bhat, 2003, Page 3). Thus, it is safe to say that individuals with children would be more willing to tele-work.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Individuals with children will be more open to tele-working than individuals without children.*

Developing further on the concept of family, the age of children might play a part in considering whether to tele-work or not. When a child is young the parents usually want to spend as much time as they can with the child. Tele-working makes that possible for parents as mobility is one of the fundamentals of tele-working. As the child grows however and starts to go to school parents would not be as obliged to stay home and may choose to work from the traditional office. Moreover, in a study by Mannering and Mokhtarian (1995) the results showed that having small children had a positive impact on tele-working. (Mannering & Mokhtarian, 1995)

*H<sub>3</sub>: Individuals with younger children will be more willing to tele-work than individuals with older children.*

The majority of the Arab society was built on religion and patriarchy. It was not until the past 20 years where there was an increase in women in the labour force. Women in the Arab world were only expected to raise the children and provide a cooked meal for their husbands when they'd return home from work. There have been many changes in the past 20 years where it is now common to see women in managerial positions and it is common for a male employee to have a female manager. “Out of the world’s 2.9 billion workers, 40 per cent were women. However, the increasing involvement of women in the work force is not synonymous with their representation at senior

management levels” (Enid, Anesh, & Singh, 2013, Page 29) In addition, gender equality is a concept that is now more accepted in the Arab world. Some companies even reward their recruiters for hiring women for having a more diverse company culture. However, there is always this gender gap even if it is not visible which may have an impact on the willingness to tele-work especially from women. Even though in a study by Mannering & Mokhtarian results showed that woman are more open to tele-work as it would help them achieve work life balance (Mannering & Mokhtarian, 1995). Woman want to prove that they are able to do tasks at work that men can and if they tele-work they might fear missing out on showing this.

*H<sub>4</sub>: Males will be open to tele-work while women would be against tele-working.*

Commuting to work can be one of the most stressful experiences an individual goes through during the working week. The metro is usually overcrowded and the traffic on the highway may be stretched out for miles at some point during the rush hour. In addition, the cost of fuel and road tolls are always on the rise. “The distance from home to the workplace and daily commuting time represent proxies for the land use pattern and the transportation system performance that are believed to affect employee telecommuting adoption.” (Ru-In & Mahmassani, 1997, Page 101) Furthermore, especially in Saudi Arabia women are not allowed to drive and for them they usually commute via taxi or via personal driver which can be an extra cost for the individual. Tele-working allows the individual to stay at home and work from there, in addition tele-working can help save time during the commute and that extra time can be used to be more productive, thus people that live further away from their offices will most likely be open to tele-working.

*H<sub>5</sub>: Individuals that live far away from their workplace are more likely to tele-work.*

Daouk-Öyry et. al introduced the humility versus dominance trait. In the case of Arab men they usually strive to be the dominant person in the relationship. Thus, if they do tele-work, they will perceive themselves as the less dominant individual in their household. “A connection is also usually made between Islamic values and the patriarchal structure prevailing in Arab societies that puts man in the position of leadership in the family and society and marginalizes women.” (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009).

*H<sub>6</sub>: Non-Arabs will be open to tele-working while Arabs will be against tele-working*

Daouk-Öyry et al. mention integrity as one of the personality traits. In addition, Sidani and Thornberry in their study on the Arab Work Ethic suggested that, “In the Arab world, evidence suggests that systems of trust are selective and multifaceted” (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009, p. 43). Integrity and trust are some of the main elements in an Arab/Middle Eastern personality. The act of tele-working requires not just trusting the equipment such as the computer devices and the internet connection, but also trusting colleagues in the workplace to provide the individual with required reports or data. The data should ideally be provided in a timely manner and not cause the person to have to physically approach their colleague to ask for the data. A person will only function well in tele-working when they have the right support from their managers and colleagues and there should be a strong bond between them. This also applies to marital status, in the sense that married individuals (especially the ones that have been married for a long time) establish a foundation of trust and integrity with their other halves. In contrast divorced individuals would think otherwise where they are more prone to having trust

issues as a result of a bad relationship or a bad marriage. Furthermore, in a study by Popuri & Bhat they claim that “Marital status has a positive effect on both the choice to telecommute and the frequency of telecommuting. This supports the results obtained by previous researchers and suggests that married individuals are more committed to household obligations than unmarried individuals, and therefore prefer to telecommute frequently” (Popuri & Bhat, 2003, Page 7) Thus:

*H<sub>7</sub>: Married individuals are more like to be open to tele-working while divorced individuals would be against it.*

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

#### **A. Sample**

As the study aimed at the Arab/Middle East, the higher the number of participants the more data received the more generalizable the study. The sample used in the study was primarily a convenience sample, in addition to snowball sampling. Which is a method where existing participants enroll or recruit prospective participants. Moreover, demographic information to be collected to test for any correlations or trends between age, gender, and distance to office, marital status, and age of children. Also, questions regarding nationality are to be added in order to test which Arab country in particular is more accepting to tele-working. Furthermore, demographic information will help investigate any correlations between the age of children and tele-working or if single parents are more open to the idea of tele-working. Multiple factors can also be measured such as testing to see if individuals that have a long commute that have older children are more open to tele-working than individuals that have younger children but with a lesser commute.

#### **B. Measures**

A Likert scale (1932) will be used in the quantitative surveys. The Likert scale answers range from 1-5, 5 being strongly agree, 3 being neutral and 1 being strongly disagree. The questions were randomly mixed, in addition to demographic questions in order to make comparisons. The study is focused on the Arab/Middle East region which

is a region that has many expatriates living in it thus there should also be questions that would make it easy to distinguish between participants (See Appendix 1).

Inspired by the literature review, the Costa and McCrae's (1978) OCEAN Personality questionnaire, the Manifest Needs Questionnaire developed by Steers and Braunstein (1976), and Personnel Decisions International's Employment Inventory also known as EI scale developed by Paajanen (1988). A customized questionnaire was developed to measure the attitudes towards tele-working based on the different demographics. As the above 3 questionnaires were questionnaires designed to measure personality, motivation and attitude they were the main inspiration behind generating the questionnaire for this study. The questionnaire contained questions from all 3 measurement scales and the questions were then customized so that they measure tele-working based on demographics and motivations. The survey is made up of a total of 35 questions, 28 of which will be directly measuring the tele-working attitudes and 7 questions will be measuring demographics such as age, gender and marital status.

### **C. Procedures**

The survey will be hosted on Limesurvey and will be easily accessible to participants. As the survey is online, it can be shared through social media and specifically LinkedIn, as it has a large network on working individuals. The survey will be sent to employees of a large, multinational corporation located in Dubai, and participants will be asked to share it with their contacts working in other organizations in the Middle East. In addition, the survey will be shared through word of mouth, a method where participants (after completion of the survey) can share the survey link with friends or colleagues working in an office environment. The link can also be



emailed to clients or former employers and they will be asked to share the survey link with their office population.

In order for this study to be beneficial and to be used as a reference, validity and reliability need to be considered. As this study has a specific focus on the Middle East it should meet “test-retest” reliability, primarily because the study is measuring a specific group of people and the results should be close to be able to generalize. In addition, if a participant was to re-take the mean of measurement for example questionnaire, or interview, the results should yield the same responses from the participants. In addition, content validity, construct validity, predictive validity and finally external validity are crucial for the success of this study. This is mainly because, as discussed earlier, this study aims to help recruiters identify which demographic trait would have the most favorable attitudes towards tele- The questions asked, either in a survey or in an interview, or even a focus group, should be written with finesse in order to test what the study is aimed to test. The success of this study will depend on the questions asked and making sure that the participants asked are from the targeted population.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

Data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 24.0 at a significance level of 0.05. The survey was composed of 28 items, and items were scored using a five-point scale reflecting the agreement rate on a five-point frequency scale (both including a neutral category). A total of 294 participated in the survey, however only 214 participants completed the survey. The answers were weighed from 1 to 5, 1 being “strongly disagree”, 3 being “neutral” and 5 being “strongly agree”. Some codes had to be reversed, so for example if a question stated: “I do not see any value in tele-working” then such a question got reversed as it is “negatively worded”. (See Appendix II Table 1). The results were then averaged out and based on the average the hypothesis were tested. (See Appendix II Table 2).

The percentage of positive responses for each item and composite was calculated; negatively worded items were reversed when computing subscale scores. For example, the responses “Strongly Agree/Agree” or “Most of the time/Always” are positive responses for positively worded items whereas for reverse worded items, disagreement indicates a positive response, so the responses “Strongly Disagree/Disagree” or “Never/Rarely” are considered. Subscale scores were computed by summation of the items within the subscales and dividing by the number of items. Means and standard deviations of subscales were computed. Student sample T-test were used to determine whether a significant difference exists between the seven dimensions and respondent characteristics (when the variable had two categories of response such as gender). Additionally, ANOVA f-test with multiple

corrections using Bonferroni was used to examine the association between difference in the mean between older and younger dimensions and demographic questions with three or more categories of response such as age, marital status, and distance from work.

### **A. Hypotheses**

Participants reported that the age of an individual would reflect positively to the willingness to telework. For the younger generation or participants under the age of 40 the response was neutral when it comes to tele-work  $M= 3.04$ ,  $SD= 0.76$ . On the other hand participants over the age of 40 years claimed that they would be more open to teleworking with an  $M=3.14$  and  $SD= 0.74$ . However, it is important to state that there were 200 participants under the age of 40 years while only 14 participants were either 40 years old or over.

Participants reported that having children would not affect the willingness to tele-work. Participants with children were neutral towards tele-working  $M= 3.05$ ,  $SD= 0.68$ . While participants without children answered in the same way  $M= 2.27$ ,  $SD= 0.81$ . Thus the attitude towards tele-working is neutral whether individuals have children or not. Again it is also important to note that there were 42 participants in this study that had children while 172 participants did not have children which might have affected the results.

Participants indicated that having children at a young age would work in favor of willingness to tele-work.  $M= 3.16$ ,  $SD= 0.50$ . The ages of children ranged between 12 months and 4 years old. The number of participants that had children over the age of 4 was 16. Participants that had children over the age of 4 felt neutral when it comes to tele-working with an  $M=3.07$  and an  $SD$  of 0.70.

There were 14 more males that participated in this study than females, the results however did not differ as results indicated that both males and females would be open to tele-working.  $M=3.17$ ,  $SD= 0.75$  for males as for females  $M=3.16$  and  $SD=0.77$ .

Participants indicated that living further away from the work place would reflect positively on the willingness to tele-work, the participants were categorized into 3 groups, the first group was individuals living up to 20 kilometers away from the workplace. Group 2 were individuals living between 21 and 40 kilometers away from the work place. Finally the last group were individuals that lived over 40 kilometers away from the workplace. The results showed that the further away you live from the work place the more likely an individual would be willing to tele-work. For group 1  $M=3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ . For group 2,  $M=3.11$  and an  $SD= 0.78$  and finally for group 3 the  $M=3.12$ ,  $SD=0.51$ . The majority of participants  $n= 143$  were part of the first group (individuals living 20 kilometers or less away from work. As for group 2 and 3 there were  $n= 68$  and  $n= 5$  respectively.

Results showed that the willingness to tele-work is affected by the nationality of the individual. When it came to nationality the participants were split into 2 groups, the first group being Arabs (which were individuals that belong to one of the 22 Arabic speaking countries) and non-Arab which was basically individuals from all other countries. When it came to willingness to tele-work group 1 or Arabs felt neutral towards tele-working  $M= 3.00$ ,  $SD= 0.76$ . On the contrary non-Arabs responded in a more positive manner when it came to tele-working and claimed that they would be willing to tele-work  $M=3.22$  and  $SD=0.70$  As for the number of participants from each group, group 1 had 171 participants while group 2 had a total number of 43 participants.

When it came to measuring tele-working with marital status, the results showed that there were actually preferences based on demographics. To test this hypothesis, the participants were split into 3 group, single, married and divorced. Results showed that single participants felt neutral towards tele-working  $M=3.00$ ,  $SD=0.76$ . Married participants claimed that they would be willing to tele-work  $M= 3.16$ ,  $SD=0.72$  and finally divorced participants claimed that they would be against tele-working  $M=2.57$ ,  $SD=0.91$ .

Besides  $H_{1,2}$  and  $H_4$ , the results appeared to support the hypotheses but not as strongly as the research initially predicted. This may be due to many factors including halo effect and random filling of the survey. Also, given that the standard deviation were low and ranged between 0.63 and 0.83 (see Appendix II table 2). A low standard deviation indicates that the range of the results is not very wide. As the number of participants was only 214 (that fully completed the survey) the ranges of answers were not sufficiently wide and resulted in a low SD.

**Table 4.1: Hypothesis Testing Results:**

| Hypothesis | Hypothesis Test |
|------------|-----------------|
| H1         | Not Supported   |
| H2         | Neutral         |
| H3         | Supported       |
| H4         | Not Supported   |
| H5         | Supported       |
| H6         | Supported       |
| H7         | Supported       |

## B. Testing for consistency

A Cronbach alpha was used to test for internal consistency between the different variables. In other words, a test to see how close the different items that are supposed to measure the same hypothesis generate similar answers. Using the alpha value which is between 0 to 1 measures the magnitude or the strength of the consistency with 1 resulting in a perfect positive consistency. A figure of 0.1 to 0.3 is considered to be weak or have a small consistency. A figure of 0.31 to 0.59 is considered to be moderate or medium consistency. Finally, a figure of 0.6 and above is considered to be strong consistency level.

**Table 4.2: Internal Consistency Testing Results**

| Hypothesis | Cronbach's Alpha Value | Test               |
|------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| H1         | 0.72                   | High Consistency   |
| H2         | 0.69                   | High Consistency   |
| H3         | 0.575                  | Medium Consistency |
| H4         | 0.295                  | Low Consistency    |
| H5         | 0.567                  | Medium Consistency |
| H6         | 0.691                  | High Consistency   |
| H7         | 0.528                  | Medium Consistency |

In general, most of the items are consistent except for a few cases this may be due to the wording of the actual question on the survey and the sample size. (See Appendix II, table 11)

# CHAPTER 5

## DISCUSSION

### **A. Commenting on Results**

The results of the study varied between supporting, refuting or having a neutral view towards the hypotheses. The main reason for having such results is mainly due to the sample size, 214 participants was clearly not enough to be able to make generalizable conclusions. The test for tele-working when looking at different generations was a bit of a surprise as it was predicted that the younger generation would be more open to tele-working as the younger generation would be more into technology and more into the “new” modes of working. However, results showed that this was not the case. This may be due to the older generation having more experience and feeling more comfortable to work from home. While the younger generation with less years of experience they might want to be present at work so that they can ask any questions if they get stuck on any task. The test for tele-working related to having children vs not having children came out as neutral... This was quite surprising because results showed that many participants prefer to work and even if they did have children. This can be due to many reasons such as seeing their family after work. However, we currently live in an era where instant messaging is available for most people and an individual can get in contact with their children at any given time. Thus, one can assume that nowadays as most of the family interaction is done through instant messaging and social media regardless of whether the person is working in an office environment surrounded by

colleagues or working at home, then having children does not affect the willingness to tele-work as much.

The test for  $H_3$  was supported according to the survey results. Which might be explained by the fact that as children grow they spend most of the day in school or day care which gives the parents a chance to go to work and focus on their duties. On the contrary when a child is still too young to go to school the parents would rather spend time looking after the child plus they do not want to potentially miss out on any memorable moments such as their child's first words or first steps.

When testing the willingness to tele-work with gender the result showed that both males and females are open to tele-working which came a bit of a surprise as the prediction was that females would not be open to tele-working. This may be due to women are more interested seeking work life balance and prefer being closer to their children.

The rest of the hypothesis were all supported by the test results, the predictions were as the literature review initially suggested.

## **B. Limitations**

Different types of data collection methods were available to test the relationships between the willingness to work from home and the different demographic variables which in this research are: age, gender, having children, the ages of the children, distance to work and finally nationality.

There was no question that directly asked participants if they would be willing to tele-work or not. The results were based on their demographics and attitudes towards



answering the questionnaire. With a direct question the analyses would have probably been more accurate and better colorations would have been derived from the results.

Furthermore, in cases such as age there was only 1 participant in the group which makes it hard to generalize. Likewise with the low number of divorced participants, it would be hard to take the results for granted.

There are some changes that would be done if this study was to be replicated, firstly by adding a few more tools such as focus groups. Though it will be hard to generalize towards a population but there will be more discussion happening if participants were asked directly and there will also be room for probing questions which a survey cannot do. In addition, the candidates should not be randomly selected so that the mistake of having Non- Arabs participate in the study. Adding a direct question that asks participants if they would tele-work or not would defiantly be something that should be added to the survey questions if this study was to be replicated. This is because a direct question would give room for correlations to be tested between different variables. Especially in a study like this one where there were 7 items being tested. Finally, have a much bigger sample size so that the results can be more valid and have a wider range of results.

### **C. Future Research Direction**

Tele-working is becoming a more popular work technique in the Middle East and multinational companies are starting to encourage it more especially given all the benefits that it has. As more employees are starting to tele-work further areas for research towards this topic can include job satisfaction with tele-working. Employees may be given the chance to tele-work however would they be happy doing that. Another

area of research would be the work life balance and tele-working in the Middle East. Even though employees in the Middle East are tele-working and physically present at home, do they achieve work life balance or are they occupied with working remotely. Another interesting area to investigate would be to see why there is a correlation between the different dimensions so for example why is relationship between openness to telework and extroversion moderate and so on. Finally, tele-working is not very common within local companies and family businesses in the Middle East. This is another area that can be investigated to find out more on why this might be the case.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### DATA COLLECTION FORM

| Question Number | Question  | Testing | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----------------|---|---------|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1               | I would be open to tele-work if my company implements it                        | H1      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 2               | I prefer working in an office than at home                                      | H6      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 3               | I prefer social interactions found in the office environment                    | H2      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 4               | I enjoy having colleagues around me   | H2      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 5               | Tele-working would allow me to work the way that I find most effective          | H4      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 6               | Tele-working would make me progress in my career                                | H5      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 7               | I prefer to come to the office, do my work then leave                           | H3      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 8               | I would tele-work if all resources were given to me                             | H1      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 9               | Traditional working is better than tele-working                                 | H6      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 10              | My manager would trust me if I tele-work  | H7      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 11              | Tele-working would diminish my social ties                                      | H2      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 12              | I would trust my non-tele-working colleagues to work efficiently if I tele-work | H7      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 13              | I would miss out on work events or gossip if I tele-work                        | H2      |                   |          |         |       |                |
| 14              | It is harder for me to  | H5      |                   |          |         |       |                |

|    |   |    |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|---|----|--|--|--|--|--|
|    | get promoted if I tele-work   |    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | I fear I would not get the support I need if I tele-work                    | H4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | I do not see any value in tele-working                                      | H1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | I might not learn new skills from other colleagues if I tele-work           | H3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | I would not get much work done if I work from home                          | H3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | An employee should only work in an office and not at home                   | H6 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | My culture supports tele-working  | H6 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | Tele-working allows me to pursue personal careers interests                 | H5 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | I would be open to tele-working because I want to try a new way of working  | H1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | My manager would not be able to see my hard work if I tele-work             | H5 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | Other employees might think I am not working if I am not seen in the office | H3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25 | Tele-working is an excuse not to go to work                                 | H7 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Tele-working would keep my manager from telling me what to do               | H4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Tele-working gives me control over my work pace                             | H4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28 | Employees would abuse the tele-working benefit                              | H7 |  |  |  |  |  |

|    |                          |                |           |            |         |       |
|----|--------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|---------|-------|
| 29 | Gender                   | Male           | Female    |            |         |       |
| 30 | Country of Origin        | Arab Countries | Other     |            |         |       |
| 31 | Age                      | 21-30          | 31-40     | 41-50      | 51-60   |       |
| 32 | Marital Status           | Single         | Married   | Divorced   | Widowed |       |
| 33 | Children                 | Yes            | No        |            |         |       |
| 34 | Age of child/children    | 1-3 years      | 4-7 years | 8-11 years | 12-15   | 16+   |
| 35 | Distance to work office: | 1-20km         | 21-40km   | 41-60km    | 61-80km | 81+km |

## APPENDIX II

### DATA COLLECTION FORM RESULTS

Table 1: Response to each question (reverse questions were recoded)

|   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree    | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree      | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------|
|   | N (%)             | N (%)       | N (%)                      | N (%)      | N (%)          |
| I would be open to tele-work if my company implements it                        | 11 (5.1%)         | 18 (8.4%)   | 32 (15%)                   | 79 (36.9%) | 74 (34.6%)     |
| I prefer working in an office than at home                                      | 39 (18.2%)        | 91 (42.5%)  | 34 (15.9%)                 | 29 (13.6%) | 21 (9.8%)      |
| I prefer social interactions found in the office environment                    | 87 (40.7%)        | 84 (39.3%)  | 21 (9.8%)                  | 13 (6.1%)  | 9 (4.2%)       |
| I enjoy having colleagues around me   | 87 (40.7%)        | 81 (37.9%)  | 27 (12.6%)                 | 8 (3.7%)   | 11 (5.1%)      |
| Tele-working would allow me to work the way that I find most effective          | 10 (4.7%)         | 35 (16.4%)  | 38 (17.8%)                 | 74 (34.6%) | 57 (26.6%)     |
| Tele-working would make me progress in my career                                | 24 (11.2%)        | 52 (24.3%)  | 73 (34.1%)                 | 45 (21%)   | 20 (9.3%)      |
| I prefer to come to the office, do my work then leave                           | 54 (25.2%)        | 71 (33.2%)  | 42 (19.6%)                 | 36 (16.8%) | 11 (5.1%)      |
| I would tele-work if all resources were given to me                             | 9 (4.2%)          | 21 (9.8%)   | 33 (15.4%)                 | 83 (38.8%) | 68 (31.8%)     |
| Traditional working is better than tele-working                                 | 26 (12.1%)        | 44 (20.6%)  | 67 (31.3%)                 | 53 (24.8%) | 24 (11.2%)     |
| My manager would trust me if I tele-work  | 9 (4.2%)          | 30 (14%)    | 46 (21.5%)                 | 70 (32.7%) | 59 (27.6%)     |
| Tele-working would diminish my social ties                                      | 40 (18.7%)        | 73 (34.1%)  | 42 (19.6%)                 | 44 (20.6%) | 15 (7%)        |
| I would trust my non-tele-working colleagues to work efficiently if I tele-work | 11 (5.1%)         | 33 (15.4%)  | 69 (32.2%)                 | 81 (37.9%) | 20 (9.3%)      |
| I would miss out on work events or gossip if I tele-work                        | 40 (18.7%)        | 78 (36.4%)  | 44 (20.6%)                 | 37 (17.3%) | 15 (7%)        |
| It is harder for me to get promoted if I tele-work                              | 28 (13.1%)        | 69 (32.2%)  | 57 (26.6%)                 | 43 (20.1%) | 17 (7.9%)      |
| I fear I would not get the support I need if I tele-work                        | 32 (15%)          | 104 (48.6%) | 34 (15.9%)                 | 34 (15.9%) | 10 (4.7%)      |
| I do not see any value in tele-working  | 5 (2.3%)          | 22 (10.3%)  | 34 (15.9%)                 | 83 (38.8%) | 70 (32.7%)     |
| I might not learn new skills from other colleagues if I                         | 46 (21.5%)        | 100 (46.7%) | 24 (11.2%)                 | 27 (12.6%) | 17 (7.9%)      |

|   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree   | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree      | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------|
|   | N (%)             | N (%)      | N (%)                      | N (%)      | N (%)          |
| tele-work   |                   |            |                            |            |                |
| I would not get much work done if I work from home                          | 21 (9.8%)         | 47 (22%)   | 24 (11.2%)                 | 75 (35%)   | 47 (22%)       |
| An employee should only work in an office and not at home                   | 7 (3.3%)          | 27 (12.6%) | 38 (17.8%)                 | 60 (28%)   | 82 (38.3%)     |
| My culture supports tele-working  | 41 (19.2%)        | 54 (25.2%) | 48 (22.4%)                 | 54 (25.2%) | 17 (7.9%)      |
| Tele-working allows me to pursue personal careers interests                 | 7 (3.3%)          | 23 (10.7%) | 59 (27.6%)                 | 93 (43.5%) | 32 (15%)       |
| I would be open to tele-working because I want to try a new way of working  | 9 (4.2%)          | 22 (10.3%) | 34 (15.9%)                 | 94 (43.9%) | 55 (25.7%)     |
| My manager would not be able to see my hard work if I tele-work             | 22 (10.3%)        | 44 (20.6%) | 35 (16.4%)                 | 84 (39.3%) | 29 (13.6%)     |
| Other employees might think I am not working if I am not seen in the office | 38 (17.8%)        | 99 (46.3%) | 23 (10.7%)                 | 40 (18.7%) | 14 (6.5%)      |
| Tele-working is an excuse not to go to work                                 | 9 (4.2%)          | 34 (15.9%) | 35 (16.4%)                 | 52 (24.3%) | 84 (39.3%)     |
| Tele-working would keep my manager from telling me what to do               | 54 (25.2%)        | 85 (39.7%) | 33 (15.4%)                 | 37 (17.3%) | 5 (2.3%)       |
| Tele-working gives me control over my work pace                             | 12 (5.6%)         | 22 (10.3%) | 39 (18.2%)                 | 88 (41.1%) | 53 (24.8%)     |
| Employees would abuse the tele-working benefit                              | 46 (21.5%)        | 94 (43.9%) | 39 (18.2%)                 | 27 (12.6%) | 8 (3.7%)       |

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for subscales (Scores should range from 1 to 5, reverse questions were reversely coded for the purpose of the calculation)

|    | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|----|------|----------------|
| H1 | 3.84 | 0.83           |
| H2 | 2.27 | 0.81           |
| H3 | 2.67 | 0.80           |
| H4 | 3.02 | 0.63           |
| H5 | 3.13 | 0.74           |
| H6 | 3.05 | 0.76           |
| H7 | 3.27 | 0.72           |



Table 3: Analyses by Gender

|    | Male |      | Female |      | P-Value |
|----|------|------|--------|------|---------|
|    | Mean | SD   | Mean   | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.80 | 0.82 | 3.89   | 0.85 | 0.470   |
| H2 | 2.32 | 0.79 | 2.23   | 0.84 | 0.417   |
| H3 | 2.63 | 0.80 | 2.73   | 0.81 | 0.387   |
| H4 | 3.02 | 0.64 | 3.03   | 0.63 | 0.907   |
| H5 | 3.10 | 0.73 | 3.17   | 0.75 | 0.515   |
| H6 | 3.04 | 0.74 | 3.06   | 0.77 | 0.843   |
| H7 | 3.24 | 0.74 | 3.30   | 0.70 | 0.535   |

Table 4: Analyses by Age

|    | 18 – 29 |      | 30 -39 |      | 40 – 49 |      | 50 – 69 |      | P-Value |
|----|---------|------|--------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|
|    | Mean    | SD   | Mean   | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean    | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.78    | 0.84 | 3.96   | 0.82 | 3.83    | 0.97 | 4.13    | 0.43 | 0.467   |
| H2 | 2.24    | 0.80 | 2.31   | 0.82 | 2.30    | 1.15 | 2.56    | 0.24 | 0.847   |
| H3 | 2.65    | 0.78 | 2.73   | 0.83 | 2.50    | 1.03 | 2.88    | 0.66 | 0.780   |
| H4 | 3.04    | 0.65 | 2.97   | 0.57 | 3.05    | 0.76 | 3.44    | 0.85 | 0.522   |
| H5 | 3.15    | 0.76 | 3.09   | 0.74 | 3.13    | 0.64 | 3.19    | 0.59 | 0.969   |
| H6 | 3.05    | 0.73 | 3.03   | 0.79 | 3.13    | 0.98 | 3.06    | 0.83 | 0.982   |
| H7 | 3.22    | 0.68 | 3.33   | 0.78 | 3.43    | 0.97 | 3.38    | 0.32 | 0.662   |

Table 5: Analyses by Marital Status

|    | Single |      | Married |      | Divorced |      | P-Value |
|----|--------|------|---------|------|----------|------|---------|
|    | Mean   | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean     | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.76   | 0.86 | 4.10    | 0.68 | 2.94     | 1.09 | 0.002   |
| H2 | 2.25   | 0.82 | 2.34    | 0.77 | 2.00     | 1.37 | 0.607   |
| H3 | 2.65   | 0.79 | 2.75    | 0.83 | 2.44     | 0.94 | 0.595   |
| H4 | 2.97   | 0.65 | 3.19    | 0.53 | 2.50     | 0.94 | 0.020   |
| H5 | 3.11   | 0.74 | 3.19    | 0.75 | 2.88     | 0.60 | 0.641   |
| H6 | 3.03   | 0.73 | 3.13    | 0.81 | 2.56     | 0.66 | 0.280   |
| H7 | 3.22   | 0.71 | 3.43    | 0.71 | 2.69     | 0.80 | 0.042   |

Table 6: Analyses by number of children

|    | Yes  |      | No   |      | P-Value |
|----|------|------|------|------|---------|
|    | Mean | SD   | Mean | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.95 | 0.61 | 3.82 | 0.88 | 0.373   |
| H2 | 2.30 | 0.79 | 2.27 | 0.82 | 0.830   |
| H3 | 2.66 | 0.79 | 2.68 | 0.81 | 0.905   |
| H4 | 3.10 | 0.55 | 3.01 | 0.65 | 0.421   |
| H5 | 3.09 | 0.66 | 3.14 | 0.76 | 0.695   |
| H6 | 2.96 | 0.74 | 3.07 | 0.76 | 0.418   |
| H7 | 3.33 | 0.62 | 3.26 | 0.74 | 0.564   |

Table 7: Analyses by Age of Children (Selected only people who have kids for this analysis)

|    | Under 12 months |      | 1 year |      | 2 years |      | 3 years |      | 4+ years old |      | P-Value |
|----|-----------------|------|--------|------|---------|------|---------|------|--------------|------|---------|
|    | Mean            | SD   | Mean   | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean         | SD   |         |
| H1 | 4.14            | 0.44 | 4.13   | 0.67 | 3.67    | 1.06 | 3.90    | 0.42 | 3.89         | 0.52 | 0.599   |
| H2 | 2.31            | 0.57 | 1.96   | 0.43 | 2.46    | 0.97 | 1.95    | 0.86 | 2.47         | 0.91 | 0.561   |
| H3 | 2.72            | 0.62 | 3.04   | 0.51 | 2.54    | 1.09 | 2.30    | 0.54 | 2.64         | 0.92 | 0.642   |
| H4 | 2.92            | 0.45 | 3.13   | 0.31 | 3.25    | 0.27 | 3.20    | 0.41 | 3.09         | 0.76 | 0.817   |
| H5 | 2.83            | 0.80 | 3.25   | 0.50 | 3.17    | 0.96 | 3.25    | 0.66 | 3.09         | 0.53 | 0.738   |
| H6 | 3.06            | 0.70 | 3.04   | 0.58 | 2.71    | 1.18 | 2.95    | 0.65 | 2.98         | 0.73 | 0.929   |
| H7 | 3.31            | 0.51 | 3.58   | 0.54 | 3.13    | 1.09 | 3.30    | 0.57 | 3.33         | 0.54 | 0.811   |

Table 8: Analyses by Distance to Work

|    | 1-20KM |      | 21-40KM |      | 21-40KM |      | 81+ KM |      | P-Value |
|----|--------|------|---------|------|---------|------|--------|------|---------|
|    | Mean   | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean    | SD   | Mean   | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.85   | 0.79 | 3.89    | 0.85 | 3.42    | 1.24 | 4.10   | 0.42 | 0.285   |
| H2 | 2.22   | 0.76 | 2.44    | 0.95 | 2.23    | 0.91 | 2.15   | 0.42 | 0.411   |
| H3 | 2.64   | 0.81 | 2.78    | 0.82 | 2.63    | 0.79 | 2.70   | 0.69 | 0.722   |
| H4 | 3.06   | 0.63 | 2.99    | 0.66 | 2.83    | 0.69 | 2.80   | 0.37 | 0.506   |
| H5 | 3.12   | 0.72 | 3.22    | 0.81 | 2.88    | 0.73 | 3.10   | 0.38 | 0.514   |
| H6 | 2.99   | 0.73 | 3.21    | 0.74 | 2.92    | 1.02 | 3.25   | 0.88 | 0.251   |
| H7 | 3.25   | 0.72 | 3.30    | 0.65 | 3.27    | 1.07 | 3.65   | 0.38 | 0.658   |

Table 9: Nationalities of the Participants

|                      | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Albania              | 1         | 0.5     |
| Bahrain              | 1         | 0.5     |
| Canada               | 6         | 2.8     |
| Egypt                | 2         | 0.9     |
| France               | 1         | 0.5     |
| Greece               | 2         | 0.9     |
| India                | 4         | 1.9     |
| Ireland              | 2         | 0.9     |
| Italy                | 1         | 0.5     |
| Jordan               | 6         | 2.8     |
| Kuwait               | 3         | 1.4     |
| Lebanon              | 146       | 68.2    |
| Libya                | 1         | 0.5     |
| Pakistan             | 2         | 0.9     |
| Panama               | 1         | 0.5     |
| Poland               | 1         | 0.5     |
| Qatar                | 2         | 0.9     |
| Saudi Arabia         | 2         | 0.9     |
| South Africa         | 3         | 1.4     |
| Sudan                | 1         | 0.5     |
| Sweden               | 1         | 0.5     |
| Syria                | 4         | 1.9     |
| United Arab Emirates | 7         | 3.3     |
| United Kingdom       | 8         | 3.7     |
| United States        | 4         | 1.9     |
| Venezuela            | 1         | 0.5     |
| West Bank            | 1         | 0.5     |

Table 10: Analysis by Nationality (Arab countries were grouped as follows: Bahrain Egypt Jordan Kuwait Lebanon Libya Qatar Saudi Arabia Syria United Arab Emirates West Bank. Other countries were grouped as “Non-Arab”).

|    | Arab |      | Non-Arab |      | P-Value |
|----|------|------|----------|------|---------|
|    | Mean | SD   | Mean     | SD   |         |
| H1 | 3.79 | 0.85 | 4.08     | 0.73 | 0.038   |
| H2 | 2.24 | 0.82 | 2.45     | 0.77 | 0.141   |
| H3 | 2.62 | 0.82 | 2.92     | 0.70 | 0.027   |
| H4 | 3.03 | 0.62 | 2.99     | 0.69 | 0.689   |
| H5 | 3.11 | 0.75 | 3.22     | 0.68 | 0.401   |
| H6 | 2.98 | 0.76 | 3.39     | 0.64 | 0.001   |
| H7 | 3.23 | 0.72 | 3.46     | 0.70 | 0.077   |

Table 11: Cronbach Analyses to Test Internal Reliability

| Hypothesis     | Question  | Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|----------------|---|------------------|----------------------------------|
| H <sub>1</sub> |   | 0.762            |                                  |
|                | I would be open to tele-work if my company implements it                    |                  | 0.7                              |
|                | I would tele-work if all resources were given to me                         |                  | 0.723                            |
|                | I do not see any value in tele-working                                      |                  | 0.729                            |
|                | I would be open to tele-working because I want to try a new way of working  |                  | 0.667                            |
| H <sub>2</sub> |   | 0.691            |                                  |
|                | I prefer social interactions found in the office environment                |                  | 0.56                             |
|                | I enjoy having colleagues around me   |                  | 0.579                            |
|                | Tele-working would diminish my social ties                                  |                  | 0.693                            |
|                | I would miss out on work events or gossip if I tele-work                    |                  | 0.668                            |
| H <sub>3</sub> |   | 0.575            |                                  |
|                | I prefer to come to the office, do my work then leave                       |                  | 0.452                            |
|                | I might not learn new skills from other colleagues if I tele-work           |                  | 0.465                            |
|                | I would not get much work done if I work from home                          |                  | 0.491                            |
|                | Other employees might think I am not working if I am not seen in the office |                  | 0.591                            |

|                |   |       |        |
|----------------|---|-------|--------|
| H <sub>4</sub> |   | 0.295 |        |
|                | Tele-working would allow me to work the way that I find most effective          |       | 0.141  |
|                | I fear I would not get the support I need if I tele-work                        |       | 0.226  |
|                | Tele-working would keep my manager from telling me what to do                   |       | 0.505  |
|                | Tele-working gives me control over my work pace                                 |       | -.055a |
| H <sub>5</sub> |   | 0.567 |        |
|                | Tele-working would make me progress in my career                                |       | 0.442  |
|                | It is harder for me to get promoted if I tele-work                              |       | 0.455  |
|                | Tele-working allows me to pursue personal careers interests                     |       | 0.539  |
|                | My manager would not be able to see my hard work if I tele-work                 |       | 0.535  |
| H <sub>6</sub> |   | 0.691 |        |
|                | I prefer social interactions found in the office environment                    |       | 0.56   |
|                | I enjoy having colleagues around me   |       | 0.579  |
|                | Tele-working would diminish my social ties                                      |       | 0.693  |
|                | I would miss out on work events or gossip if I tele-work                        |       | 0.668  |
| H <sub>7</sub> |   | 0.528 |        |
|                | My manager would trust me if I tele-work  |       | 0.596  |
|                | I would trust my non-tele-working colleagues to work efficiently if I tele-work |       | 0.368  |
|                | Tele-working is an excuse not to go to work                                     |       | 0.373  |
|                | Employees would abuse the tele-working benefit                                  |       | 0.454  |

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