

Working from home or shirking from home? Personality trait as a predictor of remote working preference and suitability

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Abstract.

The positives and negatives of remote working have been hotly debated in recent years. Remote work has been hampered with scepticism around performance and trust. The sudden onset Covid-19 has made remote working a reality for many employees worldwide. The long term effects of this on employee mental health are still not known. Personality traits have historically been an accurate predictor of working behaviours and mental health. The primary aim of this study was to look for a relationship between personality traits and remote working preference. 258 participants took part in a remote working survey and personality trait test. The groups comprised of participants who worked remotely prior to Covid-19, worked remotely as a result of Covid-19 and who did not work remotely at all. The groups were compared on their personality trait scores and their remote working preference. Parametric and non-parametric statistical analyses were used to compare the means of each group against personality trait scores. The study found a significant relationship between two of the Big 5 personality traits and remote working preference. The traits were Emotional stability and Conscientiousness. Gender was also compared for remote working preference, no significant relationship was found. The secondary aim of this study was to initiate a test and learn process for a Remote Working Suitability Scale developed by the researcher, the R.W.S.S. The research has shown that personality traits should be taken into account when designing remote working policy and evidence-based mental health interventions.

Chapter 1: Introduction.

1.1 Introduction

Working from home or shirking from home? That is the question. Working from home, flexible working, telecommuting or remote working involves working away from the usual site or office provided by an employer either on a part time or full time basis (M.B.N., 2020). Recently remote working hubs and shared desking space in the locality of the employee have become popular however; remote workers most frequently work at home (Buffer.com, 2019). The demand for remote working has been on the rise in recent years (I.W.G., 2019; Braccio-Hering, 2020), for many the Covid –19 Global Pandemic has made it a necessity. With limited amounts of empirical evidence on the subject the true mental health benefits or disadvantages of remote working have yet to be discovered. Personality traits have been used as work performance measures for years and the the aim of this research is to explore the theory that personality trait could be used preliminarily as an indicator for remote working preferences and subsequently, suitability. This study will attempt to address a gap in the literature by looking for a relationship between remote working preferences and personality traits based on these findings, assess the potential of a remote working suitability scale.

1.2 Current trends

Perhaps the most widely quoted research on remote working to date is the 2014 study by Bloom et al. exploring the effects of telecommuting on work performance at a large Chinese call centre. The experiment primarily involved testing remote working as a potential management practice for raising profitability and productivity. Secondly as a strategy to address concerns over the deteriorating both the work life balance of employees and the high attrition rates in the call centres. Employees taking part in the trial were split into a treatment

group who worked remotely for nine months with the remaining control group employees staying in the office. The authors found several striking results. The remote working group performance increased by 13% and the attrition rate dropped by 50% versus the control group. The remote working group also reported substantially higher work satisfaction than the control group.

However when the trial ended, two thirds of the remote work group returned to the office, citing social isolation and loneliness as the primary reasons for not continuing to work remotely. Subsequently, those employees that chose to remain working remotely had a further performance increase of 22%. However, Bloom et al., (2014) discovered a potential downside for these employees that remained working remotely, which was a 50% reduction of promotion rates. While the study demonstrated that remote working does not decrease performance, it also raised several other questions. Why did the performance of those that remained working remotely increase? Is it a case that two thirds of the treatment group were not suited to remote working and therefore impacted the performance of those who were suited to remote work through shirking and lack of engagement? What are the personality traits of a successful remote worker or of an employee who is given the option of remote working but declines the opportunity? How is an employee's remote work suitability defined?

A major remote working barrier past and present has been the level of trust between employee and employer (Future Jobs Ireland 2019; Owl Labs, 2019). While many companies have fully embraced flexible working arrangements, others reluctantly engage the idea of allowing their employee's perform their daily tasks from the comfort of their own homes. This reluctance is not without its warrants, an image search on your web browser using the words work from home or remote working quickly drags you down a rabbit hole of memes and pictures of workers in their pajamas watching Netflix. The fact that remote working

practices vary so much across companies, even for those in the same industry, suggests a general lack of consensus of its benefits or efficacy. Economists argue that one factor that may contribute to the incomplete adoption of the best management practices is lack of adequate information (Bloom & Reenen, 2010). In Ireland, employees of foreign owned business are 19% more likely allowed to work remotely than employees at Irish owned businesses. Larger companies are more likely to enable remote working practices, 54% of businesses in Ireland with 500 plus employees are working remotely one or two days per week (Future Jobs Ireland, 2019).

1.3 The Covid-19 Global Pandemic

With the sudden emergence of Covid – 19, remote working skeptics were left with little choice than to embrace a remote working culture. In a remote working survey by NUI Galway (2020), 86% of respondents indicated they were now working remotely due to restrictions set out by the Irish Government as a protective measure to control the Coronavirus. 51% of these had never worked remotely prior to lockdown. Many employees were faced with the stresses of a situation which was entirely new to them but also coupled with other compounding factors such as restricted movement outside, and for those employees with children, dealing with homeschooling and providing childcare at home during working hours. Couples with small children in particular with no remote working experience, found themselves in a different working world to the one they had known just weeks before. Amir Salihefendic, CEO of Doist, a company that works fully remotely states that “remote work isn't just a different way to work – it's a different way to live” (Buffer.com, 2019). There are grounds to explore the long term effects of this on remote workers mental health, work life balance and how employees are managed remotely. This is equally

important for both workers who prefer to work remotely and for those who do not but had no option but to do so. Salihefendic also outlines “we need to acknowledge that isolation, anxiety, and depression are significant problems when working remotely, and we must figure out ways and systems to resolve these complex issues” (Buffer.com, 2019). Further exploration of these potential factors is important, not only in clearing up any misconceptions around remote work but also in implementing evidence based mental health interventions for both company and employee and helping to define the level of an employee’s suitability for remote working.

1.4 The flexible working revolution

Prior to the Covid -19 pandemic, the flexible working revolution has been gathering steam. Partly, this has been the result of the last economic recession but also more recently the push for corporate climate change responsibility (Future Jobs Ireland 2019; CBRE, 2016; Taskade, 2020). Yearly in the United States, 3.6 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions are prevented from entering the atmosphere due to remote workers not commuting (Global Workplace Analytics, 2018). If Americans with jobs that suited remote working did so just 50% of the time, the greenhouse gas reduction in the United States would be the equivalent of taking the entire New York State workforce permanently off the road (Owl Labs, 2019). To give that figure some Irish perspective, Irelands total greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors for 2017 amounted to an equivalent of 60.7 million tons of CO₂ (Central Statistics Office, 2019). Environmental and urban planning benefits of reducing the frequency of commuting are frequently discussed in urban economics literature, reducing traffic volume can decrease driven road miles, minimise pollution but also decrease the centrality effect of the city as residents migrate to the suburbs (Bento et al., 2003).

The greatest drivers contributing to this workplace revolution appear to be an increased awareness around work life balance (Lockwood, 2003), the costs and career implications of maternity leave for working Mothers and lately a spotlight on shared parenting responsibilities and the importance of the presence of Fathers in the early lives of their children (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999; Pancsofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006; Lewis & Lamb, 2003; University of North Carolina, 2006). In recent years the Scandinavian parenting model has been referred to as a gold standard in the Irish media and in Government discussions. Swedish parents are generously given 480 days of leave per child with 390 days paid at a rate of 80% of a parent's salary up to a capped limit (Forsakringskassan.se, 2020). Upon closer examination, the parental leave panacea that is the Scandinavian model is not what it appears to be. The uptake on the full amount of paternal leave has been poor by men in particular. The Nordic Labour Journal reports that often it is Mothers who take the majority of the flexible leave provided (Lindahl, 2019). Similarly in Finland, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2017) highlights one in five Fathers do not take any of the family leave made available to them and only use 10% of reimbursed family leave. Which raises the question, is remote working a cost effective solution for governments as well as employers for those with children who want to continue a successful career?

At the Remote Work Consultation Forum held in Ireland in 2019, flexible working arrangements were also highlighted as a particularly important contributor to the work life balance of women returning to employment (Future jobs Ireland, 2019). Longitudinal research by Holtzman & Glass, (1999) has also shown in organisations that provided greater flexibility of work locations, supportive managers and extended leave periods for parents, resulted in higher levels of job satisfaction for new Mothers. Additionally, analysis by the International Workplace Group showed 80% of survey respondents agreed that there is a

fundamental relationship between flexible working arrangements and improving workplace diversity (I.W.G., 2019).

Remote working throughout Europe is becoming increasingly more frequent (Eurostat, 2020). Many European Governments have implemented legislation to ensure companies not only allow it as an option but also to ensure the practice is regulated. Legislation is in place in the Netherlands, Norway, the U.K. and Italy. More recently the Belgian Government has published its Workable and Flexible Work Act in an effort to regulate remote working practices (I.W.G., 2019). Although there is currently no legislation in place with regard to remote working in Ireland, an advisory board with consulting stakeholders has been set up. A 56 page document entitled Remote Work in Ireland 2019 has been produced to explore how to increase participation in the workforce, particularly in rural areas and also to assist in transitioning to a low carbon economy (Future jobs Ireland, 2019).

As the world markets grow ever more competitive, the issue of recruiting and retaining talent is also driving the trend of remote working (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). In the past, competitive salaries have been the focal point in which companies could acquire and retain talent. Of late this has not been the case with many jobseekers becoming attracted to packages with greater job flexibility (I.W.G., 2019; Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). U.S. workers with a bachelor's degree or higher were more than twice as likely to report having flexible work arrangements as those with less than a high school diploma (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). This may illustrate that highly qualified workers are driving the trend of flexible work arrangements. Such flexible working arrangements are viewed as a form of compensation similar to other benefits enjoyed by these more educated workers such as employer-sponsored health care (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010).

Remote working is now central to this demand for greater work place flexibility, not only for professionals with younger children, but also with Millennials who appear to value flexible working arrangements above the majority of other job benefits. Sixty nine percent of Millennials surveyed claim that in order to be given the option of workplace flexibility they would trade other job benefits (I.W.G., 2019). Presently, it is estimated that over 50% of the global workforce are Millennials (CBRE, 2016), meaning this flexible working revolution is ignored at the peril of a company's ability to recruit and retain talent. Konrad & Mangel, (2000) concur in stating that organisations can enhance their ability to recruit and retain highly skilled workers if they provide employees with resources to help with work life balance. Traditionally, execution of change management within companies at employee level has shown to be challenging (Sirkin & Keenan, 2015). However, as the demand for remote working is currently being driven by the employee and the market, such transitions should be far easier to implement.

1.5 There is more to remote work than a phone and a laptop

There are many aspects to remote working. After thorough consideration of available literature the following aspects of remote working have been identified by the researcher as key constructs. Job tools, Motivation efficiency and discipline, Work life balance, Social aspects and Trust. All five of these constructs appear to form a synthesis. These constructs have been used to form the basis of a preliminary Remote Working Suitability Scale developed by the researcher, the R.W.S.S.

Job tools.

While Job tools would appear to be one of the more straightforward pieces of the remote working puzzle, technology requirements are cited as one of the biggest barriers to deploying flexible work arrangements by 42% of businesses in the U.K. (I.W.G., 2019). In an

Irish remote working survey, respondents cited a lack of dedicated/physical workspace as the third most prevalent challenge to working remotely. Many respondents appear to conduct work duties from the kitchen table. A significant number of these respondents had provided their own equipment 21%, versus 25.1% of those whose employer had provided it for them (NUI Galway, 2020). Kitting out an employee with effective remote working tools does not end at supplying a phone and laptop.

Many employees have found themselves working from home with all the equipment needed but with no training in remote working. In theory, with the right equipment in place remote working should be a straightforward transition for many. However, this may be more complex than it appears. The issue of training arises around remote working, particularly in terms of how teams and staff are managed remotely. Management styles which may have worked in the office may now become challenging with remote work. A 2019 report found that the topics managers who had no training in remote working were least concerned about with regard their employees were, loneliness (59%), the career implications (65%), employees overworking (67%), and difficulty managing them (68%) (Owl Labs, 2019). Ironically, in almost all remote work surveys examined, these four topics are often the most frequently reported issues related with remote working by employees (NUI Galway, 2020; Global Workplace Analytics, 2018; Bloom et al., 2014; Buffer.com, 2019).

Such is the emphasis on eliminating shirking and the preoccupation on performance when it comes to remote working, that up to now the mental health of employees appears to be an afterthought in many discussions. There have been several studies examining the effects of stress and fatigue levels from poor quality audio and visual teleconferencing. During teleconferencing we experience higher cognitive load as our brains need to work harder to navigate nonverbal cues and body language (Ferran & Watts, 2009). A German study on misattribution of transmission delays found that a delay of only 1.2 seconds was

enough for those on the call to perceive the responder as less friendly (Schoenenber et al., 2014). Recognising problems such as stress and burnout can be a challenge in itself for managers when employees are in front of them, the out of sight out of mind mentality with remote working in particular may compound that. Further research is needed on this topic to help develop training for both managers and employees to identify the complexity of mental health for remote workers. Popular programs for recognising mental health awareness in the workplace such as the Mental Health First Aider Program (MHFAI, 2020) may need modification in order to suit remote working. Published guidelines from the Dept. of Health would also assist in building a set of universal standards around the mental wellbeing of remote workers.

Motivation, efficiency, discipline.

Motivation efficiency and discipline are also key factors with regard to working from home. Many employees have found themselves in a situation where they had perceived to be normal is no longer a reality. Work habits have changed and the role of personality trait may be very much a key aspect here. Remote working may mean for some that normal cues for the aspects of everyday working may no longer exist, such as start and finish times or even such straightforward taken for granted cues like breaks and mealtimes. Many advocates of remote working claim the traditional 9 to 5 is a thing of the past (Fried & Hansson, 2013). In almost every survey, remote working employees have cited one of the biggest issues they face is knowing when to switch off. In Ireland, the 2020 Sign of the times survey highlighted that 57% of employees check emails last thing at night or first thing in the morning, an 11% increase since 2019. 36% check work emails on holiday because they feel it is expected, up 13% from 2014, and 25% find it hard to switch off in evening/weekends which is a 9% increase on 2019 (Behaviour & Attitudes, 2020).

The importance of a dedicated work space to separate a job from personal life when working remotely should not be overlooked. With the advent of the communications technology revolution which has somewhat blurred the boundaries of work life and home life. Many employees find themselves on digital leashes, switched on 24/7 and always available. Ayyagari, et al., (2011) defined the situation as to the degree to which the technology enables users to be reachable as “presenteeism”. Furthermore, such presenteeism contributes to burnout as employees are continuously accessible by their job through electronic devices such as phones and laptops, no matter where they are. Such a phenomenon has been termed Technostress. Much like generalized employee stress; studies have found that individuals experiencing technostress have lower productivity and job satisfaction, and decreased commitment to the organization (Ayyagari et al., 2011) Incidentally, in July of this year, AIB launched a new ‘right to switch off’ policy for its workers in conjunction with the Financial Services Union, aimed at giving employees the right to make themselves unavailable during break times, days off and outside of working hours (Maguire, 2020).

Work life balance.

Large numbers of workers seeking remote work cite the main reason as pursuit of a better work life balance. A 2019 Irish Government remote working survey showed 43% of respondents claiming increased schedule flexibility as the foremost motivation to work remotely. This was the most popular motivator for those in the Private Sector and the second most popular in the Public Sector (Future Jobs Ireland, 2019). In the NUI Galway (2020) survey, the top advantage of remote working listed was no commute/not sitting in traffic.

There have been demonstrable effects of using work life balance as a tool for companies to retain talent and also to attract it. Several studies suggest that work life balance has a direct effect on not only turnover intention but also on attracting skilled workers to an organization (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). In the experiment by Bloom et al.,

(2014), implementation of a remote working program reduced C-Trips call centre attrition rates by 50% for the remote working group. Flexible working arrangements help to reduce costly behaviours to employers such as absenteeism, lack of engagement and poor timekeeping (Konrad & Mangel, 2000).

Women in particular have shown that flexible working arrangements are high on the list when exploring a potential new role (Chung, 2018; Future jobs Ireland, 2019). Research suggests that companies with greater proportions of women at senior leadership levels offer more work life balance orientated packages (Bloom et al., 2009). Alternatively, companies with large amounts of female employees are more likely to put family orientated flexible working programs in place as a result of their workforce being more dependent on them (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram and Simons, 1995). There are grounds here to also examine the effects of a strong family emphasis on the careers of some women, particularly in positions of increased seniority. There have been many arguments about workplace gender equality particularly at CEO level. Not surprisingly, only 37 of the CEO's of Fortune 500 companies are female (Hinchliffe, 2020). It is arguable that many of these high stakes roles do not care for work life balance and therefore are currently both unobtainable and undesirable to many working mothers (Nelson, 2018; Gino, 2017; Brockmann et al., 2017; Gino, et al 2015; Brown, 2020).

For companies to remain competitive in today's global market means they must be willing to continually look for ways of achieving higher output and lowering operating costs. Possibly the most flexible form of remote working is a management practice known as a results only work environment. An R.O.W.E. is where employees are evaluated on what they produce not the hours they work. Employees can choose when and how they work provided they achieve the desired results (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). Financial management and investment bank firms such as Goldman Sachs have shown R.O.W.E. to be

highly effective. However, longitudinal evidence has demonstrated these types of work practices are severely detrimental to the wellbeing of employees over longer periods of time, with many employees engaged in this type of work practice reaching burnout within three to four years (Michel, 2014).

Social aspects.

Theoretically, it would be easy to set up an employee to work remotely with all the work tools they need and a distraction free workspace. However, the social implications must be examined in terms of how such employees could withstand social isolation for long periods of time, particularly where remote working is involuntary. Due to the varying natures of the personalities of individual employees it would not be wise to discount the social aspects of the workplace. Loneliness and social isolation have been continually reported as issues by remote workers, and we have still to see the extent of this. In the framework set out by the Irish Government, both of these issues were recently cited as potential mental health concerns from the consultation panel of remote working stakeholders (Future jobs Ireland, 2019).

In the 2014 C-Trip experiment by Bloom et al. two thirds of the control group decided to stay in the office after the trial ended, with these employees citing social concerns and loneliness with remote working. Even more interesting is that once those employees returned to the office, the remainder of the remote working group showed a 22% performance incremental to the 13% increase from the full control group. There are grounds to explore if personality trait plays some part in the suitability of remote working. Were the workers who had felt lonely and socially isolated dragging the overall performance figure down? If employees feel workplace disillusionment then their work motivation will be significantly lower (Roper & Milner, 2018). In most cases, management has control over many of the

factors that cause employee job dissatisfaction and high staff turnover directly impacts the profitability of a business (Harrison & Gordon, 2014).

Trust.

Trust remains a prominent barrier for allowing employees to work from home (Future jobs Ireland, 2019). The stereotypes around allowing employees chose their own schedule has haunted the idea of remote work since its inception. Managers and companies alike are increasingly concerned about the productivity of remote employees (Owl Labs, 2019). However there have been some significant developments of late to contribute to the theory that remote working does not mean a decrease in productivity (Bloom et al., 2014; Konrad & Mangel, 2000; Hunter, 2018). In their book, *Remote: Office not required*. Fried & Hansson (2013) highlight a hole in the reluctance to allow their employees work remotely.

“Most fears that have to do with people working remotely stem from a lack of trust. A manager thinks, Will people work hard if I’m not watching them all the time? If I can’t see them sitting pretty at their desks, are they just going to goof off and play video games or surf the web all day? We’ll let you in on a secret: If people really want to play video games or surf the web all day, they’re perfectly capable of doing so from their desks at the office” (p48).

Surveillance type management practices have been shown to inhibit productivity and employee job satisfaction (Corgnet et al., 2019) and the cost of micromanaging employees is extensive. In: *My way or the highway: The Micromanagement survival guide*. 79% of survey respondents revealed that they had previously or were currently experiencing micromanagement at work while 69% had thought about changing jobs. Worryingly 85% of those surveyed stated that micromanaging had impacted negatively on their morale (Chambers, 2008). Management style can have a significant influence on employee turnover

and this costs the company money to recruit and rehire. For example in the United Kingdom replacing an employee may cost the equivalent of 6 to 9 months' salary (I.W.G., 2019).

Similarly, in *Preventive Stress Management in Organizations*, the author states that over time, the poor leadership qualities of managers can have a profound effect on the health of their subordinates. There is sufficient research to suggest that there are many health issues that arise from working for a micromanager such as chronic stress, high blood pressure, insomnia, increased risk of heart attack and in some cases can drive employees to alcoholism and eating disorders (Quick et al., 2015).

On the other hand, participative work practices that encourage practically 100% freedom of start and finish times can be just as detrimental to the mental health of employees. Michel, (2014) who conducted a 12 year ethnography of Wall Street work participation practices, found that the levels of burnout far exceeded those of normal workers. The unsupervised participative work practices used by the banks gave employees the perception of autonomy by removing the hierarchies, rules and behaviours traditionally used in other companies. Allowing employees complete perceived freedom over their schedules in this case made them hyper competitive towards one another with many employees working weekends to get an edge of their colleagues. Michel, (2014) writes, "One perverse outcome of these participatory practices was indiscriminate overwork. Bankers worked up to 120 hours per week, including nights and weekends, even when there was nothing urgent to do" (p522). There is scope to look for some compromise towards management trust levels of remote workers and its effect on their wellbeing. For example, "workers supervised by family-supportive managers reported improved physical and mental health" (Council of Economic Advisers, 2010, p20).

Training and trust are inextricably linked. In a U.S. remote working survey, the main issues for managers not being supportive of remote work were as follows, reduced employee

focus (82%), reduced employee productivity (82%), lower employee engagement and satisfaction (81%), and whether their remote employees are getting their work done (80%). While the level or type of training was not specified remote working trained managers showed a 15% reduction rate in these concerns, compared with untrained managers (Owl Labs, 2019). This suggests that additional training for managers may help with fears that allowing trust and autonomy may hamper productivity. Employees in high trust working environments report 40% less burnout, 74% less stress, 29% more life satisfaction and 76% more engagement than employees in low trust working environments (Zak, 2019).

1.6 The role of personality trait

There are multiple facets to remote working and it does not end at the supply of a laptop, printer and WIFI. Now we have a definition of what remote working is, we can address the greater challenge in defining how an employee is suitable for remote working. Objective personality testing emerged approximately a hundred years ago (Goldberg, 1999; Gibby & Zickar, 2008) and has been successfully used as a recruitment tool and work performance indicator during most of that time (Barrick et al., 2001; Salgado 1997; Judge et al., 1999). Lexical hypothesis or lexical approach outlines that important human personality characteristics become encoded in language, primarily in single words (Cattell, 1943; Miller, 1996; John et al., 1988). Lexical approach can be traced back to the works of Sir Frances Galton in 1884. Psychologist Gordon Allport was one of the earliest advocates of the trait theory of human personality; Allport suggested that human behaviours were shaped by cardinal traits, central traits and secondary traits (Pettigrew, 2015). Allport identified no fewer than 17,953 of these single words relating to human personality characteristics (Allport & Odbert, 1936). Between 1943 and 1945, Raymond Cattell used reduction techniques to refine this set of words to 35 (Cattell, 1943; 1945).

In the years that followed several researchers sought to build on the work of Cattell, such as Tupes and Christal terming their work as the Five Factor Model (Tupes & Christal, 1992). The popularity of the five factor personality model arose in the 1980s by independent contributions from several researchers and most have identified a similar set of common factors using the method of “lexical hypothesis” (Digman, 1990). Goldberg, (1990) and Costa & McCrae, (1992) were mainly responsible for the revival of personality trait theories and testing beyond the 1980s. However, Cattell’s 16pf questionnaire based on his theory of personality remains popular after it was first published in 1949. The current 5th version was published in 1993 (Cattell & Mead, 2008).

Due to this trait model having input from various researchers independently, there have been a variety of names for these Five Factors since their inception. Extraversion has been referred to as Surgency; Conscientiousness as Dependability, Neuroticism as Emotional stability or Adjustment, Openness to experience as Intellect, Imagination and culture. This research will specifically use the names for these personality traits termed by the developer of the International Personality Inventory Pool or I.P.I.P., Psychologist Lewis Goldberg (Goldberg et al., 2006). These traits are Intellect/Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional stability. The I.P.I.P. was first developed by Goldberg in 1996 as an internationally collaborative open source effort. Due to their open source nature, the scales are free to use and can be continually improved with input from professional users. Unlike some previous versions of personality scales, the I.P.I.P. does not rely on single trait adjectives but more phrase based. Goldberg et al., (2006) maintain phrases are more effective at conveying complex nuances involved in describing personality, particularly for translation into other languages. Since its inception several decades ago, the Five Factor Model has shown to be highly replicable across many cultures and languages (Goldberg, 1990; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Rai, 2019; Soto, 2019).

Up to now, Conscientiousness has been the most accurate of the Big 5 personality trait indicators of work performance and career success (Judge et al., 1999). High levels of Conscientiousness have shown to be a reliable predictor of job performance across all of the jobs examined by Barrick et al., (2001). Individuals with high levels of Conscientiousness generally reflect self-discipline, dutifulness, and indicate a preference to planned behaviours. Conscientiousness appears to be the only personality trait from the Five Factor Model to show non-zero correlations across many different occupational groups related to job performance and appears to consistently predict success in a large number of jobs moderately well (Barrick et al., 2001; Salgado, 1997). Research has shown interactive effects between personality traits on job performance. In a study by Witt et al., (2002) it was found that high Conscientiousness employees that were low in Agreeableness received lower ratings in job performance than employees that were high in Conscientiousness and Agreeableness. Trait agreeableness generally involves behaviours such as trusting and getting along with others, optimism, kindness (*see Table 1*). Individuals low in agreeableness can be competitive and argumentative (Thompson, 2008).

Conscientiousness and Emotional stability are important independent predictors of service outcomes and a study by Teng & Liu, (2013) showed that interaction of Conscientiousness and Emotional stability positively influences service quality. Emotional stability or Neuroticism is linked with low stress tolerances, getting upset easily and often a pessimistic approach to work. “Neuroticism was also found to be a generalizable predictor when overall work performance was the criterion, but its relationship to specific performance criteria and occupations was less consistent than was Conscientiousness” (Barrick et al., 2001, p9). Emotional stability also showed validity in predicting teamwork. Openness to experience, Agreeableness and Extraversion personality traits have in the past not appeared to be a reliable indicator of success in all jobs, there is however some evidence of individual

traits to be significant when examined against particular job roles (Barrick et al., 2001). Individuals who are high in Intellect/Openness like to try new things, be aware of their feelings and often be more creative. Individuals high in trait Extraversion enjoy participating in social engagements and in general they are enthusiastic and display energy. Positive and negative descriptives of the Big 5 can be found in Table 1.

As the flexibility of working environments continues to evolve there is reason to suggest the likelihood of a gravitation effect towards remote working in individuals with certain personality traits (Judge et al., 1999). More recently, we have seen much discourse with regard to the attraction of increased flexible working packages, which may give rise to such a suggestion. There has been much research looking at the outcomes of the effects of personality on situation choice, including employment situations (Ickes et al., 1997; Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990).

Table 1

Positive and negative characteristics of the Big 5 personality traits

Personality trait	High score	Low score
Intellect or Openness	Perceptive, imaginative, analytical.	Unreflective, unrefined, un-inquisitive.
Conscientiousness	Organised, hardworking, serious.	Negligent, careless, lazy.
Extraversion	Talkative, spontaneous, adventurous.	Unsociable, timid, introverted.
Emotional Stability or Neuroticism	Relaxed, not envious, stable.	Angry, tense, insecure.
Agreeableness	Cooperative, Generous, fair.	Distrustful, Cold, Selfish.

1.7 Mental health and remote work

So where does mental health fit into all of this? There are volumes of research linking mental health to the 5 factor personality traits (Lewis & Cardwell, 2020; Topić, et al., 2012; Chien, et al., 2007; Bagby, et al., 1995). The definition of work related stress according to the World Health Organisation is ‘the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope’ (W.H.O, 2010). In Ireland, work related stress and anxiety accounts for approximately 18% of work absenteeism. We have yet to understand the long term impacts of being sick while working remotely. A statistic of concern is that remote workers have a propensity not to call in sick as they are at home already (Future Jobs Ireland, 2019).

Although anecdotal, accounts have been frequently reported in the media of employees being told to work from home because they are sick, instead of taking the time to recover like they should (Wilkie, 2019). Irish female workers report stress and anxiety disorders more frequently than males, regardless of occupation (Russell, et al., 2016). Between 2010 and 2015 reports of job stress in Ireland have more than doubled (Russell, et al., 2018). Managing and recognising stress in a remote working environment is a relatively new phenomenon and appears to not yet have been addressed in Irish health and safety legislation.

1.8 Rationale

In summary of the reviewed literature, there are grounds for further exploration as to whether remote working preferences can be predicted by specific personality traits. There has been extensive research on personality trait in terms of suitability and performance in various job roles. Research on the role of personality in remote working preference and suitability in particular appears to be limited. Therefore this research is purely exploratory. The rationale for the current study is to look for differences between remote working preferences and any

of the big 5 personality traits and also examine remote working preference and gender. Additionally the current study will aim to test and develop the Remote Working Suitability Scale developed by the researcher. Due to this scale being entirely new, there is not strong enough evidence yet to create a hypothesis based on it. It is anticipated however that examination of data collected using the R.W.S.S will allow testing and further development of the scale as an effective tool to predict an employee's suitability for remote working as an alternative or accompaniment to personality testing.

1.9 Hypotheses

The overall hypotheses for the proposed research are as follows:

Hypothesis one: There will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Extraversion scores.

Hypothesis two: There will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Conscientiousness scores.

Hypothesis three: There will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Agreeableness scores. .

Hypothesis four: There will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Emotional stability scores.

Hypothesis five: There will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Intellect scores.

Hypothesis six: There will be a significant association between gender and remote working preference.

Chapter 2: Method

2.1 Participants

258 participants completed the Remote Working and Personality inventory survey. The participants were recruited through social media sites, pages and groups. Some of these participants were convenience and referral sampled. The participant's ages ranged from 18-74 years old (*see Figure 1*). The survey had a gender split of 74 males (28.68%) and 182 females (70.54%), 2 respondents did not state their gender (0.78%). The sample was taken from a wide range of fields of employment (*see Table 2*). Participants were selected on the criteria that they were not part of a vulnerable population, were over the age of 18, below retirement age and in current employment. Questionnaire participation was on a voluntary basis, no compensation of any kind was provided for taking part. 67 Participants did not complete the questionnaire, these incomplete entries were deleted.

2.2 Design

The research design was quantitative independent measures between groups in nature. The independent variables in this study were the Big 5 Personality traits. These were Intellect/Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability. Gender was also used as an independent variable and preference towards remote working was the dependent variable. These variables were analysed using SPSS statistics software.

2.3 Materials

Smartsurvey.co.uk (2020) was chosen as the questionnaire delivery software as its features satisfied the researchers' requirements. The online questionnaire used consisted of two parts (*see appendix A*), a Remote Working Suitability Scale (R.W.S.S) designed by the researcher to measure remote working suitability through assessing practices and behaviours and the 50

Item I.P.I.P. FFM personality inventory scale by Goldberg (2006) which was used to measure personality traits. Part 1 of the questionnaire '*Remote working and me*' consisted of an opening section marked 'A', which had 9 census questions answerable to all participants, such as age, gender, length of work commute, employment type and sector, The final question in section A asked whether the participant currently worked remotely or not and participants were split into three flows of the R.W.S.S. from there. Flow A. participants worked remotely prior to Covid-19, Flow B did not currently work remotely (this flow split further for participants who did or did not want to work remotely), Flow C participants worked remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions. The original questionnaire design had two flows, those who worked remotely and those who did not. As a result of Covid-19 many of the potential participants found themselves with little choice but to work remotely, and thus the flows were modified to suit before the research began.

The R.W.S.S. consists of 5 constructs and 36 items and is divided into these constructs based on significant findings and themes from previous literature. These constructs were Job tools, Motivation, Efficiency and discipline, Work life balance, Social aspects and Trust. Statements were answered on a likert scale with 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree. Statements included phrases like "I enjoy the social aspect of the workplace", "The ability to work remotely makes me feel trusted by my line manager" and "I am confident working independently". To eliminate acquiescence bias a number of questions were reverse worded such as "I find it difficult to manage distractions when working remotely". Scoring details of this questionnaire are listed in Appendix A. Reliability analysis and Pearson Correlations can be seen in Tables 3 and 4 respectively. As this part of the questionnaire was a new design, in this research it has been used for exploratory and testing purposes to lay down a path for future research. In order to satisfy the variable "remote working preference",

all participants, regardless of the questionnaire flow, were asked if they preferred to work remotely.

Part 2 of the questionnaire (*see Appendix A, section 29*) used the short form 50 item I.P.I.P. FFM personality trait measure created by (Goldberg, 1999, 2006). This scale consisted of 5 groups of 10 descriptive statements to which the participants would answer on a 1-5 likert scale depending on their level of agreement with the statement. 1 = Very inaccurate to 5 = Very accurate. Example statements are “Am interested in people” and “Start conversations”. Some phrases are reversed such as “Don't talk a lot” and “Make a mess of things”. The I.P.I.P. scale measures Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional stability and Intellect/Openness and has been widely reported as a reliable measure of personality across 100s of studies (Donnellan, et al., 2006; Maples, et al., 2014; Johnson, 2014; Socha, et al., 2010; Goldberg, 1992). Reliability analysis of the scales, reflect previous reports by the developer (*see Table 5*). The anonymity of the questionnaire was emphasised in the participant information sheet to reduce social desirability answering. None of the I.P.I.P. questions were set as mandatory on the questionnaire software. The size of the sample minimised the Halo effect as most of the participants were unknown to the researcher. All questions were anonymous and no information was requested at any time that would allow the participant to become personally identifiable. Thirteen questions were mandatory purely for the reason of directing the participant to the relevant question stream, and marked with an asterisk in the appendix (*see Appendix A*).

The questionnaire was piloted to a 16 participants to check for continuity, flow, question relevance and that scores were correctly gathered. Issues were corrected and small changes were made as a result of both the pilot sample and consultation with the dissertation supervisor, particularly around how to accommodate Covid-19 restrictions. Following these

changes the questionnaire was piloted again to 11 participants with no problems, issues or mistakes reported. The questionnaire was opened online to participants for three weeks, after this time the questionnaire was closed to responses and the raw survey data was downloaded from the online survey website onto an excel sheet. Missing data was labelled, scoring and reverse scoring were formatted in excel before the document was uploaded to SPSS statistics software for further coding and labelling. All designs, computations and analysis were performed on a Lenovo ThinkPad T420i laptop. The raw excel survey data has been saved to a password protected external drive and will be held there for a period of 5 years from the date of submission of this research. Social media sites and groups were used to distribute the questionnaire via an android device.

2.4 Procedure

Participants were invited to participate via the survey link which could be sent by any electronic means, email, Whatsapp etc. The link could be opened on any device connected to the internet. After reading the participant information sheet and articles of consent the participant had two options. I wish to participate and I do not wish to participate. If the participant checked the 'I do not wish to participate' box, the survey ended. Those who checked the 'I wish to participate' box took part in the survey. Participants answered the opening 9 census type questions. Question 9 was mandatory to answer and asked if the participant currently worked remotely. The questionnaire split from here into three separate flows of the R.W.S.S. Flow A, Flow B and Flow C. All flows and sub flows of these sections terminated at Q.131 and then every participant regardless of remote working preference answered the 50 Item I.P.I.P. FFM measure. On completion of the I.P.I.P. 50 FFM a comment box was provided should the participant wish to add anything else. The survey ended here with a survey completed message.

2.5 Ethical considerations

All known ethical considerations before and at the time the research was conducted, were taken into account. A research proposal which included a section on ethical considerations was submitted to the DBS ethics review board in advance of the study and approved with no exceptions. As the nature of the questionnaire was entirely online and anonymous there was no requirement for debriefing of participants. However if a participant had any concerns at any time they were given the option to contact Dr. Patricia Frazer at the Ethics Committee of Dublin Business School. A one page participant information sheet was developed that incorporated articles of consent for the participants (*see Appendix A*). Participants could not proceed with the survey until they checked the consent box stating that they had read and understood the information sheet and wished to proceed. For any participant who checked the 'do not wish to participate' box, the survey ended for them immediately. As was stated in the information sheet the raw anonymous data has been saved on a password protected external hard drive.

Chapter 3: Results

The aim of this study was establish whether any of the traits on the Big 5 personality scale could be used as a predictor of remote working preference and also comparing gender differences on remote working preference.

3.1 Descriptives.

Data was collected from 325 participants over a three week period. 67 of these participants did not complete the survey and were removed from the data. In exploring the hypotheses a series of inferential and descriptive tests were performed on the collected and formatted data using SPSS statistics software on the remaining 258 participants. The mean scores for all of the personality inventories are listed in Table 6 for remote working preference and Table 7 for Gender.

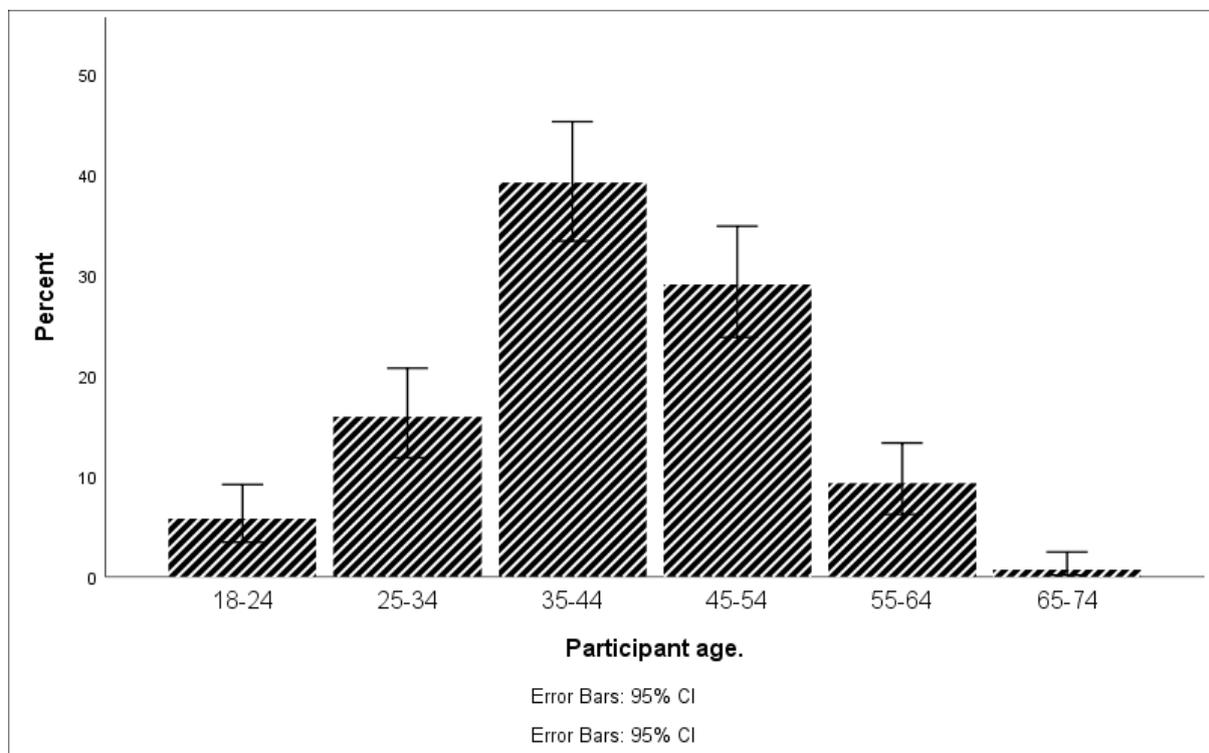


Figure 1 Age range percentages of respondents

Table 2

Employment categories of participant sample

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Admin & Support services	41	15.9	15.9	15.9
Arts, Entertainment	8	3.1	3.1	19.0
Construction	2	.8	.8	19.8
Education	20	7.8	7.8	27.5
Financial, Banking & Insurance	40	15.5	15.5	43.0
Health & Social Work	18	7.0	7.0	50.0
Hospitality	5	1.9	1.9	51.9
I.T.	29	11.2	11.2	63.2
Legal	2	.8	.8	64.0
Manufacturing	5	1.9	1.9	65.9
Pharmaceutical/Medical	7	2.7	2.7	68.6
Property & Property services	3	1.2	1.2	69.8
Public and Civil service	20	7.8	7.8	77.5
Retail & Wholesale	17	6.6	6.6	84.1
Sports & Recreation	3	1.2	1.2	85.3
Telecommunications	5	1.9	1.9	87.2
Transportation	3	1.2	1.2	88.4
Travel and Leisure	3	1.2	1.2	89.5
Utilities	1	.4	.4	89.9
Other	26	10.1	10.1	100.0
Total	258	100.0	100.0	

Table 3

Reliability analysis for researcher developed Remote Working Suitability Scale

Subscale	No. items	Cronbach's Alpha	M	S.D.
Job tools	6	.55	23.29	3.94
Motivation, efficiency, discipline	9	.73	34.21	4.33
Work life balance	9	.67	31.09	6.68
Social aspects	7	.71	21.30	4.54
Trust	5	.90	15.06	6.83

Table 4

Pearson Correlations among R.W.S.S. scores

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Job Tools – score	-				
2. Motivation efficiency discipline - score	.312**	-			
3. Work life balance - score	.254**	.352**	-		
4. Social Aspects - score	.287**	.468**	.423**	-	
5. Trust – score	.252**	.193**	.174**	.389**	-

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). (N= 233)

Table 5

Reliability analysis results for I.P.I.P. 50 FFM Measure

Subscale	No. items	Cronbach's Alpha	M	S.D.
Intellect	10	.84	31.64	48.58
Conscientiousness	10	.72	31.93	44.70
Extraversion	10	.83	30.48	40.78
Agreeableness	10	.84	38.28	41.88
Emotional stability	10	.79	26.95	42.87

Table 6

Descriptive statistics of mean personality trait scores by remote working preference

Personality trait	Remote working preference	Valid (N)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intellect	Yes	205	37.20	5.51
	No	42	35.93	5.52
Conscientiousness	Yes	205	39.18	5.97
	No	42	36.19	6.50
Extraversion	Yes	205	34.37	7.18
	No	42	35.00	8.26
Agreeableness	Yes	205	42.04	5.50
	No	42	42.33	4.98
Emotional Stability	Yes	205	32.64	7.63
	No	42	29.52	7.90

Table 7

Descriptive statistics of mean personality trait scores by gender

Personality trait	Gender	Valid (N)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intellect	Male	74	36.76	6.17
	Female	182	37.07	5.29
	Prefer not to say	2	41.00	9.90
Conscientiousness	Male	74	36.74	6.90
	Female	182	39.19	33.77
	Prefer not to say	2	34.50	2.12
Extraversion	Male	74	35.49	7.97
	Female	182	33.84	7.05
	Prefer not to say	2	35.00	4.24
Agreeableness	Male	74	32.99	6.91
	Female	182	42.99	4.32
	Prefer not to say	2	41.50	2.12
Emotional Stability	Male	74	34.84	7.39
	Female	182	30.71	7.59
	Prefer not to say	2	36.50	2.12

Table 8

Tests of normality for I.P.I.P. FFM 50 total scores

Trait	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Agreeableness	.922	258	.000
Intellect	.988	258	.036
Extraversion	.990	258	.083
Conscientiousness	.969	258	.000
Emotional Stability	.990	258	.082

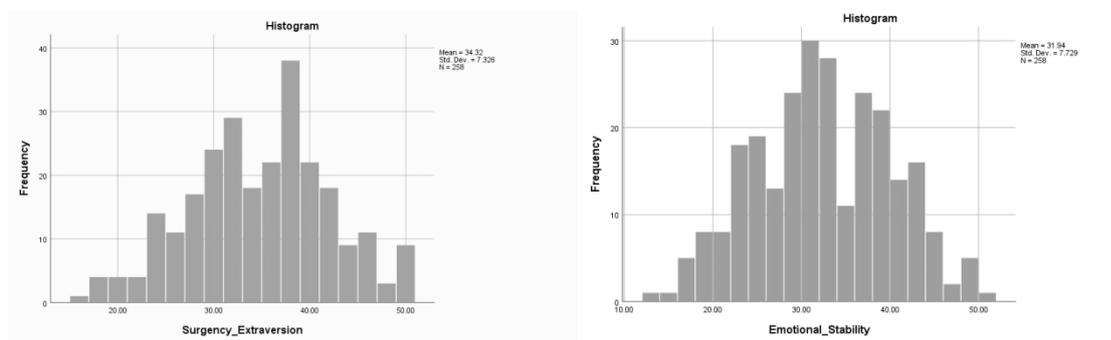


Figure 2 Normal distributions for Extraversion and Emotional stability

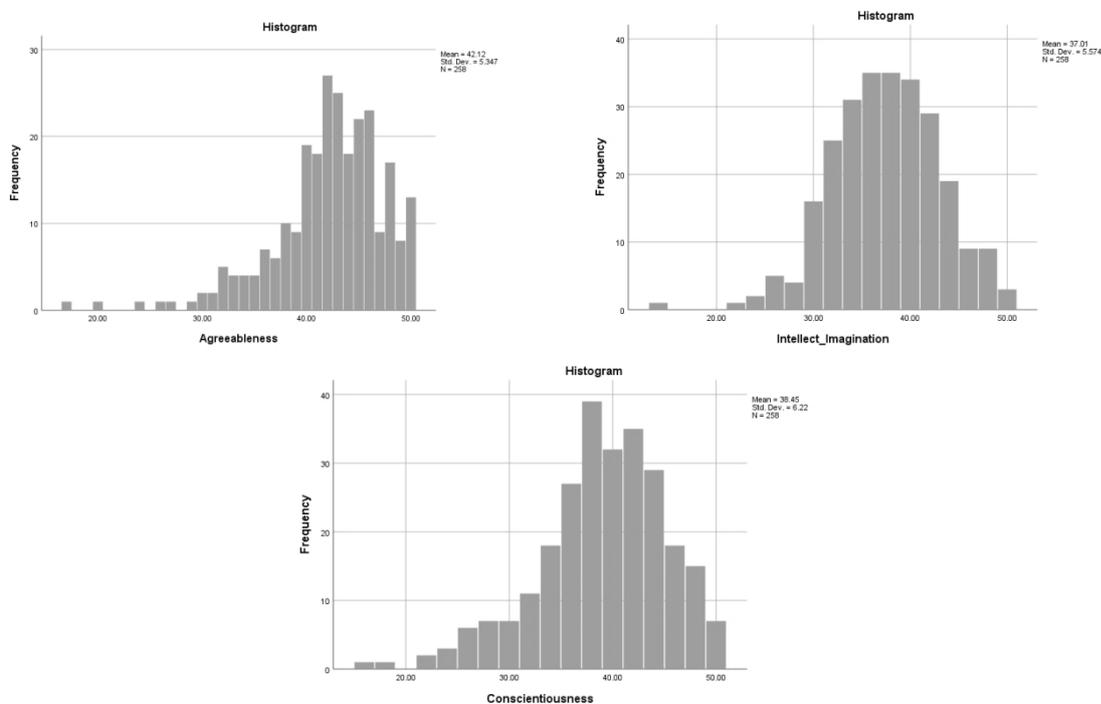


Figure 3 Non- normal distributions for Agreeableness, Intellect and Conscientiousness

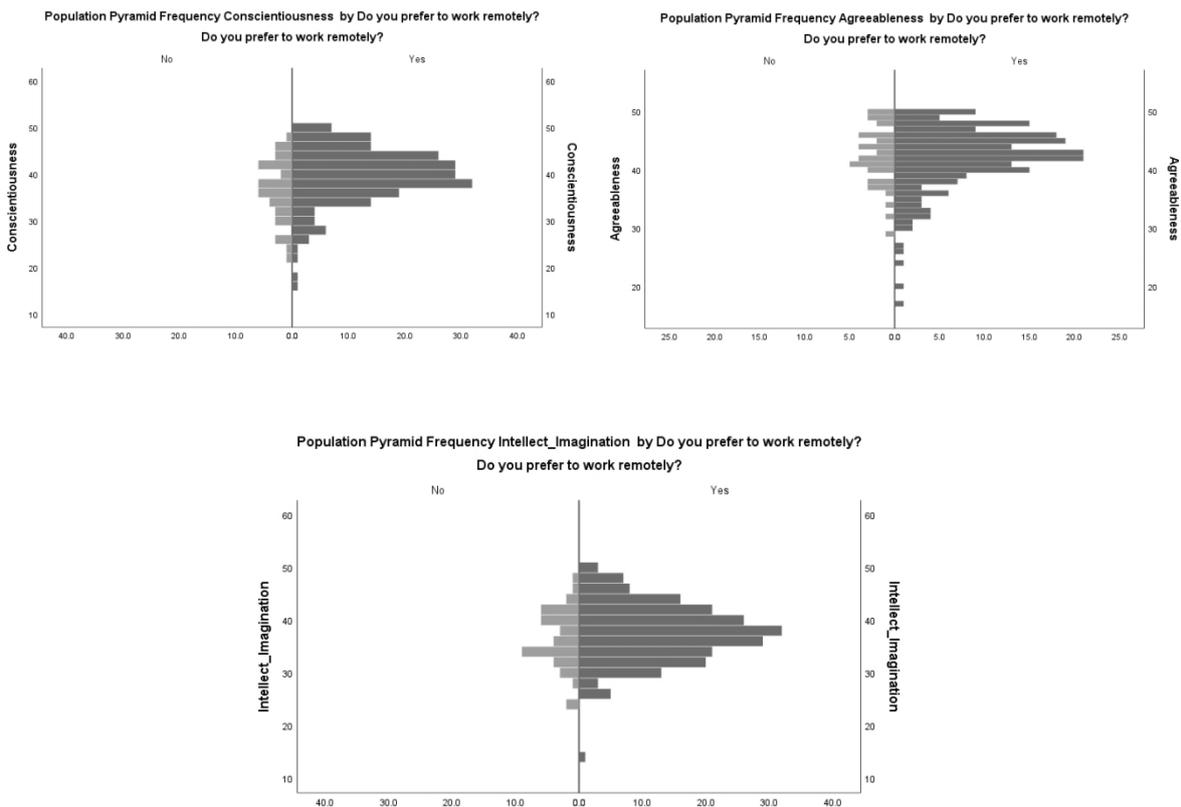


Figure 4 Distributions of remote working preference scores by personality trait for comparison

Table 8

Selection of percentage based responses from mental health related facets from the R.W.S.S.

Statement	Flow	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
Remote working means I can get more work done during time I would normally spend commuting.	A	54%	29%	12%	4%	0%
	B	29%	53%	16%	12%	0%
	C	33%	37%	6%	14%	1%
Remote working helps me achieve work life balance.	A	66%	21%	6%	6%	1%
	B	47%	41%	12%	0%	0%
	C	39%	36%	10%	14%	1%
When remote working I find it difficult to disconnect from my job at the end of the day.	A	12%	31%	19%	28%	6%
	B	0%	18%	41%	29%	12%
	C	12%	34%	32%	10%	0%
I work longer hours when working remotely.	A	18%	41%	19%	16%	6%
	B	18%	29%	24%	24%	6%
	C	9%	39%	19%	30%	3%
Remote working might mean I am not included in team decisions.	A	1%	19%	21%	34%	15%
	B	6%	24%	24%	24%	18%
	C	5%	28%	12%	45%	7%
I enjoy the social aspect of the workplace.	A	22%	59%	15%	3%	1%
	B	6%	65%	18%	12%	0%
	C	26%	56%	21%	2%	1%
Remote working can feel lonely at times.	A	4%	53%	25%	15%	3%
	B	18%	47%	0%	24%	2%
	C	13%	53%	17%	15%	2%

Flow A= Worked remotely prior to Covid restrictions, Flow B= Does not work remotely but wants to, Flow C= Working remotely due to Covid restrictions.

S.A. = Strongly agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree, S.D.= Strongly disagree.

3.2 Differences in trait Extraversion on remote working preference

Hypothesis one stated that there will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Extraversion scores. An Independent samples t-test was conducted to compare levels of Extraversion in participants who prefer to work remotely and participants that do not. A Shapiro-Wilk test showed non-significant departure from normality, $W(258) = 0.99$, $p = 0.83$. The distributions for remote working preference and preference not to work remotely (*see Table 8 & Figure 2*) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test (i.e., skew $< |2.0|$ and Kurtosis $< |9.0|$; Schmider et al., 2010).

Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(245) = .93$, $p = .34$. There was not a statistically significant difference between trait Extraversion of participants who prefer to work remotely ($M = 34.37$, $SD = 7.18$) and participants who do not prefer to work remotely ($M = 35.00$, $SD = 8.26$) ($t(245) = -.504$, $p = .615$, $CI (95\%) -3.09 - 1.83$). Therefore we retain the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there are no statistically significant differences in trait Extraversion between participants who prefer to work remotely and participants who do not. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 6.

3.3 Differences in trait Conscientiousness on remote working preference

Hypothesis two stated that there will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Conscientiousness. A Shapiro-Wilk test showed significant departure from normality, $W(258) = 0.97$, $p = 0.00$. The distributions for remote working preference and preference not to work remotely (*see Table 8 & Figure 3*) were not sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test (i.e., skew $< |2.0|$ and Kurtosis $< |9.0|$; Schmider et al., 2010)

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the preference to work remotely (mean rank = 1.298) condition and the preference not to work remotely (mean rank = 95.46) condition did differ significantly ($z = -2.846$, $p = .004$) Therefore we reject the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there is statistically significant difference in trait Conscientiousness between participants who prefer to work remotely and participants who do not. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 6.

3.4 Differences in trait Agreeableness on remote working preference

Hypothesis three stated that there will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Agreeableness. A Shapiro-Wilk test showed significant departure from normality, $W(258) = 0.92$, $p = 0.00$. The distributions for remote working preference and preference not to work remotely (*see Table 8 & Figure 3*) were not sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test (i.e., skew $< |2.0|$ and Kurtosis $< |9.0|$; Schmider et al., 2010).

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the preference to work remotely (mean rank = 124.15) condition and the preference not to work remotely (mean rank = 123.25) condition did not differ significantly ($z = -.075$, $p = .940$) Therefore we retain the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there is not a statistically significant difference in trait Agreeableness between participants who prefer to work remotely and participants who do not. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 6.

3.5 Differences in trait Emotional stability and remote working preference

Hypothesis four stated that there will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Emotional stability. An Independent samples t-test was conducted to compare levels of Emotional stability in participants who prefer to

work remotely and participants that do not. A Shapiro-Wilk test showed non-significant departure from normality, $W(258) = 0.99$, $p = 0.08$. The distributions for remote working preference and preference not to work remotely (*see Table 8 & Figure 2*) were sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test (i.e., skew $< |2.0|$ and Kurtosis $< |9.0|$; Schmider et al., 2010)

Additionally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(245) = .013$, $p = .91$. There was a statistically significant difference between trait Emotional stability of participants who prefer to work remotely ($M = 32.64$, $SD = .533$) and participants who do not prefer to work remotely ($M = 29.52$, $SD = 1.22$) ($t(245) = -2.40$, $p = .017$, $CI (95\%) .560 - 5.68$). Therefore we reject the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there are statistically significant differences in Emotional stability between participants who prefer to work remotely and participants who do not. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 6.

3.6 Differences in trait Intellect/Openness and remote working preference

Hypothesis stated that there will be a significant difference between those who prefer to work remotely and those who don't on trait Intellect/Openness. A Shapiro-Wilk test showed a significant departure from normality, $W(258) = 0.99$, $p = 0.04$. The distributions for remote working preference and preference not to work remotely (*see Table 8 & Figure 3*) were not sufficiently normal for the purposes of conducting a t-test (i.e., skew $< |2.0|$ and Kurtosis $< |9.0|$; Schmider et al., 2010)

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the preference to work remotely (mean rank = 126.51) condition and the preference not to work remotely (mean rank = 111.74) condition did not differ significantly ($z = -1.223$, $p = .221$) Therefore we retain the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there is no statistically significant difference in trait

Intellect/Openness between participants who prefer to work remotely and participants who do not. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 6.

3.7 Associations between gender and remote working preference

Hypothesis nine stated that there will be a significant association between gender and remote working preference. A chi-square test of independence showed that there was no significant association between gender and remote working preference, ($X^2 (1, N=245) = 0.13, p = .908$). Therefore we retain the null hypothesis. These results suggest that there is no statistically significant association between gender and preference to work remotely. Graphical representations of the means are displayed in Table 7.

4: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this study was to establish if personality trait could be used as a predictor for remote working preference. The secondary aim was once those personality traits were identified, some measure of suitability for remote working could be developed. Analysis of previous literature appeared to point towards a set of trends; some of the findings were more surprising than others. As has been previously proposed by Barrick, et al., (2001), the Big 5 personality inventory is an effective tool at assessing suitability for a large number of job roles. There is also evidence suggesting the Big 5 predicts not only how effective the employee can be in those roles (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001), but also work satisfaction levels (Bui, 2017). Behaviour genetics research on twins has shown all of the Big 5 traits to be genetically transmissible (Eysenck (1990). McRae and Costa, (1982) originally put forward the suggestion that these traits were inherently stable across the lifetime, but more recent research has shown that personality traits only show acceptable stability between shorter test period times (Cobb-Clark & Schurer, 2012; Ardel, 2000). It is important at this time to note that personality traits are usually characterised as the relatively enduring patterns of behaviours, feelings and thoughts, which manifest in trait-affording situations and not just behavioural summaries (Tellegen, 1991; Bogg & Roberts, 2012).

4.2 Differences in trait Extraversion on remote working preference

Extraversion has shown to be a valid predictor of team work and combined with Conscientiousness, a predictor for promotion in managerial roles (Mount, et al., 1998; Witt, et al., 2002; Howard & Bray 1990). Extraversion also appears to be related to training proficiency (Barrick et al., 2001) and performance in roles where large proportions of time involve interacting with others (Barrick and Mount 1991; Mount et al., 1998). There has also

been significant evidence that Extraversion is also a predictor for job satisfaction (Bui, 2017), of salary and job level (Melamed, 1996). Research by Watson & Clark, (1997) shows that because extraverts find social interactions more rewarding than introverts, this behaviour is more likely to be mirrored in their working environment. Large amounts of data point towards a familiar pattern in terms of the relationship between Extraversion and work practices. The hypothesis formed on the back of this was an assumption that there would be a significant relationship between Extraversion and remote working preference.

In the book *Quiet*, Cain (2013) outlines how office environments are becoming more and more extraverted. Cain says that we now operate a value system in the workplace that values group think, and this is something that is becoming more and more evident everyday with offices and workspaces becoming increasingly more focused on collaboration through collaborative open plan spaces. One of the most notable incidents regarding remote working clashing with the assumption that it inhibits collaboration occurred when Marissa Mayer, CEO of tech giant Yahoo reversed the company decision to allow remote working (Goudreau, 2013). Mayer cited the main reason for this decision being that in order for communication and collaboration to work, Yahoo employees needed to be side by side. She maintained collaboration is central to hallway conversations and impromptu meetings. Research by Bernstein & Turban, (2018) has shown this to not always be the case, highlighting the issues with noise levels in open plan office space. Peterson & Beard, (2004) showed a similar picture in that employees were satisfied with the visual aesthetics of open plan offices but not with the noise distractions, with many opting to use headphones and thus contradicting the purpose of open plan as a means of nurturing collaboration.

What has been grossly overlooked by Mayer is that introverts in particular can become over stimulated as a result of increased social interactions compared to extraverts (Eysenck, 1963) and therefore it is possible that introverts do their best work remotely.

Recent work by DeYoung (2013) supports this, with Biology showing that dopaminergic rewards of social interactions are higher for those with extraverted personality types resulting in them to seek out these interactions, whereas introverts do not. Furthermore, studies using fMRI techniques have found that the general underlying cause of these behaviours is reward sensitivity. Extraverts have a greater volume in the Ventromedial Prefrontal Cortex (vmPFC), the area of the brain that is associated with the coding of reward value (DeYoung et al., 2010).

Alternatively, a Harvard study showed that introverts have thicker, larger grey matter in the region known as the prefrontal cortex (PFC), this area of the brain is associated with abstract thinking and controlled decision making (Holmes et al., 2012). Other studies aimed at pinpointing the biological basis for personality trait behaviours, found that introverts have increased volumes of blood flow to the frontal thalamus and frontal lobe (Johnson et al., 1999). These parts of the brain involved with long term planning, solving complex problems and decision making (Ouhaz et al., 2018). All of these things you may expect would ideally be done potentially away from the office, in a quiet environment. The Social aspects construct of the R.W.S.S. was based partly on these findings.

In light of all of the above, it was assumed at the beginning of this research that participants scoring low in Extraversion would have a preference to work remotely. Unexpectedly, analysis of the collected data showed in this instance to not be the case. However, there is substantial cause for further research to be developed on this trait in particular. As Extraversion and Introversion are on a continuum and not completely dichotomous, there are levels of crossover in terms of behaviours and how these influence choice. For example, social anxiety is associated not as is generally assumed with low Extraversion, but with Neuroticism (Wauthia et al., 2019). It may then of course be valuable to examine the social aspects of remote working preferences at facet level of Extraversion

and Neuroticism, using a longer form version of the personality trait inventory. The findings of this may also contribute towards improvements of the Social aspects construct of the R.W. S.S. There are also grounds to examine possible relationships between Conscientiousness and Extraversion in terms of remote working preference.

4.3 Differences in trait Conscientiousness on remote working preference

With regard to working remotely, it appears being high in Conscientiousness would be beneficial for employees at least. Conscientious individuals like to perform tasks well, are generally efficient, industrious, dependable and systematic, organised and show self-discipline (Thompson, 2008; Jackson et al., 2010; Roberts, et al., 2005). For these reasons it is little wonder why Conscientiousness has been the predictor of both performance and success across many occupations (Anderson & Viswesvaran 1998; Barrick & Mount 1991; Salgado 1997; Tett et al., 2006). With regard to job satisfaction, Conscientiousness shows the second strongest correlation out of the Big 5 personality traits (Judge, et al., 2002).

Neuroimaging research by DeYoung, et al., (2010) showed large associations between Conscientiousness and the regions of the brain responsible for self-regulation, execution of planned actions and maintaining information in working memory. Longitudinal research by Judge et al., (1999) showed Conscientiousness to be the most stable personality trait across time. There also appears to be interactive effects of Conscientiousness with other personality traits on work related outcomes (Witt et al., 2002; Teng & Liu, 2013).

The current study has also shown Conscientiousness to be a significant factor as a predictor for remote working preference. This was not surprising, as industrious individuals like to get work done and generally do not like to be idle for long periods of time. It is probable that Conscientiousness remote workers are confident working independently and may see the distractions of the workplace as inhibitory. They may also see sitting in traffic as time that could be better spent getting more work done or a better standard of work achieved

and therefore this may sway their preference to work remotely. Conscientious individuals may be more comfortable working remotely as they may feel like they do not need to be supervised; this would also be reassuring in terms of trust for their employers as the trait has repeatedly shown to be correlated with job performance and success. Highly Conscientious individuals generally exhibit elevated levels of orderliness (Back, et al., 2009; Church, et al., 2007), and therefore managers should not be concerned about shirking behaviours or poor time keeping while employees are not under their direct supervision. The preference of these individuals to work remotely may actually mean higher productivity and employee time use efficiency has been strongly positively correlated with Conscientiousness (Kelly & Johnson, 2006).

On the contrary, too much Conscientiousness can potentially be damaging in a work environment. This is something that should be a mental health consideration for remote workers and managers alike. Extreme Conscientiousness has been demonstrated to exhibit negative consequences such as diminished wellbeing and obsessive compulsive behaviours (Carter, et al., 2015). With regard to low Conscientiousness, it would be difficult to find a job role that requires behaviours such as laziness, lack of goal orientation and not driven by success (Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006). Nevertheless, these behaviours which may not manifest or be seen in the office or place of work may pose a problem in a remote working environment. Low Conscientiousness when combined with low levels of Emotional stability and low Agreeableness will elicit rash behaviours under stress (Settles et al., 2012), which may be difficult to detect when employees are not working remotely. Involuntary situations such as the Covid-19 restrictions may expose employees to experience unfamiliar forms of stress. Conscientiousness has shown to be by far the most important personality trait in working environments and it appears in this study to hold significance for remote working also. There are many opportunities to explore this significance at facet level. Further there is

scope to examine potential interactions with other Big 5 Traits and also the Motivation, efficiency discipline scale of the R.W.S.S.

4.4. Differences in trait Agreeableness on remote working preference

In this study Agreeableness was not shown to be a significant predictor of remote working preference. This was not surprising as there does not appear to be any obvious ties with the facets of Agreeableness and a preference to work remotely. Agreeableness may be defined as a personality trait that encompasses being kind, considerate, cooperative trustful, altruistic and tender minded (Costa & McRae, 1992). Across time, Agreeableness has been shown to increase as humans get older, peaking at around 60 and then declining (Lucas & Donnellan, 2011; Specht, et al., 2011). Low Agreeableness in young boys has been shown to last throughout the lifespan (Caspi, 2000). There is little reason to doubt that all of the pros and cons of having employees high and low in Agreeableness would appear to transfer out of the working environment to the remote working environment also. However this statement is purely speculative and leaves the door open for further research on the topic.

Agreeableness has been demonstrated to be a useful predictor of success in service orientated jobs (Barrick, et al., 2001) and also a strong performance indicator of jobs that involve teamwork (Mount, et al., 1998). Importantly, this has so far only been shown to be the case for face to face team environments and not virtually (Bradley, et al., 2013). This may pose a potential issue for teamwork with regard to remote working and is a topic that will require further investigation with regard to virtual environments, not just for internal teams but for roles with external connections such as customer service. A multitude of studies have shown Agreeableness to display weak relationships in general work performance outcomes (Bradley, et al., 2013). This may be the reason Agreeableness gets overlooked when associating job performance with personality traits. However, some research suggests that in

jobs with large amounts of social interaction, employees that show high levels of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness perform better than a highly Conscientiousness employee that shows low levels of Agreeableness (Witt, et al., 2002). Again it is important to note that most of the outcomes that Agreeableness predicts are based on social interactions, something that remote work is not in abundance of.

Interestingly and something that is worth consideration with regard to remote working is that, research by Seddigh, et al., (2016) discovered that in an office environment, Agreeableness was associated with high levels of distraction. While there was not a significant difference in remote working preference and levels of Agreeableness, the findings of Seddigh, et al., may highlight a potential issue to consider for companies or remote workers contemplating remote working hubs or 'hot desking' as a solution. More positively for remote working is that individuals high in Agreeableness are generally more trusting. This would be beneficial for managers and owners of companies that allow remote working. Managers high in Agreeableness are less likely to engage in abusive supervision practices (Breevaart & Vries, 2017) and trust appears to have an influence on job performance, alignment with company purpose, lesser instances of burnout and more empathy for workmates (Zak, 2019). DeYoung, et al., (2010) found volume covariance in the posterior cingulate cortex region of the brain and Agreeableness, this part of the brain processes information about the intentions and mental states of others. This may further point towards Agreeableness as being a desirable trait for managers of remote workers.

Women tend to be higher in Agreeableness than men (Weisberg, et al., 2011) and this was also the case in the current study (*see Table 7*). Agreeableness in males is negatively correlated with income and there are several studies that show being disagreeable pays from the perspective of salary (Ng et al., 2005; Nyhus & Pons, 2005), with the pay gap between disagreeable males and agreeable males being greater than the same scenario for women. In

terms of career advancement, disagreeable candidates are more likely to be selected for advancement (Judge, et al., 2012). However, Agreeableness has shown to be a weak indicator for job satisfaction (Judge, et al., 2002), alternatively individuals with higher reported levels of Agreeableness report greater life satisfaction (Rodriguez, 2013; Ali, 2019). While in this study, Agreeableness is not a useful predictor of remote working preference, it has highlighted that it is a trait that should not be overlooked purely as it does not predict job performance. Some facet levels of Agreeableness may be relevant to some aspects of remote working, and also appears to interact with the personality traits that have been shown as predictors of remote working preference.

4.5 Differences in trait Emotional stability and remote working preference

The current study showed Emotional stability to be a predictor of remote working preference. The question as to why survey participants lower in Emotional stability do not prefer to work remotely is particularly interesting. Firstly to gain some perspective on why this might be, it is important to further examine the effects of low Emotional stability on work behaviours. Emotional stability has also been a successful predictor in job performance in some roles; however the results have generally not been as replicable as that of Conscientiousness (Barrick et al., 2001). Emotional stability is of course relevant to most occupations as generally any of the negative connotations of being low in Emotional stability are not conducive to healthy working behaviours. After all, it is hard to envisage a company or agency that wants employees who are potentially hostile, anxious, depressed and insecure. The negative associations of Emotional instability could also translate into uncooperative deviant behaviours, difficulty dealing with transient situational stress and lack of goal orientation (Berry, et al., 2007; Malouff et al., 1990; Penley & Tomaka, 2002; Norris, et al., 2007). As with some of the other personality traits, we have large amounts of evidence with regard to the positive and negative effects of Emotional stability in working environments. It

must be recognised we do not yet know the implications of this with regard to remote working, or how translatable what we do know from research on conventional environments is to remote working.

Low Emotional stability has been linked with ‘Counterproductive work behaviours’ (CWB) in several studies. CWB has been shown to be both individual and environmental; such behaviours can be a result of negative emotions and can be influenced by work stressors (Martinko, et al., 2002; Spector & Fox, 2005). Employees experiencing negative emotions frequently not only may behave in a manner that isolates them from their colleagues (Brief et al., 1995) but also spend a lot of time focusing on failures (Watson & Slack, 1993). Li et al., (2015) used Big Five personality traits and behavioural inhibition and activation systems (BIS/BAS) as predictors of career exploration in a group of Chinese University students and found that it correlated negatively with Neuroticism. This research may suggest that employees high in Neuroticism or low in Emotional stability are less likely to try something different to what they are normally used to and this may go some way to explaining the results of the current study.

What may also be of relevance to the result here is that in general females exhibit lower levels of Emotional stability than males (Du, et al., 2000; Costa, et al., 2001). As the current study showed a strong similar result (*see Table 7*). Initially, it was considered the reason for a significant difference in Emotional stability and remote working preference may have been that potentially females had a less of a remote working preference than males and this may have somehow contributed. However, this does not appear to be a factor due to the findings in relation to hypothesis 6 as there was not a significant difference found in remote working preference and gender.

The findings of a high significance level of Emotional stability as a predictor of remote working preference have been somewhat surprising. The focus had been first on predicting that remote workers would be low in Extraversion and possibly enjoy some aspects of the isolation that remote working can bring. In this assumption, the links between loneliness and Emotional stability may have been overlooked. Personality traits have shown to be a robust predictor of loneliness and there has been a plenitude of research that shows a relationship between loneliness and Emotional stability (Wang & Dong, 2018; Buecker et al., 2020). This may go some way towards explaining the findings in this research and is an aspect of these findings that would require further investigation, with a view to the mental health of remote workers.

The health implications of loneliness are of concern and should not be overlooked when implementing a remote work framework or developing mental health interventions. Cole et al., (2015) found that perceived social isolation increased mortality rates and risk of chronic illness. Loneliness was cited in the study by Bloom et al., (2014) as the main reason that most of the remote working trial employees returned to the office, in this study 53% of respondents that were working remotely as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic agreed that remote working can feel lonely at times, while almost 13% strongly agreed with this statement (*see Table 8*). A study involving over 1,100 remote workers showed that 52% of them felt left out or mistreated by other workers and frequently reported their colleagues made changes to collaborative projects without notifying them (Maxfield, et al., 2018).

4.6 Differences in trait Intellect/Openness and remote working preference

Intellect/Openness is an empirically developed personality aspect that represents individual variations in the capacity and propensity to discover, identify, understand, use and acknowledge composite patterns of abstract and sensory information (DeYoung, 2015).

Intellect/Openness has been demonstrated to be a reliable predictor of promotion into managerial positions (Nieß & Zacher, 2015). It has also been shown that Intellect/Openness is the Big Five trait applied most generally to creativity (DeYoung, 2015). Intellect/Openness appears to be related to training proficiency (Barrick et al., 2001; Murphy, 1996). Training efficiency is particularly important for remote workers, at both manager and employee level, in terms of mental health interventions. Recognising issues such as perceived isolation is vital for managers, but also getting the balance right between allowing staff to work with no physical supervision and micromanagement. Over 20 studies on academic performance have shown that Intellect/Openness is largely a weak predictor (Noftle & Robins, 2007). Salgado (2003) discovered, when collapsing across almost all types of work types, that Intellect/Openness generally showed no correlation to job performance. Li et al., (2015) found that career exploration was also linked to Intellect/Openness.

The expectations in the current study of a difference between remote working preference and Intellect/Openness were low. Analysis of the data found no significant difference in trait Intellect/Openness scores between participants who preferred to work remotely and those who did not. Remote working appears to have no obvious links to most of the work related behaviours that Intellect/Openness predicts. Although training proficiency has a direct connection to remote working, this is something that is virtually inescapable as it is connected to virtually all job roles. The same may be said with regard to teamwork, Openness/Intellect was found to be a stable predictor of work performance across teams, possibly due to workers with high levels of Intellect/Openness being more effective at joint communication and collaboration (McCrae & Sutin, 2009). This may also be the case with regard to remote work however research is limited on the topic.

In the main, most of the facets of trait Openness such as creativity, aesthetic interests, curiosity and a sense of adventure have no obvious ties with remote working. This, coinciding with the trait generally being normally distributed amongst populations (Costa & McCrae, 1992), showed little expectation for a significant difference between preference to work remotely or not. The broadness of what appears to be an overarching personality trait perhaps may be the reason a non-significant result has been found in this research. For example, DeYoung (2015) highlights that Openness and Intellect may be separable from each other. In order to further confound the situation, individuals often rank highly in scores for Openness but rank poorly in Intellect and vice versa, therefore showing that the correlation between Intellect and Openness is not optimal (DeYoung, 2015).

Historically characterising trait Intellect/Openness has proven to be difficult for those in the field of personality traits. Openness appears to be more linked with components that demonstrate engagement and sensory perception. Intellect on the other hand appears to have stronger links with components that demonstrate perception of abstract thought and intelligence (DeYoung, 2015). Due to both factors appearing somewhat related and separable simultaneously, these findings highlight significant consequences in using the scale for prediction for remote working preferences. In order for research to be empirical, defining the association between a variable would mean establishing if the association was with one or the other or both. Studies using the NEO-PI-R scales and behavioural genetics showed that Openness appears to have a weaker association with intelligence than intellect (Wainwright et al., 2008). Future research may examine these components separately in looking for remote working preferences; currently The Big Five Aspect scale is capable of assessing Intellect and Openness separately (DeYoung et al., 2015). There are also grounds to further explore the interactive effects of Intellect and Extraversion on remote working preference. Digman (1997) proposed that the Big 5 were not independent traits as had been previously intended

but what he termed as ‘Metatraits’ and found that Intellect/Openness appears to intercorrelate with Extraversion.

4.7 Associations between gender and remote working preference

There has been an abundance of research in terms of what type of employees are pushing for flexible working and this appears to suggest that women seek such arrangements more than men (Chung, 2018; Future jobs Ireland, 2019). The primary reasons women may seek jobs with flexible schedules is due to the conflict between work and family (Nelson, 2018; Gino, 2017; Brockmann et al., 2017; Gino, et al 2015; Brown, 2020). This is particularly true in the realm of skilled working environments and leadership roles. It was also previously mentioned that companies with women in the senior management positions are more likely to integrate such flexible working practices into the companies they run. The hypothesis assumed because of this, there would be some significant difference between genders in terms of remote working preference, possibly swaying in favour of women. Surprisingly in this study, no such significance was found.

Aside from the research on work family conflict for Mothers, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly in this case why there is not an obvious difference between genders. Considering a study in the United States showed that men were 8% more likely to work remotely than women (Owl Labs, 2019), a larger sample of males in the study perhaps may have provided a different result. It would be interesting to assume that the reason there was not in this case a significant difference is perhaps remote working may be the solution to the push for Fathers be more present in the developmental years of their children as opposed to raising ‘corporate orphans’. There is an abundance of research to back up the importance of the Father’s role as a caregiver.

The lack of a significant result here should be viewed as positive and perhaps yields remote working as a double edged sword with regard to gender. For women it may go some way to solve the issue of career breaks and progression, being overlooked for positions of seniority due to being of childbearing age and not having to choose between being a stay at home Mom or allow their kids grow up in a crèche. For men the other side of this sword is to not have to be forced into the ‘corporate absenteeism’ of spending very limited amounts of time with their children and the long term implications that come with that. Instead, which would of course be more preferable for everyone would be for males to be able to share the load of parenting with their spouse. The benefits of shared parenting in the early lives of children are almost infinite. There are vast amounts research on the benefits of paternal presenteeism in the early years of a child, such as language development, frontal lobe development and the benefits of roughhousing with Dad (Siviy et al., 2011; Lewis & Lamb, 2003). These effects are long lasting into adulthood with outcomes such as satisfaction levels in relation to spouses and self-reported parenting skills (Burns & Dunlop, 1998; Franz et al., 1991).

While remote working may in fact be the answer to some of these problems. It cannot be overlooked due to potential issues involved with separation of work and family life in the home, even more if both parents work remotely. Workplace flexibility has many benefits but there have been demonstrable issues with the intersection of work and family life.

4.8 Dissemination plan

Evidence has shown dissemination to be most effective through multiple vehicles (Brownson, et al., 2018). For the current study, dissemination activities will include publishing of the research on Dublin Business School Open source channel once accepted. The research finding will be prepared for submission to relevant journals. The research will be published on social media channels and groups for remote workers. Should the current study be

accepted to a journal, the researcher will request Dublin Business School may kindly share the findings of this project on their social media outlets. Should the research be published it will be shared with key government policy makers such as the Dept. of Health, the Dept. of Transport, Dept. of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The published research will also be shared with the Business and Health editors of various broadsheet newspaper outlets. The published research will be shared with Psychology interest websites to be published as an article or part of an article.

The Psychological Society of Ireland (P.S.I.), have recently expressed an interest in remote working research and this project has been put forward in conjunction with Dr. Barbara Caska to the P.S.I.s Division of Work and Organisation. The current study has been discussed in an initial meeting with a P.S.I. organised consultative panel. Further it has been agreed that a summary of this research will be initially submitted to the P.S.I. as part of a larger submission on remote work to the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.

A remote working advocacy website has shown interest in publishing the findings of the current study on their websites and social media. This company is involved in the remote work consultation panel for the Irish Government. A remote working recruitment specialist has also shown an interest in a collaboration project using the results of this research as a starting point.

Expected impact/reach of Dissemination plan

The desired primary impact of the current study is to highlight the need for further research on remote work and mental health. This in turn may assist the secondary desired impact is for personality trait to be considered in mental health interventions, policy and guidelines for remote workers. Furthermore to develop research on the role of personality

trait and remote working practices. The tertiary desired impact is for the results of the current study to be considered in the development of a remote working training for managers and employees alike and also mental health interventions. Last but not least it is hoped that this research will create advocacy for remote working and help to inform the general public about mental health aspects of remote work and allow employers to make informed decisions around remote working. It is hoped that this may be achieved in part if the current study is published in high impact journals.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Introduction

The primary aim of this research was to explore whether the Big 5 personality traits and gender could be used as a predictor for remote working preference. The secondary aim was to construct a scale that may be suitable for measuring the suitability of individuals to remote working. The present study found a significant difference between remote working preference and the traits Conscientiousness and Emotional stability; however no significant difference was found between remote working preference and the traits Intellect/Openness, Extraversion, and Agreeableness. The present study also showed that gender was not a predictor of remote working preference. Personality inventories are clearly an interesting method of assessing suitability for remote working and appear to have some alignment with work performance measures in general, although further research is needed.

5.2 Limitations

With the present study being exploratory in nature, some limitations remain; however they present an opportunity for future research. Remote working has been around for quite some time but research on the mental health implications of remote working is limited. Similarly, apart from anecdotes and assumptions in the media, the research is limited with regard to the influence of personality traits on remote working. As with any personality trait, the theories explain what traits an individual may have and how they behave. What it does not do is explain why individuals behave in such a way with regard to remote working contexts.

While this research was exploratory, using the short form of a personality trait measure may have been a particular limitation in this study, although the 50 Item I.P.IP. FFM

Measure has shown adequate reliability and validity; it may leave some questions unanswered in terms of the results. It is acknowledged that in this case the measure accomplished what it was supposed to do and has also opened a doorway for further research. This personality trait measure was used as it is open source and free to use. There may perhaps be an opportunity to replicate the study using non open source tests or indeed a longer form I.P.I.P. scale.

Although the sample size was sufficient enough to run the analysis needed. A larger sample is always desirable but more notably in this case a more even sample split across gender would also have been ideal as the split was approximately 70/30 in favour of females. The primary reason for this being as the groups were split down by gender and by remote working preference, the sample size being tested for that hypothesis became dramatically reduced. It is also important to note that while the Big 5 has shown to be a reasonably accurate and valid personality measure across many cultures and languages (Costa & McCrae, 1992), it does not exhaust all distinctions between personality traits.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

This study has shown there is a relationship between remote working preference and two personality traits. The grounds for future research are built on replicating this research perhaps in a larger sample, different populations or work sectors with a view to honing in not only on those personality traits that have shown a relationship, but exploring further into the facet level of traits that showed no relationship. There are also grounds for further examining why participants with lower levels of Emotional stability prefer to work at their place of work as opposed to remotely. This could be developed further by using the long form personality scales and potentially focus groups. The use of other personality scales or combinations of

them may also be useful. Potentially the Myers Briggs, Type A and Type B personality test, Cattell's 16pf or long form versions of the I.P.I.P scales may help develop this research further. Perhaps with less focus on the demographics of remote working, and more on personality trait. As Conscientiousness appears to be a consistently stable form of predictor of job success across a multitude of roles, there is not much left to be said for further investigation on this trait on its own. There may be an opportunity to further explore Conscientiousness in remote working managers. The interactive effects of personality traits may also be of interest and, notable research by Witt et al., (2002) has shown promising results.

In this study, personality scales were used to explain what traits an individual may have and their relationship if any to remote working preference, what it does not do is explain why individuals behave in such a way with regard to remote working. There may be opportunities to perform a mixed methods study involving focus groups or interviews along with personality testing to further examine behaviours with regard to remote working. There may also be cause to replicate the study using a larger sample size with a more even gender split. This may lead to development of evidence-based mental health interventions.

Furthermore there needs to be international collaboration between remote working researchers and stakeholders. Due to a scramble for any kind of information at all on remote working, there appears to be large variances in statistics being reported in the media and in survey data. In order to understand the complexities and long term implications on the mental health of remote workers we must first get a handle on gathering accurate information before we attempt to interpret it.

5.4 Closing statement

The current study used personality trait testing to examine a relationship if any to remote working preferences across all of the Big 5. Such a relationship was found in trait Conscientiousness and trait Emotional stability. These findings indicated that Emotional stability and Conscientiousness may have an effect on remote working preference. The present study also examined if gender differences with regard to remote working preference existed, no differences were found.

The unexpected prevalence of remote working has thrust working into a virtual environment and appears to have caused companies and work practices to become more task orientated and less people focused. This focus with regard to remote working has been so heavily invested in job performance, eliminating shirking and saving the environment that mental health may have been left in the shadows. While it has been shown that remote working does not decrease job performance (Bloom, et al., 2014), the opportunity to use personality trait testing as a tool here is immense. Not for exclusion from remote working; but to understand not only remote working behaviours, the potential mental health issues involved with long periods of social isolation and assist in developing training programs in how to recognise and deal with potential issues. There is also an opportunity to use this information in developing remote working guidelines for employers.

Prior to Covid-19 many companies implemented and explored remote working practices while others have now been forced to as a result of the Pandemic. Remote working is no longer a progressive trend for tech companies to boast about and attract the brightest minds with the lure of being able to work from your holiday home in Florida. Remote working is a reality for everyone. The reasons we have arrived to where we are aren't ideal, but it's an opportunity to recognise remote work is simply no longer Telecommuting. Remote

working is a complex process in which we are still not 100% certain of what the long term outcomes will look like on the Mental Health of those who do it, voluntary or involuntary. In a world of automation, expeditiousness and being ‘always on’, capitalism as we know it may have to re-invent itself, but not at the expense of the Mental Health of remote workers.

“The nature of work is changing...The challenge for policy makers—and for citizens—is enormous” (McKinsey Global Institute 2013).

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Appendix/Appendices

Appendix 1

1. REMOTE WORKING AND ME.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET/ARTICLES OF CONSENT

It is important for you to understand why this research is being carried out and what it will involve before you decide whether you would like to take part. This Information Sheet has been written for you and it is essential that you read through it carefully before proceeding with the survey. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT? The aim of this study is to understand attitudes, behaviours and barriers related to remote working.

WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO? Answer a series of questions about your job and yourself.

ARE THERE BENEFITS TO TAKING PART? The benefits of taking part centre around helping researchers to better understand remote working behaviours.

ARE THERE DISADVANTAGES TO TAKING PART? A possible disadvantage to you is the time it takes to complete the questionnaire. (Approximately 7-10 minutes depending on your answers). You are free not to answer any question you may feel uncomfortable with. **NB Some census type questions require an answer in order to direct you to questions that are relevant to you**.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART? It is your decision whether you take part or not. If you do not wish to take part simply check the "I do not consent box" and end the survey.

WILL MY TAKING PART BE CONFIDENTIAL? Yes. The nature and design of this survey ensures 100% anonymity for all participants. No part of the questionnaire allows you to be identifiable. All anonymous data will be kept for a minimum of five years from the date of publication of the study on a secure password protected drive as per guidelines from the Irish Universities Association.

WHO ELSE IS TAKING PART? Any person who is currently employed and wishes to do so.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE END OF THE STUDY? The collective results of this research may be published online.

WHAT IF I DO NOT UNDERSTAND SOMETHING? If you do not understand any question in part or whole you can move to the next item.

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND DURING THE STUDY? You may withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions. Simply close the active window on your device.

ETHICS PERMISSION: This study has been approved by the Dept. of Psychology Ethics committee of Dublin Business School. If you have any concerns and wish to contact an independent party please email patricia.frazer@dbs.ie. Please click either of the buttons below to continue or to exit this survey. *

I have read and understand the information provided above and wish to participate with the survey. **ANSWER YES GOES TO QUESTION 2.**

I have read and understand the information provided above and do not wish to participate in the survey. **ANSWER NO HERE ENDS SURVEY.**

*** DENOTES A MANDATORY ANSWER QUESTION FOR PURPOSE OF FLOW. ALL SKIP LOGICS ARE MARKED IN RED. POS = POSITIVELY LIKERT SCORED (5-1) , NEG = NEGATIVELY LIKERT SCORED (1-5) (ALL OTHER QUESTIONS ARE SCORED HOWEVER THE TEST OPERATOR SEES FIT IE MALE = 1, FEMALE =2 (PURELY FOR CODING PURPOSES IN SPSS)**

Section 2. Flow A

2. What is your Gender?

Male.

Female.

Other.

Prefer not to say.

3. What age are you?

18-24 years old

25-34 years old

35-44 years old

45-54 years old

55-64 years old

65-74 years old

Prefer not to say.

4. Which sector do you work in?

Public.

Private.

Third sector - Charity.

Prefer not to say.

5. Which statement best describes the category you work in?

Administrative and support services.

Arts, entertainment.

Construction.

Education.

Financial, banking and insurance.

Health and social work.

Hospitality.

I.T.

Legal.

Manufacturing.

Pharmaceutical/Medical.

Property and property services.

Public and civil service.

Retail and wholesale.

Sports and recreation.

Telecommunications.

Transportation.

Travel and Leisure.

Utilities.

Other.

6. Which title best describes your role at work?

Employee.

Team leader.

Mid-Level Management.

Senior Management.

Other.

Prefer not to say.

7. On average how long is your daily commute? (round trip door to door).

Under 30 Minutes.

30 Minutes to 1 hour.

1 to 2 Hours.

2 to 3 Hours .

3 to 4 hours.

Over 4 hours.

Not applicable.

8. I am concerned about the carbon footprint I produce when I commute.

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

9. Do you currently work remotely? *

Yes.

No. - **SKIPS TO SECTION 12. FLOW B - JUNCTION 1, Q.51**

SECTION 3. FLOW A JUNCTION 1**10. Prior to Covid-19 restrictions did you work remotely? ***

Yes.

No - I currently work remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions. - **SKIPS TO SECTION 21. Flow C - Job tools. Q.93**

SECTION 4. Flow A - Time.**11. Before Covid-19 restrictions, how long have you been working remotely?**

Less than a year.

1 to 3 years.

3 to 5 years.

6 to 10 years.

More than 10 years.

12. Before Covid-19 restrictions, how many days a week on average did you work remotely?

1 Day.

2 Days.

3 Days.

4 Days.

5 Days - Full time.

Over 5 days - Full time.

SECTION 5. Flow A - Job Tools.

13. My internet connection is adequate for remote working. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

14. My company provides me with sufficient tools to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

15. I have received sufficient training regarding working remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

16. Internal meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

17. External meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

18. I have a dedicated work space at home. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

SECTION 6. Flow A - Motivation Efficiency Discipline.

19. Remote working allows me to dress more comfortably. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

20. I am self-disciplined. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

21. I am self-motivated. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

22. I am confident working independently. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

23. I find it difficult to manage distractions when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

24. I get more work done working remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

25. Working remotely means I can get more done during time I would normally spend commuting. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

26. I am less productive when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

27. I am distracted by colleagues at my place of work. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

SECTION 7. Flow A - Work life balance.

28. Remote working helps me achieve work life balance. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

29. Remote working allows me to get more sleep. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

30. I am less stressed as a result of being able to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable

31. When working remotely I find it difficult to disconnect from my job at the end of the day. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

32. Remote working is better for my family relationships. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

33. Remote working helps to reduce my childcare costs. POS

Strongly Agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly Disagree.

Not applicable.

34. Working remotely helps with my childcare responsibilities. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

35. I work longer hours when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

36. Remote working allows me to save money on daily work costs. e.g. commuting, food. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 8. Flow A - Social aspects.

37. I am comfortable spending long periods of time working on my own. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

38. I prefer communicating with my colleagues virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

39. I prefer communicating with my external connections/clients/customers virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

40. Remote working might mean I am not included in team decisions. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

41. I enjoy the social aspect of the workplace. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

42. Remote working can feel lonely at times. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

43. Working remotely, I still feel part of a team. YES

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 9. Flow A - Trust.

44. Working remotely may decrease my chances of promotion. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

45. Remote working means I have to work harder to prove I am not slacking off. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

46. I need to be in my place of work sometimes to be seen by my line Manager/Management. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

47. The ability to work remotely makes me feel trusted by my Line Manager. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

48. The ability to work remotely makes me feel trusted by my company/employer. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 10. FLOW A - SATISFACTION

49. Overall how satisfied are you with remote working? *

Very Satisfied.

Satisfied.

Neutral.

Dissatisfied.

Very dissatisfied.

Other please comment:

SECTION 11. FLOW A -PREFERENCE

50. Would you prefer to continue working remotely? * ALL ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTION SKIPS TO SECTION 28. Flow A. Q131

Full time.

Part time.

No.

Unsure.

SECTION 12. FLOW B - JUNCTION 1

51. Which statement best describes the reason you do not work remotely? *

My current role prevents me from working remotely.

My current career prevents me from working remotely.

My Company/Line Manager/Division does not currently allow remote working.

My company currently does not provide the technology/tools for me to work remotely.

I have the option to work remotely but choose not to. **-SKIPS TO SECTION 28. Flow A. Q131**

SECTION 13. FLOW B - JUNCTION 2

52. If you had the opportunity, would you prefer to work remotely? *

Yes.

No. **-SKIPS TO SECTION 28. Flow A. Q131**

SECTION 14. Flow B

53. I would be willing to change career/job/job role in order to be able to work remotely. * POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

54. I would take a pay decrease in order to be able to work remotely. * POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

55. I would trade some of my current job benefits in order to be able to work remotely. * POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

56. If circumstances allowed, I would work remotely. *

Full time.

Part time.

Unsure.

15. Flow B - Job tools.

57. My internet connection is adequate for remote working. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

58. My company provides me with sufficient tools to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

59. Internal meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

60. External meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

61. I have a dedicated work space at home. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

SECTION 16. Flow B - Motivation Efficiency Discipline.

62. Remote working would allow me to dress more comfortably. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

63. I am self-disciplined. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

64. I am self-motivated. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

65. I am confident working independently. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

66. I would find it difficult to manage distractions when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

67. I would get more work done working remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

68. Working remotely means I would get more done during time I would normally spend commuting. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

69. I would be less productive when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

70. I am distracted by colleagues at my place of work. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

SECTION 17. Flow B - Work life balance.

71. Remote working would help me to achieve work life balance. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

72. Remote working would allow me to get more sleep. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

73. I would be less stressed as a result of being able to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

74. When working remotely I would find it difficult to disconnect from my job at the end of the day. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

75. Remote working would be better for my family relationships. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

76. The ability to work remotely would reduce my childcare costs. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

77. Remote working would help with my childcare responsibilities. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

78. I would work longer hours when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

79. By remote working I would save money on daily work costs. e.g. commuting, food. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 18. Flow B - Social aspects.

80. I am comfortable spending long periods of time working on my own. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

81. I prefer communicating with my colleagues virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

82. I prefer communicating with my external connections/clients/customers virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

83. Remote working might mean I am not included in team decisions. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

84. I enjoy the social aspect of the workplace. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

85. Remote working could feel lonely at times. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

86. Working remotely, I will still feel part of a team. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 19. Flow B - Trust.**87. Working remotely may decrease my chances of promotion. NEG**

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

88. Remote working means I will have to work harder to prove I am not slacking off. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

89. I would need to be in my place of work sometimes to be seen by my line Manager/Management. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

90. The ability to work remotely would make me feel trusted by my Line Manager. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

91. The ability to work remotely would make me feel trusted by my company/employer. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

SECTION 20. Flow B

92. Overall how satisfied would you be with remote working? * ALL ANSWERS SKIP TO SECTION 28. Flow A. Q131

Very satisfied.

Satisfied.

Neutral.

Dissatisfied.

Very dissatisfied.

SECTION 21. Flow C - Job tools.

93. My internet connection is adequate for remote working. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

94. My company provides me with sufficient tools to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

95. I have received sufficient training regarding working remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

96. Internal meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

97. External meetings can easily be held remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

98. I have a dedicated work space at home. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

22. Flow C - Motivation Efficiency Discipline.

99. Remote working allows me to dress more comfortably. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

100. I am self-disciplined. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

101. I am self-motivated. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

102. I am confident working independently. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

103. I find it difficult to manage distractions when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

104. I get more work done working remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

105. Working remotely means I can get more done during time I would normally spend commuting. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

106. I am less productive when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

107. I am distracted by colleagues at my place of work. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

23. Flow C - Work life balance.

108. Remote working helps me achieve work life balance. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

109. Remote working allows me to get more sleep. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

110. I am less stressed as a result of being able to work remotely. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable

111. When working remotely I find it difficult to disconnect from my job at the end of the day. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

112. Remote working is better for my family relationships. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

113. Remote working helps to reduce my childcare costs. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

114. Remote working helps with my childcare responsibilities. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

115. I work longer hours when working remotely. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

116. By remote working I save money on daily work costs. e.g. commuting, food. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

24. Flow C - Social aspects.

117. I am comfortable spending long periods of time working on my own. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

118. I prefer communicating with my colleagues virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

119. I prefer communicating with my external connections/clients/customers virtually as opposed to in person. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

120. Remote working might mean I am not included in team decisions. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

121. I enjoy the social aspect of the workplace. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

122. Remote working can feel lonely at times. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

123. Working remotely, I still feel part of a team. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

25. Flow C - Trust.

124. Working remotely may decrease my chances of promotion. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

125. Remote working means I have to work harder to prove I am not slacking off. NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

126. I need to be in my place of work sometimes to be seen by my line Manager/Management.

NEG

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

127. The ability to work remotely makes me feel trusted by my Line Manager. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

128. The ability to work remotely makes me feel trusted by my company/employer. POS

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

Not applicable.

26. Flow C.

129. Overall how satisfied are you with remote working? *

Very Satisfied.

Satisfied.

Neutral.

Dissatisfied.

Very dissatisfied.

Other please comment:

27. FLOW C.

130. I would like to continue to work remotely post Covid-19 restrictions. * ALL ANSWERS SKIP TO SECTION 28. Flow A. Q131 (IN THIS CASE IT'S THE NEXT QUESTION)

Full time.

Part time.

I do not want to work remotely.

Unsure.

28. Flow A. (ALL FLOWS END UP HERE AND THEN ONTO THE PERSONALITY INVENTORY)

131. I would welcome the idea of Remote working hubs in my locality. (A remote working hub is a building with individual cubicles that enables the benefits of being in an office/work setting but very close to home and childcare facilities).

Strongly agree.

Agree.

Neutral.

Disagree.

Strongly disagree.

29. PERSONALITY.

How Accurately Can You Describe Yourself?

Describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age. So that you can describe yourself in an honest manner, your responses will be kept in absolute confidence. Indicate for each statement whether it is as a description of you.

1. Very Inaccurate,
2. Moderately Inaccurate,
3. Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate,
4. Moderately Accurate,
5. Very Accurate

QUESTIONS ARE MARKED AS EITHER POS OR NEG MARKED AND TO WHICH CONSTRUCT THEY BELONG TO FOR SCORING PURPOSES. EXTRAVERSION, AGREEABLENESS, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, EMOTIONAL STABILITY, INTELLECT.

132. Am the life of the party. **POS EXTRAVERSION**

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

133. Feel little concern for others. **NEG AGREEABLENESS**

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

134. Am always prepared. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

135. Get stressed out easily. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

136. Have a rich vocabulary. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

137. Don't talk a lot. NEG EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

138. Am interested in people. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

139. Leave my belongings around. NEG CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

140. Am relaxed most of the time. POS EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

141. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas. NEG INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

142. Feel comfortable around people. POS EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

143. Insult people. NEG AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

144. Pay attention to details. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

145. Worry about things. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

146. Have a vivid imagination. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

147. Keep in the background. NEG EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

148. Sympathise with others' feelings. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

149. Make a mess of things. NEG CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

150. Seldom feel blue. POS EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

151. Am not interested in abstract ideas. NEG INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

152. Start conversations. POS EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

153. Am not interested in other people's problems. NEG AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

154. Get chores done right away. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

155. Am easily disturbed. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

156. Have excellent ideas. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

157. Have little to say. NEG EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

158. Have a soft heart. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

159. Often forget to put things back in their proper place. NEG CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

160. Get upset easily. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

161. Do not have a good imagination. NEG INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

162. Talk to a lot of different people at parties. POS EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

163. Am not really interested in others. NEG AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

164. Like order. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

165. Change my mood a lot. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

166. Am quick to understand things. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

167. Don't like to draw attention to myself. NEG EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

168. Take time out for others. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

169. Shirk my duties. NEG CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

170. Have frequent mood swings. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY.

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

171. Use difficult words. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

172. Don't mind being the centre of attention. POS EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

173. Feel others emotions. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

174. Follow a schedule. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

175. Get irritated easily. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

176. Spend time reflecting on things. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

177. Am quiet around strangers. NEG EXTRAVERSION

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

178. Make people feel at ease. POS AGREEABLENESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

179. Am exacting in my work. POS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

180. Often feel blue. NEG EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

181. Am full of ideas. POS INTELLECT

Very Inaccurate.

Moderately Inaccurate.

Neither Accurate Nor Inaccurate.

Moderately Accurate.

Very Accurate.

30. Comments FLOW A ALL

If you have any comments on remote working please add them here.

*******END OF SURVEY*******