City of Tampere Employee Telecommuting and Work Well-being 2021

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Bachelor of International Business   Abstract

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The purpose of this thesis is to increase knowledge about the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic period and extensive telecommuting on the staff of a large organization such as the City of Tampere. The study will be useful for the city in the future, for example, during the extensive renovation of the Central Office Building, when the staff will again have to follow the hybrid work model in their daily work for their employer. The thesis is relating to what kind of impacts have occurred on personal work well-being and why they have happened in the transition to telecommuting, taking into account the efficiency of the municipal organization's operations and work-life balance thinking. Reliability of the work well-being tools used by the City of Tampere organization are being inspected due to the change from office work to remote work.

The thesis includes a survey for the employees of the Central Administration, and the results are compared with earlier material. As a conclusion it was found that there has been a slight improvement of work well-being due to transition to telecommuting, and the tools used by the organization for evaluating work well-being were concluded to still be reliable. The nature of the work has changed permanently. The research also increases general knowledge of the effects of the Corona virus on Finnish society from the perspective of well-being at work.

Keywords   Telecommuting, Work Well-being, Work-Life Balance, Covid-19 pandemic

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Tämä opinnäytetyö lisää tietoa Covid-19-pandemian ajan vaikutuksista ja laajasta etätyöskentelystä suuressa organisaatiossa. Tutkimuksen kohteena oli Tampereen kaupungin henkilöstö. Tutkimus on hyödyllinen kaupungille tulevaisuudessa esimerkiksi keskusvirastotalon laajan peruskorjauksen ajalle, kun henkilöstö siirtyy jälleen hybridityömalliin päivittäisessä työskentelyssään kaupungille. Opinnäytetyö tutkii hybridityömallin vaikutuksia henkilökohtaiseen työhyvinvointiin. Työssä tutkitaan myös vaikutusten syitä, huomioiden kunnallisorganisaation toiminnan ja työ- ja yksityiselämän tasapainon. Tampereen kaupungin käyttämien työhyvinvointimittareiden luotettavuutta tarkastellaan johtuen toimistotyöstä etätöihin siirtymisestä.

Työhön sisältyy kyselytutkimus, joka tehtiin konsernihallinnon työntekijöille, ja sitä vertaillaan aikaisempaan materiaaliin, kuten Tampereen kaupungin omiin kyselytutkimuksiin. Kyselytutkimus suunnattiin ensisijaisesti keskusvirastotalossa työskentelevälle henkilöstölle. Loppupäätelmänä havaittiin, että Tampereen kaupungin organisaatiossa on ollut pientä parannusta työhyvinvointiin etätöihin siirtymisen seurauksena, ja lisäksi voidaan todeta, että kunnallisorganisaation käyttämät työkalut työhyvinvoinnin mittaamiseen ovat edelleen luotettavia. Kuitenkin joillakin yksittäisillä työntekijöillä työhyvinvointi on heikentynyt etätyöskentelyn erilaisista kuormittavista tekijöistä johtuen. Tutkimus lisää myös yleistä tietämystä koronaviruksen vaikutuksista suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan työhyvinvoinnin näkökulmasta. Työn luonne on muuttunut peruuttamattomasti pandemian aikana.

Contents

1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to map the experiences of telecommuters in the city of Tampere about the course of the working day as well as the normal daily program, everyday thoughts, and various possible development suggestions about teleworking. The aim of the study is to find out experiences and the level of well-being at work from long-term teleworking and its future.

The emphasis of the research method is on qualitative research. Interviews were used to collect the material. The interviews were transcribed. An occupational well-being manager and others were interviewed. Quantitative research methods were also used to obtain quantitative data from employees through a survey. These research results complement the City of Tampere's own results, for example from the Kunta10 survey. The results were analysed and reported in this study.

An overview of the explosive growth of telecommuting during the pandemic is being researched also. The effects among the employees of the City of Tampere are being examined, especially from the point of view of well-being at work. The aim is to obtain the results of a survey and to compare its results with previous occupational well-being surveys, including those of the city. The result of the work is a study of the effects of telecommuting and the Covid-19 pandemic on well-being at work on the staff of the City of Tampere.

The research paper is making use of self-conducted surveys for staff, utilization of Kunta10 surveys and qualitative personal interviews. Microsoft Power BI reports from the city of Tampere are also used. Analysis of the material was requested from the occupational well-being manager. Data from employee experience surveys that utilized the Quality of Work Life (QWL) Index, stored in the city's own Microsoft Power BI software, are also the subject of analysis.

The study will further elaborate on the definitions discussed above and try to find some common ground between various perspectives while trying to give answers for the research questions.

The author has found so far that the topic of wellbeing at work and work-life balance is a very broad one, and the first difficulties found so far are how to limit the answers to the research questions while still providing acceptable academic level answers to the questions. Sources and research style of this thesis is handpicked together, and every question is studied and answered together after both have accepted the conclusion.

1.1 Well-being and Work-Life Balance

Competition between companies has been harder, especially after 2019, so the employers must value their most important assets, which means human resources in most of the professions. People are beginning to be more oriented into specialist roles in many fields, and this makes them almost irreplaceable. These are likely a few of the many reasons why employers have started taking wellbeing of their workforce seriously. Specialist job titles also mean more meaningful position for most of the workers, and this can bring a lot of stress but if wellbeing of employees is taken seriously it can make them more productive and self-driven. This would be the ideal workplace, where one can achieve one's own goals, and one is taken care of by the employer. Ideally every employee should have good healthcare insurances so they can contact a doctor immediately if they start having physical or mental health problems. Contacting medical professionals should also be encouraged by employers, so no one would feel like they have been left alone. In this thesis we will investigate this topic as well and try to find if there could be some bigger changes needed.

One facet of this problem is, if an extreme case is to be used as an example, that there have been concerns about those employees who are vulnerable to abusing substances. One of the steps for wellbeing and safety is to prevent alcohol and drug use, and if this kind of abuses are happening it is critical to offer help for employees. The normal workplace social constraints prevent most people from abusing substances as alcohol during workdays. Telecommuting makes alcohol use during work hours mostly invisible to other people. This may cause the individuals problems to escalate and worsen without an easy way to intervene by a boss or co-workers. The problems do not need to be this drastic, however, as even slight increase in stress and difficulty to concentrate worsen the ability to work. If an employee needs to take care of his or her children at home while telecommuting, there is a risk that concentrating simply on work related things is not going to be smooth. There have been concerns that employees most at risk of negative effects of

telecommuting remain unseen and unheard by their managers and co-workers. Various kinds of challenges may overlap and accumulate to a single employee yet remain relatively invisible to the community at workplace due to lack of day-to-day social interaction.

One big question is also "can you give too much to your work?", and it is not an easy one to answer. While working keeps one's mind busy, and one will have goals in their life which might drive them to achieve great things, it could also be toxic to their family life. One should not ignore everything else and just concentrate on work, this can cause lot of issues. Is it possible to find ideal balance between work and leisure time? The global situation with the coronavirus has changed the way we think work-life balance dramatically.

1.2 Research Topic

Wellbeing at work and work-life balance are two closely related topics, so it is natural to contemplate them together.

Wellbeing at work and work-life balance are about overall wellbeing of a working human regardless of the field of profession or the country the person is living in and working on. In that regard, it is a universal topic that needs to get attention. Most of employees are relying on a job to make the ends meet, so the topic is touching most of the people. Life, or rather, "good life" is all about balance and researching this topic is not only helpful from the business point-of-view, but this research would touch almost every other field too.

A motivated person is often a productive person. This is common sense. Quality of life can be greatly impacted for good or worse by the work-life balance. Even your dream job may get stressful and wearing up to the point a burnout. However, sometimes the job requires people to make sacrifices. The deeper question is that who is responsible for the balance between work and life?

Often the topic of work-life balance is understood to include only those people who are merely salaried workers. However, entrepreneurs are a different kind of a group. So are the managerial workers, as the modern world expects everyone to be always available, and the managerial workers

suffer from the current hectic business life. Therefore, the focus on the topic is from the perspective of the managerial workers.

1.2.1   Research Question

The primary research question is: "What kind of changes for work wellbeing have happened due to adoption of telecommuting for employees working within the City of Tampere Organization?".

As the topic is a complex one, the author feels that the following sub-questions are also relevant to properly study the topic:

1. How has the work wellbeing been affected by adoption of telecommuting?
2. How has the work-life balance been impacted?
3. How have the attitudes toward telecommuting changed?
4. What are the long-term risks or benefits from the telecommuting considering the impact on employees?
5. What are the experiences from a massive change to telecommuting done in a very short timeframe?

Both the primary research question and its sub-questions are related specifically to the context of the City of Tampere Organization.

1.3   Hypothesis

The hypothesis is that most likely the study will find out that telecommuting greatly increases efficiency of employees, but that some people are even at the risk of a burnout. Effects of telecommuting are not similar to every employee due to work-life balance. This hypothesis is based on common complaints made against remote work.

Common grievances about telecommuting include:

1. The family is staying at home and requires attention
2. Ergonomy suffers

3. Breaks hard to keep

4. Lack of social contacts

5. Manager hard to reach

6. Free time and office hours begin to overlap

7. Quick adoption of telecommuting done almost overnight (Okubo, 2020)

Statistics show that most are very satisfied with telecommuting, but a significant portion is unsatisfied. (Ministry of economic affairs and employment, 2021; Männistö, 2021) There is also a gap between generations on their perspectives. (Hemmadi, 2014)

2   Theoretical Framework

This thesis discusses the work-life wellbeing and how to find a balance between work and leisure. Finding this perfect harmony between these two will benefit both employee and employer. It could make employees more efficient in many fields of work, and in this thesis answers to these questions are studied. The presented theory on how taking care of employee's wellbeing prevents absences due to illness (absenteeism), makes the employee more efficient, helps to prolong careers and creates an overall healthy work culture. A major trouble with telecommuting is the lack of social interaction, and perhaps the current workplace culture has not adapted completely to telecommuting, at least regarding the social aspects of workplace community.

Yang, Suh, Lee and Son (2018), who studied the work-life balance in South Korea, remark that the idea of work-life balance lacks a widely accepted definition. They also note that the idea is a complex one.

They list some of the suggested definitions. The definitions include "equilibrium or an overall sense of harmony in work and private life", "an adequate amount of resources to respond effectively to the demands of their and family roles", and "balancing the life demands of various life-roles". (Yang et al., 2018)

Wellbeing at work is an older concept than the work-life balance which has increased in prominence during the modern days. The modern careers are more intertwined with a person's own private life, and as a consequence the work-life balance as a topic has increased in importance more and more.

Jones, Burke and Westman (2013) make a point that the work-life balance can also be seen as a work-family balance. They also note that people may be involved in multiple roles outside family. Such roles include leisure, religious and community roles. Understanding of this multitude of roles has increased in this field study. During the "good old days" one could get a job and have his whole career in a single workplace. These days it is more common to always consider other jobs to improve one's conditions in life. Flexibility and job insecurity are two key terms in this area. (Jones, Burke & Westman, 2013)

Perhaps it can be said that the wellbeing at work and work-life balance are not strictly about business studies, but rather an interdisciplinary field. The topic is also about the fields of psychology and sociology. (Jones et al., 2013) In the United Kingdom, there has been a considerable political pressure coming from the European Union to improve work-life conditions by reforming national legislation. (Houston, 2005) In that sense, it can be argued that the topic has already become a politicized one.

The responsibility of work-life balance is a complex question. While the employer benefits from a satisfied and motivated worker, it is difficult for the employer to keep responsibility in areas of the employee's private life. There is always a great deal of personal responsibility of one's life, and that cannot be externalized. Whatever the answer may be, the reality is that the work-life has become more stressful than in the previous decades. (Jones et al., 2013) This trend is surprising, considering that in the United States alone it was estimated already in 2000 that more than half of the jobs could be telecommuted at least on a part-time basis. The amount of flexibility allowed by the employers has been studied in the USA, and this also an important aspect which the author will be considering in the thesis. (Romer, 2011)

The methodology includes a survey on the literature on wellbeing at work and work-life balance. Thankfully the topics have enjoyed a wide interest among scholars and students. However, the problem lays in the fact that there is a lack of precise clear definitions for the work-life balance. The literature on the topic has even failed to give a solid definition for simple things such as a "family" or a "job". (Jones et al., 2013)

The situation with the wellbeing at work is not much better. Despite the fact that the work-life balance is a particularly difficult topic to define, its importance is growing more and more as barriers between work and life at home have been weakening. The wellbeing at work and work-life balance are currently interesting topics and needs to be addressed. Modern ways of living are constantly changing, and so are the results and parameters of wellbeing at work and work-life balance. For instance, working mothers are very common in the current day work culture. (Jones et al., 2013) However, thus far very little has moved from research to be used by the actual management. (Lee-Ross & Pryce, 2010)

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was considered a consistent theory on quality of work life (QWL), and these models have been based on the original Maslow's theory. (Narehan, Hairunnisa, Norfadzillah, & Freziamella, 2014) Maslow, Herzberg (1959), Kano and many others have researched the motivation theories as mentioned by Arai, Kapoor and Bhatia. Herzberg's motivation theory states that there are hygiene factors causing distress, and in contrast motivation factors which increase performance. (Arai, Kapoor, & Bhatia, 2019) Noriaki Kano's (1984) Model of Customer Satisfaction may also be applied in the context of QWL surveys. Current research has found out that separation of employee needs into categories of "basic", "functional" and "exciting" may lead into giving insight from QWL-surveys in regards of what actions need to be taken. Employee expectations of minimum necessities for work may permanently change. What was once an exciting new thing may become a basic expectation for the employee. (Lasrado & Bagchi, 2011) As the whole organization has had to relearn basic work processes with telecommuting, it may be difficult or impossible to try rollback the changes made.

One viewpoint given by Geert Hofstede's research is that different business cultures can be characterized on six different scales, or dimensions. (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) Such viewpoints may be useful in understanding how different cultures feel about the prevailing situation at the workplace.

3   Methodology

3.1   Research Method

The method used in this thesis can be summarized to be primarily a survey on literature. Interviews and questionnaires are used to produce qualitative and quantitative data.

As this study is a survey on literature, materials include primarily books and articles. Some modern articles and books that are used reflect upon matters such as downshifting and telecommuting.

The method is essentially a qualitative study on modern up-to-date literature concerning the wellbeing at work and work-life balance.

However, the exact scientific data may reveal itself to be elusive. Wellbeing is a very subjective feeling that varies greatly from person to person. Something that is perfectly fine for a certain person may guarantee another's burnout. There is a lot of subjective experience related to wellbeing.

The research methodology is primarily to try to find common discourses from the articles and books used as material for this thesis. While sources may disagree on certain aspects, the goal is to find the most common ground between them.

3.1.1   Indicators

There are a lot of indicators which can be used to get results about work wellbeing and overall work-life balance.

Quality of Work Life (QWL) Index is one such indicator. QWL-index is a widely used indicator based on motivation theories. (Narehan, Hairunnisa, Norfadzillah, & Freziamella, 2014)

Absenteeism can be used as an indicator when compared to situation before and after widespread adoption of telecommuting in the organization.

Work-life balance is a related concept to work wellbeing, but from a more qualitative perspective. Some theories of work wellbeing state that certain things are more about subjective experience.

Reliability of subjective perspective against measurable indicators are to be considered. This is a typical polarity between quantitative and qualitative indicators.

3.1.2   Methodology and Sources

Methodology of the study will use both qualitative and quantitative methods. The goal of using mixed research methods is to both increase and confirm accuracy of the results gained.

1. A survey is to be conducted to the employees of the city of Tampere (quantitative)
2. Interviews (qualitative)
3. Use of already published literature. (both quantitative and qualitative)
4. Emphasis on new research, books and articles, published during the coronavirus crisis. (both quantitative and qualitative)

3.2   Reliability

Reliability of sources must be kept in mind. There are several facets, which affect the reliability of the sources used. In the following are some of the things that need to be kept in mind.

Some of the sources may also have been deprecated over time, as in the past telecommuting was nowhere as common as it is now.

Downshifting was also more of a utopia than reality as, for instance, people did more working hours per week in the past.

While the old sources are perfectly fine on themselves, the research method limits their usability on case-by-case basis. The method used on this thesis makes, for instance older sources less reliable

for a study conducted about the present day. Old and new materials are not necessarily comparable, and as such this study is tied into the present day.

3.2.1   Subjective Experience

Reliability of interviews and questionnaires are affected by subjective experience of those people who answer them. Literature on Work Wellbeing commonly mention the role of the subjective experience on the reliability of the results of the studies. Geert Hofstede has characterized different business cultures on six different scales, and they may be used to understand how different cultures feel about the workplace dynamics. (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) Employees of different cultures may not agree what is best, if their values greatly differ.

The collectivism vs. individualism dimension is about the role of an individual in the culture. Is the individual the most important actor on his own right, or is the goal and function of a group of people more important than one person? The dimension of power distance includes aspects such as desirability of inequality, authoritarianism, use of status symbols, power-based management vs. participative management, and autonomy of people. The dimension between femininity and masculinity includes various facets such as the preferred way for resolving conflicts (fighting vs. negotiating). The dimension between monumentalism and flexhumility has alternatively been described as the scale between short-term orientation and long-term orientation. The former term is equivalent with the short-term orientation. This scale is used to describe a cultures relationship with time. For instance, are the given goals more future oriented? The dimension of indulgence vs. restraint is about how much happiness and similar positive feelings can be shown by an individual. The restrained cultures also respect strict moral values, and do not give much value for free time. (Hofstede et al., 2010)
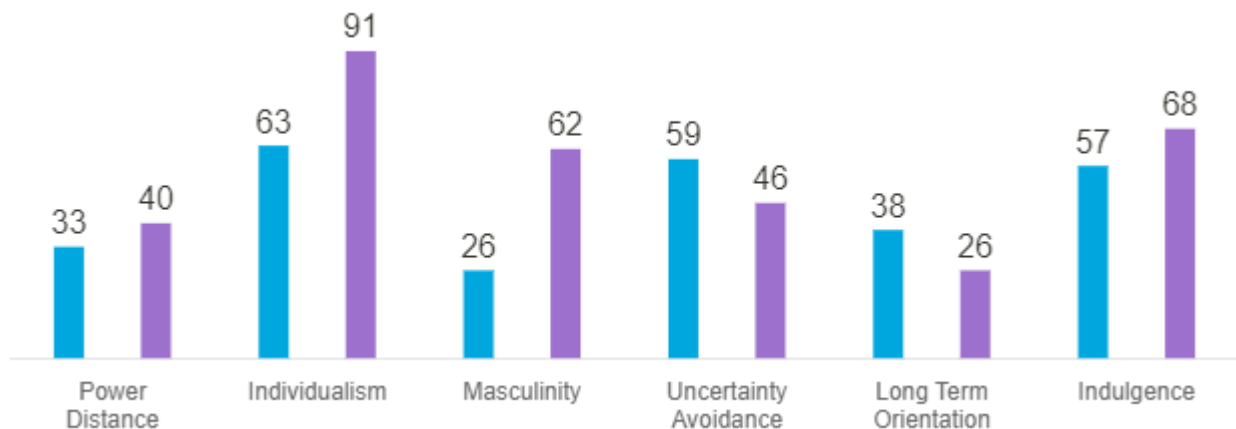
Figure 1. Scores of Finland (blue) and the United States (purple) in G. Hofstede's six dimensions. (Hofstede Insights, 2021)

These scores show that Finnish work culture has emphasis on things such as independence, equality, direct communication, individualism, consensus, flexibility, equality, avoiding uncertainty, working hard, punctuality, normativity, optimism and indulgence. The American values seem to be mostly the same, except on the dimensions of individualism and masculinity. The American culture is more polarized and focused on "winner taking all", when comparing femininity-masculinity axis. (Hofstede Insights, 2021)

These values highly regarded in Finnish or American work cultures may influence the inclination to telecommute, the overall trust of employees working hard independently while telecommuting, and the employee's own subjective experience on how they feel about remote working.

3.2.2 Reliability of Data on Telecommuting

The effects of coronavirus lockdowns need to be separated from the actual effects of just remote work itself. The initial change was massive and done very quickly in developed nations. (Okubo, 2020)

The preliminary studies used as material for analysis include both Finnish and international studies to avoid possible problems with a regional bias. Different societies have different work cultures with different conditions for employees. Using just a limited set of studies may cause a bias on certain

region. For instance, Japan and Finland were able to adopt telecommuting very quickly, and it was very common in the overall workforce, while in nations such as the United States, telecommuting was not adopted as widely. The causes for the discrepancy of flexibility between different societies and work cultures, especially at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, must be considered regarding the overall reliability of research. For instance, Japanese and American workplaces had a very different ability to adopt telecommunication quickly and flexibly as a part of daily organizational operations than in Finland or other Nordic countries. Different kinds of economies had different flexibility to adopt telecommuting. The wealthier nations had a clear advantage at that. Even the United States–did not adopt telecommuting as widely as certain European nations.

3.2.3   Reliability of Survey Methods

Tampere city surveys that their employees may suffer as from reliability problems because it is a documented fact that not all employees take the time to answers for questionnaires and some units or teams lack the data completely because of only a few or none of the team members answered.

Some units are so small, so that there is not enough data coming, even if almost everyone is answering. Small teams are somewhat at risk for the lack of anonymity, and that might also be reason not to answer. Also, when a work unit is small the data is not necessarily portraying the wider trend of work well-being in the organization, when comparing and collecting overall data. When comparing the data, results of small teams are shown only in the context of a larger unit inside the organization. For instance, the Power BI data by the city of Tampere blocks users from viewing the data which may compromise a person's anonymity withing his immediate work environment and colleagues.

All the reasons above are why the team comparison withing the organization is difficult, and a better way would be only to do comparison between bigger units, when it is feasible. In this sense, the Power BI is a useful tool for this, so the city of Tampere organization already has methods to process the data easily and readily for use.

Other concerns with the using of Kunta10 and QWL index is that they are not very specific about outside of work life aspects, which means that if telecommuting is affecting also personal life and leisure time, this is not well shown. The ongoing trend is that Covid-19 pandemic makes most of the normal leisure time activities not possible, and as such the connection between work-life balance and telecommunication is an interesting context which needs more study.

Kunta10 survey is probing different fields of working life and overall functioning of the office. So even if the questions are quickly reformed for examining the areas of the new normal (telecommuting) it makes comparison of the results very difficult in most parts of the organization mainly because the questions have been the same for a number of years. Changing the overall survey methodology has the effect of making the comparisons less reliable with the previous surveys. This facet of possible reliability issue must be kept in mind when considering how to make possible changes for the survey.

So, there is a difficult remark that the Kunta10 survey is obsolete, and in which manner it does not necessarily work anymore as planned, as a way of following the workers' wellbeing, satisfaction, and work life balance. Should there be a completely new kind of questionnaire and should both the Kunta10 and the new one be kept for a time, or should the Kunta10 be cancelled immediately? How can a worker, for example, answer a question about office materials and space when he or she is doing half of the workdays home and half of the workdays in the office? It is important to consider how the surveys should be constructed, when the employee answering may consider the work environment from the viewpoint of office work, or alternatively the remote work from home. There is quite a serious difference when trying to get comparable data, as different factors impact wellbeing when telecommuting.

Whatever the future research's form is, the most important thing to solve is how to get everyone to answer. Should there be a reward or maybe just make it mandatory to answer. Mandatory answers might distort the data, if people are reluctant to answer, or do it in the displeasured state of mind. As such it may be justified to state that subjective feelings of workers matter even in such situations. Kunta10 and QWL index are also used to compare different cities' employee satisfaction, but if the survey is reformed that undertaking also requires a wider cooperation

between the cities, so it is likely not feasible to construct a new model for a national level survey for municipalities to examine working life balance.

The City's quantitative surveys can be distorted when only certain employees in each unit respond to the surveys, and some do not respond at all. Units or teams might be so small that they do represent primarily everyone's personal subjective experience. Therefore, the information produced by the city in the Kunta10 survey and in the QWL index statistics cannot always be reliable regarding a single unit or team. Therefore, it is difficult to compare specific teams, and it makes it important to consider whether the emphasy should be on larger units of the organization in quantitative numerical data if it is research-wise possible?

The surveys by the city also do not place particular emphasis on the factors influencing personal life that have been highlighted during large scale teleworking because of the 'new normal', as the adoption of a telecommuting model, or a hybrid model as it is the case for the city of Tampere, has changed the nature of work.

So, there is a possibility that the Employee Experience Survey is in its current form outdated, with regards to how the previous list of problems has been considered in the Tampere surveys.

Should the city of Tampere pay more attention to personal life than office life? Occupational well-being theories are relevant here. Data protection, etc. are also a factor. If the City of Tampere were to include personal life questions in the survey, would the data protection of an individual employee be protected as well as in the current data presented on the Power BI platform, or so that it is not possible to deduce who answered?

Family requires attention. Ergonomy suffers. Breaks are hard to keep. There is a lack of social contacts. Managers are hard to reach. Free time and office hours begin to overlap. Quick adoption of telecommuting done almost overnight. (Okubo, 2020)

4   Prior Surveys on Telecommuting

4.1   Finnish and International Surveys and Studies on Work Wellbeing

Prior research on the topic has been done both in Finland and abroad. As focus of this paper is closely related to telecommuting, the sources are chosen primarily with that emphasis.

Past relevant studies done in Finland include the yearly Working Life Barometers. A recent study was published in June 2021. The newest study has been slightly updated to better accommodate the situation due to the year being impacted heavily by the global coronavirus pandemic. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2021)

Unsurprisingly, there was a major increase in increase of telecommuting from the previous year due to the coronavirus pandemic (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2021).

The very vast majority of workers in 2020 were satisfied about telecommuting. 44 percent were very satisfied, 48 percent were rather satisfied, and 6 percent were rather unsatisfied (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2021).

Surprisingly little differences were observed between different groups of employees. Genders and age groups did not have any drastic differences in the level satisfaction. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2021)

There has been a recent study about telecommuting and City of Tampere Organization from April 2021. The study by Ari Niemensivu was a thesis project for Master's Programme in Business Studies at the Tampere University's Faculty of Management and Business. This previous study needs to be considered with a greater emphasis, as it is one of the few already done within the City of Tampere organization during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Niemensivu's study's focus was on the managerial aspects and shared leadership within the organization during the pandemic and adoption of the so-called hybrid model. That qualitative study focused on interviewing managers and employees working at specialist tasks, and the focus

was more on the subjective experience of those interviewed regarding both their own experiences and opinion regarding the organizational level. The study concluded that role of shared leadership increased while use of hierarchical leadership decreased. The adoption of shared leadership style was hindered by disruption of communication methods caused by challenges caused by telecommuting. The study also concluded that the employees felt positive and negative aspects of telecommuting very differently, and these differences were caused by personal differences, one's role at the organization and personal preferences (subjective experience). The employees working at subordinate or managerial roles had clearly defined differences in their experience regarding the changes in leadership style. The interviewees were clearly impacted by the discussions of remote work at media and were more thoughtful of its impact.

Niemensivu's study relied much on the previous work by Craig L. Pearce on the leadership methods. Some of the recent studies argue that as work and methods of working get more complex a single hierarchical leader is unable to control the whole situation (arguments by Carson, Day, and others). This has been seen as a proof that a new kind of leadership studies need to be considered, as the older methods of research seem to have become obsolete. (Niemensivu, 2021)

Perhaps complexification of the work caused by telecommuting is having a wider impact on the accuracy of workplace and work wellbeing studies, and not only the leadership studies need to be updated, but rather the whole framework of studies which rely on analysing the communication at workplaces.

Niemensivu also uses the term of virtuality, which refers to a more prominent role of electronic communication methods and the geographic scattering of work. However, the City of Tampere Organization is regionally focused, so the cultural and other aspects which may complicate telecommuting, are not relevant for this study. This is despite of the relatively large size of the organization, when compared to various private enterprises. Niemensivu makes this same argument regarding his study. (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014, 391.; Niemensivu, 2021)

4.2 Surveys Done by the City of Tampere

4.2.1 Kunta10

Kunta10 survey is done in cooperation between the six large cities with over 100,000 inhabitants including the cities of Tampere, Espoo, Helsinki, Vantaa, Turku and Oulu. Several smaller neighbouring cities also participate. They include the cities of Raisio, Nokia, Valkeakoski, Naantali and Virrat. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (*Työterveyslaitos*) works as the coordinating entity. (Tasku, 2021; The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2021)

The survey is currently bi-yearly. The most recent survey was from 2020. Almost 30% of all Finnish municipal workers are given the survey. The survey is the country's largest and longest-running survey of municipal personnel. It is the largest study of its kind in the municipal sector. (Tasku, 2021; The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2021)

The 2020 survey revealed a positive development in work, work community and management related issues. The results indicated that the employees of the City of Tampere were favourable towards development and committed to their work. (Tasku, 2021; The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2021)

The main results are distributed to all participating cities and their staff. Municipalities use the results of the study to improve the well-being of employees and the quality of working life. According to the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, following repeated surveys, it is possible to better assess changes in the quality of working life and their effects on staff well-being and health. The survey also includes data on absenteeism. (The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2021)

4.2.2 Employee Experience Surveys

Employee Experience Surveys are quarterly surveys done within the City of Tampere Organization and they are sent to all employees. The data is publicly available within the organization. Privacy of single employees is protected however, as if too few answer the study within a team, the

detailed data is not given freely. The data is used to calculate a QWL-index, so that employee satisfaction can be measured in a concise form.

The Employee Experience Survey includes five topics (leadership, managerial action, work culture, know-how and processual questions) and three categories of questions (physical and emotional safety, togetherness and identity, and goals and creativity).

5 Results and Analysis

5.1 Survey

5.1.1 Goals of the Survey

The purpose of the own study is to ask about the deeper, work-life balance related, factors related to telecommuting, so that the results can be compared, for example, with the city's own internal studies. The primary surveys done by the City of Tampere are Employee Experience Surveys are only internal, and Kunta10 surveys are done in cooperation with other municipalities. Regarding the methods used on this study, the focus of this survey was more on the side of obtaining quantitative data to compare with other studies. Their results are compared with the results obtained in this study's survey. By comparing these results, the data can be quite insightful and may very well lead to far more deeper understanding of work well-being as a whole. Just a little bit more questions with a lot more precision is key to better and more valuable data. One very clear pitfall of the current data, and the conclusions that follow them, is that in the case that if one organizational section's point are lower than last year, usually the reason for that is open for questioning as there has been a drastic change in the way of working due to a large-scale adoption of telecommuting in the new hybrid model. It is a far too common practice nowadays that the results are revealed perhaps in a big work meeting, and the supervisor is just guessing why some area is lower than last year, as this is partly due to missing precise data.

By asking about the individual stress factors closely related to telecommuting, such as deficient work ergonomics and the blurring of free and work time, the study also provides completely new information on the risk areas for the well-being at work of the City of Tampere's personnel. The

study also provides new possible areas of research which may be a target of improvement. Even if all of the new more specific data is not yet usable for employee to make immediate developments to their immediate work environment or work culture, the data may come more useful over the years especially when there is made new data comparisons in the following years.

Some of the problems of telecommuting may be the challenges of the adaptation phase, which have arisen because of the change in working methods in the corona framework. This is another good reason to make questionnaires a bit more specific, as later on the factors like the initial Covid-19 shock can be excluded from the other aspects of the survey data. Without this, the risk is also that everything bad coming from the results will be easy to blame as the outright end result of Covid-19. It is easy to make a mistaken analysis with things which are unrelated to the main idea of the questionnaire or fail to pay any further attention to possible problems, such as the pandemic.

The transitional phase to the telecommuting hybrid model has acted as a kind of a watershed moment for the well-being of employees at work. In the city of Tampere, the broader employee experience hardly differs from the general consensus of telecommuters in a Western country. In other words: Those who do well are doing better, and those who are doing badly are doing much worse.

The indirect reflective effects of the corona must also be considered, i.e., the consequences of the lockdown of society on general well-being and work-life balance situation.

The broader structure of the survey allows production of new information on the accumulation of stressors related to the negative effects of telecommuting. However, the intention has been to avoid a query that is too long so that the return percentage for the query remains at the very least moderately good. The accumulation of telecommuting problems for the same group of people is a common phenomenon observed in the research of the field.

With regard to the hybrid model aimed as a sustained practice at the City of Tampere, it would be a possible target of further research to investigate how the hybrid model can avoid the most common pitfalls of the negative aspects of teleworking. For instance, the solution could be that in the future, the employer pays employees for proper computer screens at home as well, if every

office worker no longer has its own personal workstation in the office building of the future. There is a large project undertook by the City of Tampere to triple the amount of office workers stationed at the Central Administration building. The goal is to have 900 people fit into a building originally meant for 300 people. However, the project includes a new wing for the building, but there are not going to be personal workstations for everyone.

5.1.2   Statistics about the Survey

The survey was conducted between 9.9.2021–3.10.2021. The survey was sent to 211 people working at the Central Administration Office of Tampere. There were 136 returned surveys with the total turnout of 64%. 19 persons (14%) of those who replied were working in managerial positions.

117 of the 136 (86%) replied for free from section by writing their thoughts about telecommuting or opinions and feedback from the questionnaire.

Out of the respondents 34 (25%) were male and 98 (72%) were female. 4 (3%) people did not want to specify their gender.

Age groups of the respondents were 8 (6%) from ages 18 – 29, 20 (14%) from ages 30 – 39, 46 (34%) from ages 40 – 49, 46 (34%) from ages 50 – 59, 12 (9%) from ages 60 – 69, 4 (3%) declined to respond.

Central Administration was the most common unit of the responders. Only one person declined to tell his or her unit.

5.1.3   Results of the Study

The vast majority of people who answered the survey, over two-thirds of them worked remotely. Slightly less than one-tenth of the responders had began working at the Central Administration building after the pandemic began in Finland.

The satisfaction to the then current situation was almost universally high, which was quite surprising in the author's mind. The employees of the City of Tampere organization were asked, for instance, about how satisfied they were with telecommuting, how stressful they found out the telecommuting to be, and about their experience regarding work efficiency when telecommuting.

Satisfaction regarding the manner of adoption of telecommuting within the municipal organization was also extremely high, and almost unanimous. Only two people claimed that it went either somewhat or very badly. The vast majority of employees did also wish to keep the hybrid model after the pandemic had ended. Only four people disagreed with that and wanted to return primarily into local work done at the office.

Alarmingly, over one quarter of people replied that they lack a decent workspace at home. Similarly, a somewhat large part (12,5%) did find it more challenging to work remotely. Respondents also had a relatively common feeling that the work equipment at home is lacking. About one third of responders felt that way.

Regarding communication, it was almost universally felt that reaching one's own manager was easy when telecommuting. Communication with co-workers was also thought to be good, even though it was slightly more commonly disagreed upon. Most shockingly the feelings of communality were seen as having eroded with the hybrid model and extensive telecommuting. Over a half of the employees responded that the communality or community spirit had decreased. This was the most common negatively perceived effect of telecommuting.

Most of the employees felt that their recovery from work was good, and for the most, the telecommuting had also helped the situation. Separation of work and leisure time was still not a widespread problem. However, breaks are often missed while telecommuting.

5.1.4 Analysis of Themes brought up by Survey Responders

Employees who answered the survey brought up many different themes in their free-form answers. Many of the answers were on the themes of transitioning to telecommuting, leadership and flexibility, ergonomy and work equipment as well as overall work environment.

Transition to Telecommuting

Transition to telecommuting was mainly considered to have worked out excellently especially when considering the very short period from office work to working from home.

One respondent of the survey gave the thought that switching into a hybrid model can be tricky if the rules are not agreed upon. Teleworking has increased the number of meetings and therefore the respondent stated that he has not been able to give the best possible input to all meetings. Self-direction is, in his opinion, important in self-employment, which means that supervisors face more challenges compared to the time before the corona.

> "As a rule, teleworking has gone well. Moving to a hybrid model can be tricky if the rules are not agreed upon. Teleworking has increased the number of meetings and therefore I have not been able to give the best possible input to all meetings. I think self-direction is important in teleworking, which means that there are more challenges for supervisors compared to the time before the corona. How can you sense the feeling of a team?" (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

Leadership and its role are changing and being challenged. One respondent worried, how can manager sense the feeling of a team? The respondent thought that there should now be a systematic shift from full telework to hybrid work. Furthermore, there is no one way/solution to implement it, but the implementation should be done by prioritizing needs of the employee/work tasks. Prioritizing employee would benefit better results for work wellbeing, but challenge is that every single worker is self-directed in their work.

Leaderships was a closely related topic to the functioning of the transition itself, as it was mentioned in the same context.

Leadership and Flexibility

From managing part of view the main thing that seems come up from subordinates is need for transparency for the work assignments. Both managers and subordinates would prefer more flexibility and freedom for deciding whether to work remotely or at the office. In specialist work telecommuting seems to have increased efficiency.

"The possible return to office work feels even distressing because work and home life are now so well balanced, and I am very happy. I also don't see that working in an office would bring me any added value to the current situation. I hope that in the future, staff will have the freedom to choose where they do their work. Joint events with co-workers, for example monthly morning coffee together, would be nice, but they should be with voluntary participation." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

"Especially in teleworking, the transparency of work tasks is really important. It is not possible in the City of Tampere [organization] to find out what kind of tasks other employees do. Discussions take place in team meetings, but information from other units is also needed. The challenge could be solved with the current work guidance. " (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

"The corona has shown the advantages of teleworking and the fact that, at least in specialist work, it improves productivity. In the hybrid model, units / supervisors must be given sufficient flexibility to always choose how much remote work can be done according to the job and the employee." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

Almost every single one who answered the questionnaire is experiencing that team spirit and sense of togetherness has dropped at least somewhat. Many wrote to the free answers part that they are missing, and longing for, a great deal of random contacts in the office corridors and staff restaurants. This most likely would also be missed in the future hybrid model. Chatting in Teams is precise and intentional which is great for the work efficiency, but it may cause problems in the long run as people drift apart.

Customer service side and Support services could not change completely to telecommuting because even when the office building was closed completely, there was need for postal service and phone operating for concerned citizens. Higher management had to physically meet every day in the worst part of pandemic until there was certainty that it was safe and possible for all to attend remotely.

Ergonomy and Work Equipment

Basic needs, like a laptop and headphones for everyone, are met now almost universally, but in the new normal which is going to be hybrid work -based, where there is no physical office for

everyone, there is a need for better support for home, so every worker has same rights for sufficient working environment. Internet is not given, so should employer support good internet access to everyone because when we are in office everyone has equal internet access, why should not there be same when telecommuting.

> "I live in the countryside and consumer-priced data network connections are challenging. The city could financially support the establishment of the connection needed for work – by ordering / contributing to the cost of a wired connection / fibre, by procuring a better mobile router (mesh network equipment), etc."
> (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

Employer could financially support by giving certain amount to be spend office hardware store, money would not be given to workers but there would be equal amount line of credit. Costs of this could repay themselves when people have better working equipment, and then there could be fewer sick leaves or less motivation problems for example due to bad ergonomics. However, according to Manager of Work Well-being at City of Tampere Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021), the overall levels of absenteeism have drastically dropped. However, this is mainly due to the lack of seasonal influenza, as corona lockdowns have simultaneously made their spreading more difficult. Meanwhile, absenteeism due to burnout and other long-term reasons have seen some increase. One respondent hoped for the employer's financial support in providing sufficient work equipment. This might, however, not be always a solution. One respondent mentioned that despite being allowed to bring office equipment to home, he or she was unable to use it all due to lack of space and had to work with bad ergonomics.

Bad indoor air and noise at the open-plan office were mentioned as stressors in the survey answers. Quality of food was brought up by respondents. When at the office, it is easier to get better food.

> "I've always suffered from working in an open office and I hope I don't have to go back there, at least with this amount of work. If my workload is greatly reduced, [telecommuting] would probably work in those conditions as well." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

> "The city could now have take-away offers negotiated with restaurants at telecommuting times to provide better options for lunch, so that lunches would have options for the own fridge leftovers or to replace perpetual salads." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

Work Environment

Interaction was mentioned many times in the answers. Writing a Teams message or an email is seen very formal and joking or sharing everyday things like talking about weather, seems to leave most of the Central City Office workers feeling that they are somehow out of the information loop or not in touch how the colleagues are doing. From the multiple-choice questionnaire "which cause most challenge when telecommuting" the most common answers was either small children or many children. This is partly due to pandemic when there was a time when schools were closed, and even now when the child is having a small flu symptom their child needs to stay home and likely to be taken for testing.

There were also some feedbacks concerning new employees' integration to the work team. Orientation can be done remotely but again the sense of togetherness and belonging to a workgroup is challenge. Managers have quite a task to solve this problem and after pandemic there are many team meetings to be held physically, and previously distant people may have a kind of get to know each other "parties". So far, a lot of observations been on somewhat negative or challenging side, but the positive perspective is given almost as much as those which are negative.

> "I started working at the beginning of 2021. The first two weeks were at the office. Rest of the time was telecommuted, including orientation. The orientation took place mainly through the Teams, even when at the office. I think it works. And because I have several kids and a busy everyday life, the telecommuting also gives me every day an hour more time, when I don't have to spend it on commuting." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

> "I am a new doer in a team with a lot of new doer. Working at office would be helpful in learning things together, but we have coped relatively well. There must be meetings and communication through Teams." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

When individuals or work team has had a negative work atmosphere in the office the telecommuting might have been a rescue for this. One respondent felt that he or she was able to avoid the negative work environment when telecommuting, and that improved greatly work wellbeing.

> "Since before the pandemic period, the city had almost no [measures to improve well-being at work], on the part of the employer, to develop the community spirit, so teleworking has not changed anything about that part." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

> "Work well-being has improved in many ways in telecommuting when the unfortunate poor work atmosphere at the [Central Administration Building] has been left out." (Translation of an anonymous survey answer, 2021)

Most of the respondents were hoping that there is not going to be returning for office work completely but there were also few harsh comments which said, "I have strongly considered changing to another job, if in the future the work at the office is mostly done in hybrid model, as I feel it as too burdensome." and "hopefully we return to the office work" (Translations of anonymous survey answers, 2021). It was also in hypothesis that telecommuting is not for everyone. Even with the best tools and support for home office there is always going to be persons that prefer "office life" or just wants to get out from home and have distinction between home and work life. They may also enjoy the social aspects of office life, as many responses touched on the social aspects of the work.

Long-term telecommuting might also cause a certain type of apathy, and it may decrease efficiency, as claimed by one responder.

5.2 Analysis of the Interview of Manager of Work Well-being Sami Uusitalo

The tools used to measure well-being at work are not outdated or anyhow obsolete as such, but of course they can be modified. The reason for not modifying them is far larger at the moment than the reasons to modify. Every time the Kunta10 is modified it reduces the viability of comparison with the older results. New tools would be welcome and could very well measure effectively special situations like telecommuting. This would be better than completely modifying the existing tools or adding new tools for the existing ones. It should be carefully considered that the questionnaires are not too long. Current Kunta-10 and QWL-index take 20–30 minutes of time to answer. If there are more tools, and hence more questions, how to keep interest of the participants and do the personnel have time for 40–60-minute survey? (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

Kunta10 survey's strength is that it was first developed in 1970 and the questions have been validated to be accurate and a strong way to measure overall work well-being in many different work environments, so the idea of Kunta10 could be said to be that it is not too old or too modern, and the comparison between current and earlier results can be done even in ever changing situation. Kunta10 test and results have straight results related to health and relieving of stress. New tools would be needed to measure work well-being in telecommuting times, and more specifically to identify what is a cause of work or personal life and what is mainly from Covid-19 pandemic's reflective effects. The current methods are not outdated, rather they just need new tools included to measure contemporary specific challenges. QWL-index measures mental and physiological safety experience with 15 different questions, and there are no results from pandemic's time yet, but they are going to be very interesting results to get, and QWL-index would be the correct tool for measuring these within the City of Tampere organization. It is important to emphasize that only thing that can't be specified from the Kunta10's 15 questions is that which are the results of pandemic and which are results of telecommuting, or which are for example result of bad leadership from superiors. In summary data is still being gathered on which way the well-being curve is going, and an ultimate final conclusion is not possible to make yet with an absolute certainty. However, the trend seems to be clear. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

In the beginning of Covid-19 pandemic the municipal organization was in crisis and knowing anything certain was not possible. The whole city was dependable of ever-changing information and orders of the Finnish Government and its Regional State Administrative Agency for Western and Inland Finland. Plans were close to impossible to make, and the City of Tampere as an employer was following instructions and orders from the government. The seriousness of the beginning during this crisis was so bad that orders to stay home and telecommute had to be given even if people did not have necessary tools to work from home adequately. According to Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021), close comparison can be found from the 2015 refugee crisis. Back then the municipality did not have any place to accommodate the hundreds of people who just arrived each day. The municipality had to just react at the last moments, and make decisions fast about who goes where and where they get food etc. Later on, the municipality could be satisfied what was done, but currently the municipal organization would be more prepared if a similar situation occurred. The city organization managed to change to telecommuting in two days, even if such drastic change seemed impossible at first. The change was managed well, considering the fact that most of the workers had never even tried telecommuting. One more thing which is

important to note is that the city has had a strong recommendation for telecommuting for a long period of time. The city as an employer has right to order everyone to stay home and work remotely, but the message had been decided from the very beginning that city as an employer does not take actions that might been seen negatively and coercive. It was decided that softer methods would be used. The Central City Office was the only exception in the very beginning when the whole building was closed, but after the shocking start of the pandemic, the "order" was changed to a strong recommendation. However, in practice that was close to mandatory. Even when the Central City Office was in full lockdown there were still a few key players who had to come to office every day. This action Uusitalo brings out in the very beginning of the interview and tells that this is highly unorthodox action from employer who has every right and even responsibility to order firmly how the job is done, even when there is no crisis going on. Uusitalo considers that this was proven to be effective and more positive way to communicate to subordinates and let every manager to plan their own pandemic work strategy. Practically this means that the responsibilities were given to the lower levels of the organization rather than using hierarchical orders. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

Uusitalo mentions that his own work priorities had also drastically changed in his position as Manager of Work Well-being, when asked. First of all, the number of mandatory meetings has risen dramatically, and the workload overall was difficult to manage in the beginning of the crisis. Telecommuting was a challenge for him also in the beginning, as he had worked only from the office. In the long run he managed to make telecommuting work. Nowadays the schools and workplaces have learned to be more flexible with schedules. The pandemic and the following telecommuting put lot of pressure to HR-Department. A lot questions came both from the highest directors and ground level workers, and at least in the very beginning decisions had to be made instantly without previous experience from the past and without support from colleagues around you at the office, because almost everyone was working from home. Microsoft Teams had not yet been so familiar as Tampere just changed out of using Skype, and using Teams was just being learned. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

For Tampere city this crisis showed the importance and meaning of HR-department. From the get-go in every step the HR was consulted and was kept in touch with every decision and given great responsibilities in planning and executing telecommuting strategy, follow-ups on how personnel are managing in the difficult situation, and with communications-department managing the

information both inside for personnel and outside for the habitants of Tampere city. It is important to note that there were a lot of concerned citizens who wanted answers from the City of Tampere, and traffic in the Tampere.fi website was all time record high. Every information that was ensured or decision that were concluded needed to be published online immediately. Daily meetings, and ever-changing information and decisions made on constantly evolving data made 24/7 working hours mandatory for HR and communications departments. Amount of disinformation was surprisingly high and rectifying it, and trying to solace the citizens of Tampere, was a massive task. Corona information leaflets were taken to practise to also reach citizens who did not follow television or did not use internet or were getting disinformation from internet. It is not a small task when you consider that there is a quarter of a million people living in Tampere. Different languages, and also people who are hearing or seeing impaired, had to get the information too. Every elderly people were to be called by a phone and asked of their situation and given information, and that is a lot of phone calls when considering that 19 percentage of that quarter million people living in Tampere is over 65 years of age and 8 percentage is over 75 years of age. The conflict between different sections of the Finnish government and healthcare institutions in the beginning of the crisis was also confusing for the organization. There were many situations where it was not clear who has the final say and what decisions the City of Tampere municipality can make for themselves. One very good example is when the Regional State Administrative Agency for Western and Inland Finland decided to close all libraries. Libraries are a key facility especially for students. This was not municipality's idea and actually the City of Tampere wanted to keep libraries open with same instructions that under which grocery stores were allowed to operate under. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

Work well-being felt big changes that were clearly results from telecommuting as well as from precautions and fear of the pandemic. About 50% of all the Tampere city workers healthcare doctors' and nurses' visits are currently done remotely. This is something that would have never happened at this rate without the current crisis. Short sick leaves of employees have been reduced dramatically. Longer sick leaves have been also reduced somewhat, but the reasons for longer periods of absenteeism are nowadays mainly from burnouts and other work stress related absences. This has been seen especially with the workers at the corona front who have done their work without breaks and without free days. They have had to take care of extremely important and stressful job for a very long time. Uusitalo points out that often overlooked heroes of the pandemic are in Tampere city's education section. Teachers have not gotten the credit they have

deserved during pandemic. Teachers worked through the ongoing pandemic and have had to change between teaching remotely and in class with masks on long days. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

The City of Tampere organization does not have had yet specific data to help segment the difference between telecommuting and pandemic effects on well-being. The organization has gotten some data from occupational health quarterly reports, but if someone suffers from burnout, there are no certain indicators if it is because of pandemic's effects or other work or personal life related stress. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

Same tools and questionnaires are still valid but new ones to measure pandemic time challenges would be welcome. The thing is that questionnaires need to simple and fast enough to answer that people are willing to participate. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

There is a significant degree of segregation between so called blue-collar and white-collar workers. White-collar workers are doing great and even better now than before Covid-19 crisis, but the blue-collar workers are doing worse now than before pandemic. The reason for this is not yet well documented, but Uusitalo argues that it might be that those who can manage their own calendar when to telecommute and when to be in the office feel freer and less stressed. Also, there is the lack of subordinates who demand attention in the office. Of course, they still need attention through email and Microsoft Teams, but that is completely different from someone standing in front of you and asking difficult questions. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

According to Uusitalo, the most important, and still valid tools are the Kunta10 survey and QWL-index, so they would most definitely need to be kept in use by the organization. Uusitalo would strongly suggest educating managers and everyone who has subordinates to encourage and create time, first of all, to fill the work well-being questionnaires, and secondly but equally importantly the managers need to learn how to read the results and adjust everything accordingly. These tools provide valuable data and indicators for the organization. The more data the organization has, the more as the employer the City of Tampere can develop. Both the organization and the employees would benefit from additional data if it is used properly. A satisfied worker is a more productive worker, and the work environment benefits among happier colleagues. (Uusitalo, interview 9 September 2021)

5.3 The Prospect of Current Work Well-being in the Organization

As discussed above, Niemensivu's (2021) qualitative study, which included in-depth interviews of anonymous City of Tampere's managers and employees working at specialist tasks, concluded that the hybrid model was followed with an increase of prevalence of shared leadership in the organization. Meanwhile the hierarchical leadership saw a decrease. It can be argued that as a result of the long duration of the pandemic situation, the City of Tampere organization has built up new kinds of working methods as well as adapted to a significant degree, at least in leadership models, to the challenging situation. However, the role of and functioning of telecommuting managers inside the city's organization would be an interesting topic for a further study.

Furthermore, Manager of Work well-being Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021) pointed out in his interview that, the role of the manager in the organization needs to be taken seriously. Managers should not take their own positions indifferently and carefreely. It could be said that the vigour of managers taking care of their own subordinates does matter for the work-wellbeing. If the top level works well, then employees are happy, and consequently the customers (or in the case of the municipality, citizens) will be happy as the endpoint. This theme was touched upon in the interview of Uusitalo in detail. The author argues that shared leadership does not equal absent leaders, or rather, managers.

Among the common employees it can be noticed that the work environment has changed a lot, so the role of the leadership is but a one facet of the overall picture. It can be argued that the situation is extremely complex. Role of the manager is still, naturally, a prominent one, but more responsibilities have shifted to the common employee. This is relevant on the both sides of the work-life balance. The employees need to more autonomous at work, and still be able to separate home and work when telecommuting. Adoption of telecommuting has at large parts been on the responsibility of the individual employee. The author argues that the overall amount of responsibility expected from employees has risen considerably. The study results show a considerable change has occurred.

Working days from home are felt more effective than commuting to the office and working there. Only 11 out of 136 experienced that effectiveness has suffered a little bit, and 2 out of 136 replied that effectiveness has suffered a lot. 3 replied that they cannot say, and again the vast majority

replied that effectiveness has risen at least somewhat (68) or very much (29). 23 out of 136 did not see change one way or another.

3 out of 136 experienced telecommuting to be much more burdensome and 20 out of 136 somewhat more burdensome. Most who replied experienced no change 42/136 and somewhat less burdensome was 39/136. 27 felt that work is now much less burdensome than in earlier office work and 5/136 did not want to specify. So, from these results author's own hypothesis is proven to be non-accurate. However, the results may be different if the City Central Office's employees' ages would represent the younger generations with less children. Very few employees stated that they have small children (23), many children (17) or were a single parent (5). The overrepresentation of older people may not show exactly how well telecommuters feel about their work environment in a more balanced sampling of employees, if children at home are a significant stressor for the work-life balance.

After these previous survey answers, it is not a surprise that a huge majority are wishing that even after the pandemic the telecommuting (74) and/or hybrid model (57) is to be continued. Only four out of 136 replied that they wish to return office work after the pandemic. One did not commit either way. These are extremely low numbers considering the large amount of received answers in the study.

Communication was experienced to work well during telecommuting, and overall, 95 out of 136 answers were on the positive side. 25 employees felt neutral about communicating with their fellow workers, and only 14 people felt that communication works somewhat badly when working remotely. Furthermore, a single person felt that communicating remotely works extremely badly. One did not specify his opinion.

Reaching one's supervisor was experienced even more positively in the context of telecommuting, with only seven people experienced that during telecommuting it is more difficult to reach one's manager, and 19 did not see a change in one way or another when compared to the office work. In author's mind this seems very surprising. However, a combined total of 110 out of 136 people experienced that reaching one's supervisor is easy or even very easy during telecommuting. However, it may be a problem that the manager does not meet his subordinates personally, as

understanding the feelings of people is more difficult remotely than when talking face-to-face. One free answer pondered about this potential problem. The author thinks that the situation might be also problematic considering how people get into the group and feel togetherness with their potential friends at the workplace. Some free answers also were worried about this, as new people periodically join the work community.

One question gathered disproportionally negative answers, considering that most questions about telecommuting showed more support than negative experiences. 90 people felt that the feelings of communality had suffered either somewhat or greatly. 35 people were neutral about the situation and 5 were unsure. Only a total of 6 people felt that the communality would have benefited from telecommuting. The author thinks that this may be also due to the corona pandemic, but there seems to be some inability to incorporate the work teams as a community. Perhaps this is due to the work culture not having yet gotten used to the differences caused by telecommuting. This can probably be mitigated by good leadership.

As more survey data from Kunta10 surveys will accumulate, the reliability of that data will also increase, as more and more data is available about the new hybrid model. After a few years, it can positively identify the impact of a mixed office work and telecommuting to the overall organization level work wellbeing. The inclusion of more independent decision making in the organization has given more responsibility to individual employees. Not only the informal shared leadership, but the wide authorization for each employee to choose when to telecommute, have drastically changed the whole organization. As a result, it is difficult to say with certainty what results such transformation has given for the organization. The overall results can probably be more conclusively estimated in a few years' time. The Kunta10 surveys also give excellent indicators for comparison of work wellbeing with other participating cities and municipalities at a national level.

The first data about impacts of coronavirus pandemic on municipal work wellbeing at Finland have already been published. It has been deduced from these early results that each profession of each employee has been differently impacted from the pandemic. Employees working at medical sector were more likely to be greatly stressed. The impacts of the pandemic are clearly shown here in Kunta10 studies. As the people surveyed at this study are not 'in the frontlines' of the pandemic,

the results should stay reliable when examining the impact of the hybrid model. (The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2021)

The problem with the Employee Experience Survey and Kunta10 survey are that the focus of their questions ignores the new aspect of work-life balance which has increased dramatically in effect on work wellbeing. The situation at home can drastically impact work wellbeing. The surveys should include more questions, which should take into the consideration that work-life balance is also about the 'life', as the home situation correlates more strongly with work conditions.

The QWL Index is supposed to show overall performance and productivity of the personnel, but it can be argued that as the telecommuting personnel faces different kinds of stressors from the environment than office-based personnel, there should be expected a certain degree of inaccuracy with the results and actual situation.

The QWL Index data which have been gathered so far by the City of Tampere organization through the Employee Experience Surveys, shows an indication that the work satisfaction has been on the rise. For instance, between Q3 of 2020 and Q3 of 2021 the satisfaction value of the whole organization rose from 57,38% to 59,56%. Meanwhile the values of Central Administration section rose from 67,95% to 70,88%. As the survey conducted by the author has been answered by mostly employees of the Central Administration, it can be argued that the results also are reliable on the overall situation of the whole municipal organization. The QWL Index values and the author's survey results seem to agree on improvement of both work-life balance and work well-being. The author's survey shows that many employees feel that their efficiency at work has increased, and many of them also feel that they recover better from the work week. These and other changes caused by remote work do seem to improve satisfaction inside the organization. Manager of Work well-being Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021) stressed on his interview that it is interesting to see in the future what parts of changes on work satisfaction have been impacted by corona and which parts of the impact have come from transitioning to telecommuting. The author thinks that the problem areas of work well-being have shifted to different kinds of difficulties. The Social Services and Health Care sections of the organization have disproportionately been impacted by the pandemic situation, so the work well-being can be considered to be still in the state of flux. (Työntekijäkokemusraportti, 2021)

6   Conclusions

Telecommuting, and communicating through Microsoft Teams, with a laptop computer might be seen to be a younger generation's field, but what is noticeable from the questionnaire answers is that out of the respondents only 8 out from 136 are in age group 18–29 and 20 are in age group 30–39. The vast majority 96 of 136 is in age group 40 to 49 (46) and 50 to 59 (46). From the author's point of view this shows that telecommuting and virtual meetings are not just millennials area and so "and an old dog can learn new tricks".

Because of these older age groups which are mostly represented at the Tampere City Central Office, the supposition in the author's own mind was that there would be more hatred for the new normal of working from home. People who have worked at the office for decades do not seem to mind and resist the new normal of daily remote work in any stubbornness.

Overall, the ease of communication seems to have increased, and people get right to business when approaching through Teams or Zoom. However, the remote working and chatting has the bad side effect of making communication more formal. This has been complained about by the employees of the City Central Office. From the free feedback answers it can be noticed that even when people want to telecommute, many people still miss the so-called corridor talk and unplanned meetings which again lead to small talk. The author's research also revealed that many people feel that remote working has made people more impatient.

Power distance, individualism and independence as values are low in Finland, in Hofstede's theory about workplace dynamics, so the Finnish people may prefer independent leadership, as has been adopted in the City of Tampere, according to Niemensivu's research. The scale of power distance is low in Finland, and this may indicate more trust on individual employee, and his or her work may not be as hierarchically led rather than being allowed independent decision making. (Hofstede et al., 2010; Hofstede Insights, 2021)

Regarding the change of attitudes towards telecommuting, this is in the author's mind relevant, as the new methods may have been more quickly adopted due to the Finnish workplace culture. The survey answers also show that many would like to keep permanently working remotely at least a

part of the time. In the study results it is shown that overwhelming majority is satisfied with telecommuting, even in a specific environment where the remote work is more common than in the most Finnish organizations. Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021) made a note in his interview that the Central City Office had a greatly over-represented proportion of employees working remotely compared to the overall numbers at the City of Tampere Organization as a whole. This is in the author's mind a proof that the Finnish work culture is highly capable of adopting almost universal telecommuting as a mode of operation within the typical office work.

As stated above, the Finnish work culture relies on independence, and less hierarchy and individualism. This may also explain why the telecommuting employees of the City of Tampere, are more efficient, both in their own opinion as proven by the answers to the study, and as claimed by Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021) in his interview. The Finnish work culture values useful for independent and hybrid, or telecommuting, mode of operation, in the author's opinion. 110 out of 136 respondents of the survey stated that they can easily reach their manager, so even this may show low power distance values in the Finnish work culture. (Hofstede Insights, 2021)

The workflow is largely guided by working and managing things through Teams and other Office software. Challenges to telecommuting and coping in are brought about the lack of social contacts (coffee table and corridor discussions). Disruption of work-life balance makes it difficult to recover after each workday. Some people suffer from inadequate working environment due to bad ergonomics and there is also the worry of having small children staying at home during lockdown. The potential trouble with telecommuting can be multifaceted and complex, if various problems accumulate. These problems create challenges for well-being at work. Telecommuting is a burden on employees, but positive aspects and opportunities were also seen. However, in response to the problems, the interviewees found a large number of development suggestions that can support the requirements of teleworking.

In conclusion, telecommuting does not always completely meet the needs of all employees. For example, the family sheet of a child and the working day are mixed up by some employees. Employees have experienced being left alone while working remotely. Major challenges in the middle ground between telecommuting and everyday demands can put pressure on employees to cope. Determined managerial work is needed. The goal of the city of Tampere is to introduce a

hybrid model working method during the renovation of the Central Administration Office. This will affect almost thousand city of Tampere employees. Telecommuting has come to stay in the daily work methods of the city of Tampere.

In the case of Tampere city, the telecommuting is planned to be used permanently as a prominent method of the daily workflow. The coming office building is designed in such way that there will not be workstations for everyone and even the workstations that are going to be made are not personal but free for all personnel to use. As the results show, the personnel are finding Ergonomics and own quiet space challenging. The city of Tampere as an employer could focus on offering at very least the excess office tables and chairs to personnel to take home.

However, it is important to note that the change at the developing countries was very quick compared to the less developed parts of the world. There are other non-cultural factors involved with the rapid pace of the adoption of telecommuting in the Finnish cultural sphere. However, almost a quarter (33 out of 136 respondents) of survey answers claimed a lack of proper workspace at home, and 50 of 136 also stated that they have worse work equipment at home than at their workspace at the Central City Office. The author points out that even in a developed country like Finland, not everyone was quickly able to get a proper environment for working at home. (Okubo, 2020) Internet access is another huge issue. Can the employer expect that everyone has, in Finnish perspective, an adequate internet access at home? Internet connections at work is mandatory tool and free for every worker to use, but when working from home can the employer demand that the employee has its own and that the cost should go to the employee's pocket?

Benefits for the employees were as expected coming mostly from commuting time saving, and it would have been logical if it were the most prominent aspect regarding increasing work satisfaction. However, other aspects of the telecommuting workflow also seemed to have increased efficiency. The role of the shared leadership, for instance, did impact efficiency of the employees. The telecommuting has increased equality in commuting, but it has also caused a new kind of inequality between employees. The work equipment such as internet connection and proper ergonomic office furniture or workspace can be a factor for inequality.

The author argues that the Hofstede's scales recorded at Finland, may indicate a more favourable work environment to adoption of telecommuting. The overall trust of employees working hard

independently while telecommuting seems high, by both these scores and by other results of the study. The interview of Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021) and the survey conducted on the employees of the Central City Office also support this deduction. The employees background in the Finnish workplace culture may highly impact the overall subjective experience regarding the changes at the workplace, as well as the fluidity of the adoption of change. (Hofstede Insights, 2021)

Teleworking increases people's work efficiency, but also increases the risk of burnout despite increasing overall efficiency of employees. The hecticity, and impatience, of the work life are increased during teleworking. Perhaps these are side effect of adaptation into a new way of work life. The lack of managerial contact raises multiple risks. From the employer's point of view, increased work efficiency is good, but should work-life balance take precedence? An exhausted worker may cause greater side effects than apparent inefficiency. Adapting - and supporting adaptation - to respecting the boundaries of teleworking and leisure can be a real edge for the leadership during the new normal, and for the hybrid model being adopted in the city of Tampere organization. Autonomy, as well as "shared leadership", are important cornerstones of working life, but real leadership can create both the appropriate boundaries and the ability for a teleworker to develop themselves within the framework of doing one's own job in a new kind of an environment.

From the authors point of view, when exploring the results, the positive sides of telecommuting far exceed the negative ones and potential risks. However, all the negative effects may not yet have revealed themselves for scrutiny. We know already that short sick leaves are almost non-existent currently, but that is not necessary all positive a thing. People are expected to still have so called normal flus and etc. but are employees now more reluctant to call themselves for sick leave? As an afterthought this could have been one of the questions in Teams forms questionnaire. This may be a future prospect for study within the city of Tampere organization. However, the author thinks that the increase in burnouts, despite the overall decrease in absenteeism, is an alarming development.

The wide participation for the questionnaire surprised the author. It seems that this kind of studies are needed. Many who answered for the free feedback section wrote thoughts such as "Nice that these thing are asked about.", "I hope the results are published and the employer acts accordingly of the results.", "Good that this is being studied." etc. (Translations of anonymous survey answers, 2021) There seemed to be a lot of genuine interest and support for the topic.

The study showed its relevance and hopefully further studies will follow, whether they are third-party or by the city of Tampere organization itself. For the city of Tampere as an employer, it is going to be very interesting time because of the new hybrid model's planned adoption as a permanent framework for work. For an absolute certainty there is no going back to what once was the perceived normal. The Central City Office building is going to be undergo a major renovation, and its old wing is about to be demolished, and in the new renovated building there is no personal workspace for all employees. Only approximately 60% of the employees are able to fit in the new Central City Office simultaneously. There is positive side for everything, even for a pandemic. The Tampere city has had an excellent opportunity to try telecommuting before the renovation and employees have had longer time to adapt. Now there is excellent data and experience on how different units can do one's work duties while working mostly remotely. Now that the pandemic is coming to an end, there is no immediate need to return for the offices for a short while, and the city has already encouraged implicitly the hybrid model and proposed cautiously that employers should not rush back to office building all at once. In the latest briefing on 1 October 2021, it was stated that the new hybrid model is going to be piloted on a section of the building. (Tasku, 2021) It is better to start practising new normal now and find the potential flaws now when there is still possibility to go to office, if there is something that prohibits telecommuting. In the authors opinion, there is never going to be a workplace or a working model that pleases 100% of the employees. Still this coming hybrid model is going to be most suitable for current time for many reasons. First of all, most employees seem to enjoy more to telecommute rather than commuting to office every working day.

The author would like to point out that telecommuting is also a new greener way of working, as needless commuting decreases traffic, and this is most likely good for the climate and sustainable development of the city of Tampere. This may be a small step, but the City of Tampere has committed in its Sustainable Tampere 2030 -program to achieve carbon neutrality in the following years. (Tampere.fi, 2021)

Employee Experience Survey is a quarterly study conducted by the City of Tampere organization, and this QWL Index based survey is answered merely by 30% of employees who have been queried. In comparison the Kunta10 survey is answered by 68-71% of the queried employees. The Kunta10 survey gets a good number of answers, so it is more reliable. More people need to be convinced to answer the Employee Experience Survey at the City of Tampere organization, as it is a good model for studying the development trends of work-wellbeing. This development idea was proposed by

Manager of Work well-being Sami Uusitalo (interview 9 September 2021). The interview of Uusitalo revealed, that the City of Tampere organization and its HR-department are extremely aware of the current situation and the challenges for studying work well-being in the currently dominant framework of telecommuting and hybrid work. There were many development ideas for both studying and improving both work-life balance and work well-being. It can be concluded that the future of the organization regarding the wellbeing of employees seems to be in professionally handled and kept at the forefront of the coming hybrid model. While some models of employee wellbeing might be somewhat flawed, and there is room for improvement, the organization will likely be able to eventually adapt to the changing needs of working life.

The author is satisfied with the study regarding the set research questions. The gathered data gave satisfactory answers for the research questions when analysed. All of them were able to be answered with the analysed data. The author is surprised that the answers in the survey were close to unanimous among the respondents. The Central City Office employees seem to have a common (or communal) opinion regarding the current hybrid model used during the Covid-19 pandemic. This made the survey data easy to analyse. This also seems to indicate that the employees can benefit from telecommuting with equal opportunities. The research questions were able to be diversely inspected with a large variety of data. The data seemed to be reliable, and each data set supported each other, so the answers for the questions were easy to conclude. The primary research question can be answered in a nutshell that good kind of changes happened, when the City of Tampere organization adopted wider telecommuting.

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8   Appendix 1 – Interview questions

Interview questions of the City of Tampere's Manager of Work Well-being Uusitalo Sami as translated to English language. The theme interview was done at 09.09.2021 10:30 –13:30 Central City Office 6th floor cabinet Orvokki. The interview was recorded.

1. Are the tools used by the city to measure well-being at work obsolete due to teleworking and the pandemic? For example, the Kunta10 survey? What about the QWL index?
2. How were the effects on well-being at work considered when moving to hybrid work and / or a strong telework recommendation? How was the matter of work well being paid attention in advance?
3. How have your own tasks changed in the current hybrid model? Both in practice and in terms of work, and well-being at work priorities.
4. What else essential comes to mind? Word is free (when you have paid for windows).
5. What kind of changes in well-being at work have been observed in the hybrid model?
6. What do you think is the role of telecommuting in changes in well-being at work and what part of the corona pandemic? Can their effects be distinguished and measured by any indicator? How well do the city's current surveys fit into the current situation?
7. Has there been any significant segregation in well-being at work among Tampere city personnel? Are personnel doing badly in some sectors of a particular segment? Is the impact more from personal circumstances (children at home) or from a profession (for example, the social sector)?
8. Have there been any changes in well-being at work as staff have adapted to teleworking with the hybrid model and the longevity of the corona? Among other things, thanks to new ways of working that have been developed in the face of compulsion.
9. For example, do you have any specific studies in mind that have had interesting results and that you would like to mention in particular?
10. How about now? Suggestions for development? What would you change if you were omnipotent?
11. Original questions below, questionnaire was conducted in Finnish.

The original questions in Finnish language:

12. Ovatko kaupungin työhyvinvoinnin mittaamisen käyttämät työkalut vanhentuneet etätyön ja pandemian myötä. Esimerkiksi Kunta10-kysely? Entä QWL-indeksi?
13. Miten hybridityöskentelyyn ja/tai vahvaan etätyösuositukseen siirryttäessä huomioitiin vaikutukset työhyvinvointiin? Miten asiaan kiinnitettiin etukäteen huomiota?
14. Miten omat työtehtäväsi ovat muuttuneet nykyisessä hybridimallissa? Sekä käytännössä että työn, ja työhyvinvoinnin, painopisteiden osalta.
15. Mitä muuta olennaista tulee mieleesi? Sana on vapaa.
16. Minkälaisia muutoksia työhyvinvoinnissa on havaittu hybridimallissa?
17. Mikä osa on sinun mielestäsi työhyvinvoinnin muutoksissa etätyöstä ja mikä osa koronapandemiasta? Voiko niiden vaikutukset erottaa toisistaan ja mitata jollakin indikaattorilla? Miten hyvin kaupungin nykyiset kyselyt soveltuvat nykyiseen tilanteeseen?
18. Onko henkilöstön keskuudessa työhyvinvoinnissa havaittu merkittävää eriytymistä? Meneekö jollain tietyllä segmentillä henkilöstöstä erityisen huonosti? Onko vaikutus

enemmän henkilökohtaisista oloista (lapset kotona) vai esimerkiksi ammattialasta (sote-ala)?

19. Onko työhyvinvoinnissa tapahtunut muutoksia henkilöstön sopeutuessa etätyöhön hybridimallin ja koronan pitkäkestoisuuden myötä? Muun muassa uusien, pakonkin edessä, kehitettyjen työtapojen ansiosta.

20. Onko mielessäsi esimerkiksi jotain tiettyjä tutkimuksia, jotka ovat olleet tuloksiltaan mielenkiintoisia, ja jotka haluaisit erityisesti mainita?

21. Miten tästä eteenpäin? Kehitysehdotuksia? Mitä muuttaisit, jos olisit kaikkivaltias?

9 Appendix 2 – Results of the Study

Have you worked remotely during the corona pandemic?

- I have mainly worked remotely (102)

- I have worked more remotely than in the office (18)

- I have worked about as much remotely and in the office (10)

- I have worked more in the office that remotely (4)

- I have mainly worked in the office (2)

- I have not worked remotely (0)

Do you have subordinates?

- Yes (19)

- No (117)

Have you started to work for Tampere city before the Covid-19 Pandemic?

- Yes, I have (119)

- No, I have started after Spring 2020 (12)

How satisfied are you with telecommuting right now?

- Very satisfied (57)

- Somewhat satisfied (66)

- Neither satisfied nor not satisfied (3)

- Somewhat unsatisfied (5)

- Very unsatisfied (3)

- Cannot specify (2)

How stressful do you find telecommuting compared to working in office?

- Significantly more stressful (3)

- Somewhat more stressful (20)

- Neither more nor less stressful (42)

- Somewhat less stressful (39)

- Significantly less stressful (27)

- Cannot specify (5)

Do you feel that the efficiency of your work has increased or decreased while working remotely?

- Increased very much (29)

- Somewhat increased (68)

- Neither increased nor decreased (23)

- Somewhat decreased (11)

- Decreased very much (2)

- Cannot specify (3)

How satisfied are you with how telecommuting was introduced in the City of Tampere when the corona pandemic started in Finland in Spring 2020?

- The transition to telecommuting went very well (64)

- The transition to telecommuting went somewhat well (51)

- The transition to telecommuting did not go well nor badly (2)

- The transition to telecommuting went somewhat badly (1)

- The transition to telecommuting went very badly (1)

- Cannot specify (17)

Do you wish that the telecommuting, and the hybrid model would continue after the end of the corona situation?

- I hope that telecommuting will continue to its current extent (74)

- I hope that telecommuting will continue a smaller scale (57)

- I hope that the city of Tampere will return primarily to in local work (4)

- Cannot specify (1)

Do you find it easier or harder to work remotely from home?

- Very difficult or impossible (1)

- More difficult (16)

- No change (29)

- Easier (34)

- Much easier (55)

- Cannot specify (1)

Do you have your own decent workspace at home for telecommuting? (No kitchen dining table / living room sofa corner.)

- Yes (100)

- No (33)

- Cannot specify (3)

Do you feel that you have good enough tools in your home to work remotely?

- Better than at the office (12)

- As good as at the office (73)

- Worse than at the office (47)

- Insufficient tools for telecommuting (3)

- Cannot specify (1)

How easy it is to reach a supervisor while telecommuting?

- Very easy (35)

- Easy (75)

- Neither easy nor difficult (19)

- Somewhat difficult (6)

- Very difficult (1)

- Cannot specify (0)

How do you think communication with co-workers works remotely?

- Very well (21)

- Well (74)

- Neither easy nor difficult (25)

- Badly (14)

- Very badly (1)

- Cannot specify (1)

Do you feel recovering from the strain of the work week?

- Very well (25)

- Well (57)

- No change (47)

- Somewhat badly (5)

- Very badly (2)

- Cannot specify (0)

Is the recovery better or worse than before the corona and the introduction of the teleworking / hybrid model?

- Much better (17)

- Somewhat better (37)

- Neither better nor worse (52)

- Somewhat worse (18)

- Much worse (1)

- Cannot specify (11)

What are the following stressful / difficult work factors in your current life situation? Select all that apply.

- Small children (23)

- Many children (17)

- I am a single parent (5)

- There are special requirements for my workstation. (Ergonomics, special tools, display terminals, etc.) (13)

- Irregular working hours (9)

- My home does not have a suitable Internet connection (3)

- Long commute (16)

- I have a long-term illness (9)

- My work is largely teamwork / requires constant contact with co-workers (38)

- The corona situation has made it difficult to maintain my social relationships (30)

- None of the above (35)

- Other factor (25)

Do you find it more difficult to separate leisure and working time when working remotely?

- Working time issues do not flow into free time (18)

- Working time issues rarely flow into leisure time (40)

- Working time issues sometimes run down to free time (49)

- Working time issues often run into free time (19)

- Working time issues very often run down to leisure time (7)

- Cannot specify (3)

How about coffee breaks or lunch breaks in a hybrid model?

- I manage to keep breaks almost always (27)

- I manage to keep breaks somewhat often (48)

- Breaks are sometimes missed (27)

- Breaks are often missed (26)

- I rarely have any breaks (7)

- Cannot specify (1)

How you experience belonging to a work community in a hybrid model and extensive telecommuting?

- Communality has increased a lot (3)

- Communality has increased somewhat (3)

- No impact on work community (35)

- Communality has weakened (74)

- Community spirit has weakened considerably (16)

- Cannot specify (5)

10 Appendix 3 – Survey questions

Interview questions and multiple-choice answers for Tampere city central office personnel conducted in Finish language via Teams Forms:

1. Have you worked remotely during a corona pandemic?

- I have mainly worked remotely
- I have worked more remotely than in the office
- I have worked about as much remotely and in the office
- I have worked more in the office that remotely
- I have mainly worked in the office
- I have not worked remotely.

2. Gender

- Man
- Woman
- Don't want to specify

3. Age

- 8-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- Don't want to specify

4. What unit or sector you are currently working for?

5. Do you have subordinates?

- Yes
- No

6. Have you started to work for Tampere city before Covid-19 pandemic?

- Yes, I have
- No, I have started after spring 2019

7. How satisfied are you with telecommuting right now?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied

- Neither satisfied nor not satisfied
- Somewhat unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied
- Cannot specify

8. How stressful do you find telecommuting compared to working in office?

- Significantly more stressful
- Somewhat more stressful
- Neither more or less stressful
- Somewhat less stressful
- Significantly less stressful
- Cannot specify

9. Do you feel that the efficiency of your work has increased or decreased while working remotely

- Increased very much
- Somewhat increased
- Neither increased nor decreased
- Somewhat decreased
- Decreased very much
- Cannot specify

10. How satisfied are you with how telecommuting was introduced in the city of Tampere when the corona pandemic started in Finland in spring 2019?

- The transition to telecommuting went very well
- The transition to telecommuting went somewhat well
- The transition to telecommuting did not go well nor badly
- The transition to telecommuting went somewhat badly
- The transition to telecommuting went very badly
- Cannot specify

11. Do you wish the telecommuting, and the hybrid model would continue after the end of the corona situation?

- I hope that telecommuting will continue to its current extent
- I hope that telecommuting will continue a smaller scale
- I hope that the city of Tampere will return primarily to in local work
- Cannot specify

12. Do you find it easier or harder to work remotely from home

- Very difficult or impossible
- Difficult
- No change
- Easier

- Much easier
- Cannot specify

13. Do you have your own decent workspace at home for telecommuting? (No kitchen dining table / living room sofa corner.)

- Yes
- No
- Cannot specify

14. Do you feel that you have good enough tools in your home to work remotely

- Better than at the office
- As good as at the office
- Worse than at the office
- Insufficient tools for telecommuting
- Cannot specify

15. How easy it is to reach a supervisor while telecommuting=

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult
- Cannot specify

16. How do you think communication with co-workers works remotely?

- Very well
- Well
- No change
- Badly
- Very badly
- Cannot specify

17. Do you feel recovering from the strain of the work week?

- Very well
- Well
- No change
- Somewhat badly
- Very badly
- Cannot specify

18. Is the recovery better or worse than before the corona and the introduction of the teleworking / hybrid model?

- Much better
- Somewhat better
- Neither better nor worse
- Somewhat worse
- Much worse
- Cannot specify

19. What are the following stressful / difficult work factors in your current life situation? Select all that apply.

- Small children
- Many children
- I am a single parent
- There are special requirements for my workstation. (Ergonomics, special tools, display terminals, etc.)
- Irregular working hours
- My home does not have a suitable Internet connection
- Long commute
- I have a long-term illness
- My work is largely teamwork / requires constant contact with co-workers
- The corona situation has made it difficult to maintain my social relationships
- None of the above

20. Do you find it more difficult to separate leisure and working time when working remotely?

- Working time issues do not flow into free time
- Working time issues rarely flow into leisure time
- Working time issues sometimes run down to free time
- Working time issues often run into free time
- Working time issues very often run down to leisure time
- Cannot specify

21. How about coffee breaks or lunch breaks in a hybrid model?

- I manage to keep brakes almost always
- I manage to keep brakes somewhat often
- No change
- Breaks are sometimes missed
- Breaks are often missed
- I rarely have any breaks
- cannot specify

22. How you experience belonging to a work community in a hybrid model and extensive telecommuting?

- Communality has increased a lot
- Communality has increased somewhat

- No impact on work community
- Communality has weakened
- Community spirit has weakened considerably
- Cannot specify

23. Other ideas for telecommuting or its introduction in the city of Tampere

Write the answer:

24. Free-form feedback on this survey :-)

10.1 The original questions in Finnish language

1. Oletko etätyöskennellyt koronapandemian kuluessa?

- Olen työskennellyt pääsääntöisesti etänä.
- Olen työskennellyt enemmän etänä kuin lähityössä.
- Olen työskennellyt suunnilleen yhtä paljon etänä ja lähityössä.
- Olen työskennellyt enemmän lähityössä kuin etänä.
- Olen työskennellyt pääsääntöisesti lähityössä.
- En ole työskennellyt etänä.

2. Sukupuolesi

- Mies
- Nainen
- En halua vastata

3. Ikäluokkasi

- 18 - 29
- 30 - 39
- 40 - 49
- 50 - 59
- 60 - 69
- En halua vastata

4. Mihin yksikköön / palvelualueeseen kuulut?

- Kirjoita vastaus

5. Työskenteletkö esimiestehtävissä?

- Kyllä
- En

6. Oletko työskennellyt kaupungin palveluksessa jo ennen koronapandemiaa?

- Kyllä olen.
- En ole. Olen aloittanut työt kevään 2020 jälkeen.

7. Miten tyytyväinen olet etätyöskentelyyn tällä hetkellä?

- Erittäin tyytyväinen
- Melko tyytyväinen
- Ei tyytyväinen eikä tyytymätön
- Melko tyytymätön
- Erittäin tyytymätön
- En osaa sanoa

8. Miten kuormittavaksi koet etätyöskentelyn lähityöhön verrattuna?

- Huomattavasti kuormittavammaksi
- Jokseenkin kuormittavammaksi
- Yhtä kuormittavaksi
- Jokseenkin vähemmän kuormittavaksi
- Huomattavasti vähemmän kuormittavaksi
- En osaa sanoa

9. Koetko, että työsi tehokkuus on lisääntynyt tai heikentynyt etätyöskennellessä?

- Lisääntynyt erittäin paljon
- Lisääntynyt jonkin verran
- Ei ole ollut vaikutusta
- Heikentynyt jonkin verran
- Heikentynyt erittäin paljon
- En osaa sanoa

10. Miten tyytyväinen olet siihen miten etätyöskentely otettiin käyttöön Tampereen kaupungilla koronapandemian alkaessa Suomessa keväällä 2019?

- Etätyöskentelyyn siirtyminen sujui erittäin hyvin
- Etätyöskentelyyn siirtyminen sujui melko hyvin
- Ei hyvin tai huonosti
- Etätyöskentelyyn siirtyminen sujui melko huonosti
- Etätyöskentelyyn siirtyminen sujui erittäin huonosti
- En osaa sanoa

11. Toivotko etätyöskentelyn ja hybridimallin jatkuvan koronatilanteen päätyttyä?

- Toivon, että etätyöskentelyn jatkuvan nykyisessä laajuudessaan
- Toivon, että etätyöskentely jatkuu pienemmässä mittakaavassa
- Toivon, että kaupungilla palataan ensisijaisesti lähityöskentelyyn
- En osaa sanoa

12. Koetko, että sinun on helpompi tai vaikeampi työskennellä etänä kotoa?

- Erittäin vaikeaa tai mahdotonta
- Vaikeampaa
- Ei vaikeampaa tai helpompaa
- Helpompaa
- Erittäin helppoa
- En osaa sanoa

13. Onko sinulla oma kunnollinen työtila kotona etätyöskentelyyn. (Ei keittiön ruokapöytä / olohuoneen sohvanurkkaus.)

- Kyllä
- Ei
- En osaa sanoa

14. Koetko, että sinulla on riittävän hyvät työvälineet kotonasi etätyöskentelyä varten?

- Paremmat kuin toimistolla
- Yhtä hyvät kuin toimistolla
- Huonommat kuin toimistolla
- Riittämättömät työvälineet etätyöskentelyyn
- En osaa sanoa

15. Miten koet esimiehen tavoittamisen etätyöskennellessäsi?

- Erittäin helppoa
- Helppoa
- Ei helppoa eikä vaikeaa
- Vaikeaa
- Erittäin vaikeaa
- En osaa sanoa

16. Miten mielestäsi toimii kommunikaatio työkavereiden kanssa etänä

- Erittäin hyvin
- Hyvin
- Ei hyvin eikä huonosti
- Huonosti
- Erittäin huonosti
- En osaa sanoa

17. Koetko palautuvasi työviikon rasituksista?

- Erittäin hyvin
- Hyvin
- Kohtalaisesti
- Huonosti
- Erittäin huonosti
- En osaa sanoa

18. Onko palautumisesti parempaa vai huonompaa kuin ennen koronaa ja etätyöskentelyn / hybridimallin käyttöönottoa?

- Paljon parempaa
- Parempaa
- Ei parempaa eikä huonompaa kuin aiemmin
- Huonompaa
- Paljon huonompaa
- En osaa sanoa

19. Mitä kuormittavia / työskentelyä vaikeuttavia tekijöitä sinulla on seuraavista nykyisessä elämäntilanteessasi? Valitse kaikki sopivat.

- Pieniä lapsia
- Useita lapsia
- Olen yksinhuoltaja
- Työpisteelleni on erityisvaatimuksia. (Ergonomia, erityiset työvälineet, näyttöpäätelasit tms.)
- Epäsäännöllinen työaika
- Kotiini ei saa riittävää nettiyhteyttä
- Pitkä työmatka
- Minulla on pitkäaikaissairaus
- Työni on suurelta osin tiimityöskentelyä / vaatii jatkuvaa yhteydenpitoa työkavereihin
- Koronatilanne on vaikeuttanut sosiaalisten suhteitteni ylläpitoa
- Ei mitään edellisistä

20. Koetko, että vapaa- ja työajan erottaminen on vaikeampaa etätyöskennellessäsi?

- Työajan asiat eivät valu vapaa-ajalle
- Työajan asiat valuvat harvoin vapaa-ajalle
- Työajan asiat valuvat joskus vapaa-ajalle
- Työajan asiat valuvat usein vapaa-ajalle
- Työajan asiat valuvat erittäin usein vapaa-ajalle
- En osaa sanoa

21. Miten kahvitaukojen tai ruokataukojen pitäminen onnistuu hybridimallissa?

- Saan tauot pidettyä lähes aina
- Saan tauot pidettyä useimmiten
- Taukoja jää joskus pitämättä
- Taukoja jää usein pitämättä
- Tauot jäävät lähes kokonaan pitämättä
- En osaa sanoa

22. Miten koet työyhteisöön kuuluvuuden hybridimallissa ja laajassa etätyöskentelyssä?

- Yhteisöllisyys on lisääntynyt paljon
- Yhteisöllisyys on jonkin verran lisääntynyt
- Ei vaikutusta yhteisöllisyyteen
- Yhteisöllisyys on heikentynyt
- Yhteisöllisyys on huomattavasti heikentynyt
- En osaa sanoa

23. Muita ajatuksia etätyöskentelystä tai sen käyttöönotosta Tampereen kaupungilla

- Kirjoita vastaus

24. Vapaamuotoista palautetta tästä kyselystä :-)