Telecommuting: a difference in acceptance of the concept between workers in the East Coast and Kelang Valley

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The paper studies whether the difference in work locations will have a significant bearing on the acceptance of telecommuting. Two locations chosen for this study are the Kelang Valley and the East Coast of the Peninsular Malaysia. It investigates the major differences between the two areas of study and looks at how the workers in both areas see teleworking as an alternative method of working arrangement. The findings show that difference in location does imply different social and economic conditions that directly and indirectly influence the decision on whether to telework or not to telework.

Keywords: Telework; Telecommuting; Malaysia; Location; Information Technology

1. What is teleworking/telecommuting

Teleworking or telecommuting are two words commonly used to describe virtual work that occurs when information and communication technologies are applied to enable work to be done at a distance from the place where the work results are needed or where the work could conventionally have been done [8]. There are several types of teleworking arrangements, namely home-based telework, mobile telework, hot-desking, telecentres, telecottages, and tethered workers. Among the factors that differentiate these arrangements are the amount of time spent outside of the office environment and the location and the method of communicating data to and from the workplace [5, 8, 16].

Although teleworking is an enticing alternative work arrangement, many have not yet embraced it. There could be many factors for this. Among them could be the worker involved, the task-set, the home environment, the organizational environment, and the technical infrastructure. A worker needs to be psychologically suitable for teleworking. Not every task is suitable for teleworking. The workers' workplace at home must be defensible and clearly separated from their families. The organization must be actively and

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