

# EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF TELE-MIGRANTS: DRIVERS TO ADOPT TELE-MIGRATION AND THEIR PERFORMANCE



By

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Fall 2020-MS I&E-00000330528-NBS

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Department of Human Recourses & Management

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MS Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MS I&E)

In

NUST Business School (NBS)

National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan.

**(2023)**

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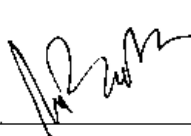
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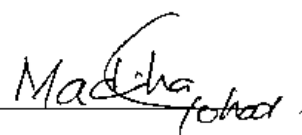
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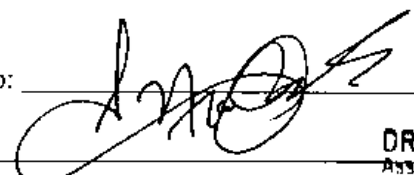
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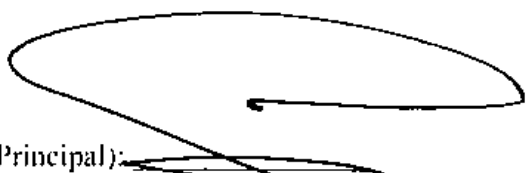
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### **Declaration**

I Tayyaba Irum Shakil hereby state that my MS thesis titled “Exploring The Experiences Of Tele-Migrants: Drivers To Adopt Tele-Migration And Their Performance” is my own work and has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification in this or any other University or other institute of learning.

**Name:** Tayyaba Irum Shakil

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> Sep, 2023

**DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this thesis to my beloved father whose life has always acted as a guiding light for me*

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The aim of this research is to investigate the internal and external factors that motivate individuals to adopt tele-migration. The study also explores how tele-migration affects their performance.

**Methods:** This study employs an interpretative phenomenological approach to understand the subjective meanings and experiences of tele-migrants. Qualitative research methods were used, following a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 16 CEOs and co-founders of startups who are working as tele-migrants in various foreign markets. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data.

**Findings:** The study highlights both internal and external factors that encourage CEOs and co-founders of startups to adopt tele-migration. The internal factors include freedom of mobility, international job experience and cultural immersion, financial incentives and enhanced compensation, flexible working hours and secure work environment, skill development in tele-migration, transparency in process, fostering productive boundaries while the external factors comprise limited job prospects in the local market, skill based compensation by Overseas employers, government policies and regulator flexibility for empowering tele-Migration and technological advancements. The findings of the study indicate that tele-migration is changing the performance of individuals in terms of their routine, work performance, and quality, resulting in increased productivity and improved skills.

**Originality:** This study offers a unique exploration of the tele-migration phenomenon by utilizing Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory as a theoretical framework. Additionally, this study serves as a foundation for researchers to identify the internal and external factors that facilitate the adoption of tele-migration, as well as its impact on the performance of tele-migrants.

**Keywords:** Tele-migration, Tele-migrant, Tele-migration in a start-up, Encouraging factors of tele-migration, Consequences of tele-migration.



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction to the Study

Inspired by the concept of "global village" given by McLuhan in the 60s, the burgeoning growth of globalization and the use of digital and communication technologies have changed the dynamic landscapes of the corporates, governments, and social institutions and have enabled the global interdependence, constructing a sort of global office.

According to Baldwin (2019), globalization is derived from arbitrage. Arbitrage is the cost difference across countries that becomes larger than the trade cost, so companies exploit this cost gap by buying low and selling high (Foellmi et al., 2018). Baldwin (2019) states that traditionally, this arbitrage was concerned with the trade in goods as it is easy to export what you make rather than what services you provide. Furthermore, the technical difficulty of getting the service provider and service buyer at the same place and at the same time was another reason that globalization was all about the goods till now.

Today, digitalization has the potential to offer "skill arbitrage" in the global development. The labor markets where there are limited options for employment for workers with a particular set of skills, the employers enjoy a great deal of power. Additionally, the high cost of migration also restricts the workers to seek better employment opportunities elsewhere. Horton (2010) states that the digital labor markets allow the work to be performed from any location in the world, reducing the constraints on workers' location. As a result, workers can engage in "skill arbitrage," where they can sell their labor to the highest paying employer, regardless of the company's location. This concept enables workers to break free from the boundaries of their local labor markets, decrease the bargaining power of employers, and earn higher wages for their labor (Graham et al., 2017).

This transformation is allowing the emerging markets to directly export their advantage (i.e.,

low labour-cost given its quality) as compared to other nations, instead of first making goods with the help of that labour and then exporting them (Baldwin, 2019). This lucrative opportunity for the emerging market has resulted in the overall expansion of the service trade that is likely to be an export gain for the emerging as well as for the developed countries (Baldwin & Forslid, 2020). Driven by digital transformation, globotics are rapidly transforming the world economy at a frenetic pace (Baldwin, 2019). Globotics - a combination of globalization and robotics (Baldwin, 2019) refers to combining machine-learning with the growing reliance among businesses on using remote workers. This globotics transformation is redirecting the ways we think about development- where services are freely tradable.

The globalization part of globotics can be considered as a “third unbundling” (Baldwin & Forslid, 2020) that stems from outdoing the geographical distances with technological breakthroughs (Kimura, 2019). It allows the labour services to be physically unbundled from the laborers (Baldwin, 2019b) and this trade in services give rise to the “tele-migration”, in which an employee with recognizable skills, while sitting in his country of residence, works in offices in another country and interacts with foreign employers using online platforms and digital gadgets (Serrat, 2021; Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). According to Baldwin and Dingel (2021) tele-migration refers to working from home when home is geographically distant from the workplace. It involves cross-border remote employment and international trade in services and the opportunities that it offers for the workers and employers significantly contribute to the ongoing globalization of the labor market (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022).

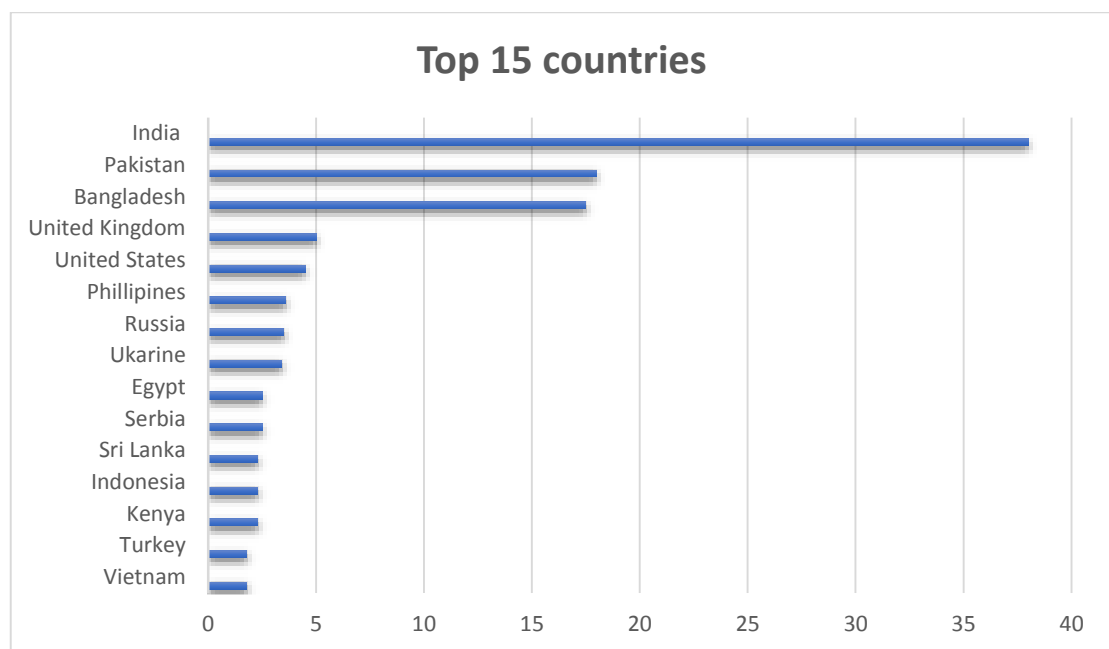
Tele-migration is a work arrangement in which the employees can work from their home country or convenient locations instead of relocating to a fixed workstation of another country, using communication technologies and online platforms to interact with their employer, co-workers, and clients. According to Baldwin et al. (2021) the traditional trade of services in Columbia often involves the sending of skillful and talented people of big companies to other countries or bringing the customers to Columbia but tele-migration is different, it allows the

Columbians to work for foreign companies while sitting in their homes. These tele-migrants can do a high-tech job at a low wage rate (Baldwin, 2019). For instance, referring to the research conducted by Baldwin (2019), the income gaps across nations stated by Quiroga Barrera Oro (2021) shows that an accountant residing in China earns one-twentieth of the salary of a US accountant. Such wage gap difference is the reason the firms from high income economies are attracted to tele-migration. Apart from hiring tele-migrants from developing countries (on lower wage rate) for decreasing costs, a firm can also reduce its workplace expense i.e., a traditional workplace where employees sit, and work is no longer a need. Workers and employers using digital channels can establish networks and partnerships, while also maintaining communication. Additionally, workers can also deliver their work to customers digitally. This enables the exchange of services without the need for physical proximity or presence (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). Employers can save on the expenses associated with establishing foreign branches in countries with highly skilled workers or relocating foreign workers to a physical workstation. Furthermore, a firm can get its hand on talented bunch of employees from different geographical areas with diverse experience (Quiroga Barrera Oro, 2021). This also promotes cultural diversity in the workplace, which studies have shown to enhance innovation, labor productivity, and the company's appeal to potential foreign employees (Kovács-Ondrejko et al., 2021). Ultimately, this leads to increased efficiency and competitiveness in business operations.

Tele-migration involves the movement of workers in the digital realm and is intrinsically linked with the processes in the development of global economy (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). The global transactions are between the workers (sellers of services) from the countries with low cost and the employers (buyers of services) from high-cost countries who are willing to pay high wages (Graham et al., 2017). The significant price differential enables both workers and the employers to benefit in the global market for information services and other related services without the need for physical migration (Graham & Anwar, 2019).



According to Baldwin and Forslid (2020), tele-migration is an opportunity for the developing countries to export their services abroad and work in foreign workplaces using online platforms. The distribution of online workforce globally, observed by Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al. (2020) from the data presented in Online Labor Index (2020) by (Stephany, Kässi, Rani, & Lehdonvirta, 2021) shows that 52% of the global online workforce is from the three Asian countries- India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.



**Figure 1:** Top 15 countries of online workforce

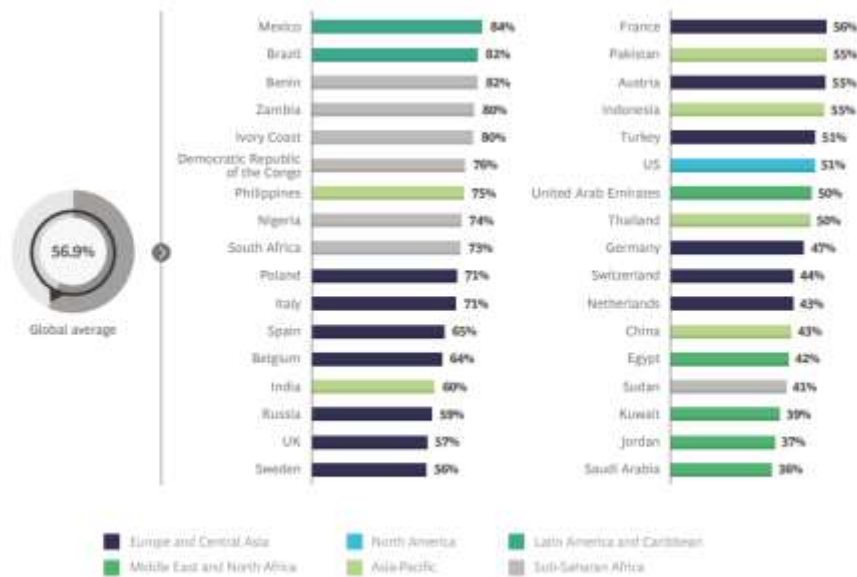
Source: Online Labor Index (2020)

A crucial question that arises here is: can services be exported from one country to another? According to Baldwin and Dingel (2021) here the nature of the job and nature of the worker would matter. For example, a data analyst from Philippines would be able to do the same job as the data analyst in Canada by exporting his service to the Canadian employer currently served by that Canadian analyst. Blinder (2007) answers this question where he subjectively ranked various occupations and estimated that between 22% and 29% of all U.S. jobs are or will be potentially offshorable within a decade or two. Replicating the study of Blinders (2007), the MBA students at Harvard Business School estimated that between 21% and 42% of U.S. jobs

are potentially offshorable (Smith & Rivkin, 2008). So, the American employees face a potential competition from the workers of other countries. According to the observation of Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al. (2020) a significant percentage of online workers of People's Republic of China, India, Russia, Ukraine, Viet Nam, and Pakistan export their services in the field of software development/technology. However, the online workers from the countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia and Philippines offer their services for the creative and multimedia tasks.

Baldwin and Dingel (2021) states that multiple considerations need to take when evaluating whether an offshorable job is performed offshore. One of the considerations is that there must be foreign workers who have the capability of doing the required work. According to Dingel and Neiman (2020) most of the occupations that are offshorable and can be performed remotely are likely skill-intensive and highly paid jobs in U.S. Skillful people from developing countries are exporting such services in the developed economies. It is notable that the developing economies export more than they import on the online platforms. The key point that is important here is the profile of tele-migrants. They are highly skillful and qualified workers that pose a direct competition with the domestic talent of the developed countries. In recent years due to the technological advances, tele-migrants can adapt to jobs that require high level of education and skills. They are also competing for the strategic positions in the foreign companies.

According to a survey conducted by Kovács-Ondrejko et al. (2021) the willingness of the two-thirds of their respondents globally in 2014 approved that the idea of moving from one country to another appealed to them. The proportion now has been declined by 13% and now about 50% of the workers are already working abroad or are willing to move abroad for work. Their survey in 2020 suggests that majority of the respondents, specifically 57% are willing to work for a foreign employer that operates from outside of their home country and allows to work remotely for him.



**Figure 2:** Percentage of respondents who would work remotely

Source: 2020 BCG/The Network proprietary web survey and analysis

The survey further reveals that about 55% of the respondents from Pakistan showed their willingness to work for foreign employer who allows them to work for him from their home country. This is a significant number who is willing to work in foreign offices. According to Kovács-Ondrejčková et al. (2021) it is logical that while evaluating the perks of fully remote job for a foreign company, an individual concentrates on the essential aspects like job compensation, responsibilities, and employer's credibility. Factors like cultural attraction of the country where employer is based are less significant in fully remote work setup.

Now a question here is: why do people from Pakistan adopt tele-migration? The existing research answers how it is an opportunity for the developing country and how it is benefitting their economies but do not answer about the encouraging factors that encourage the people from developing nations to adopt tele-migration. The current study intended to explore these encouraging factors and add to the knowledge of tele-migration phenomenon.

## 1.2 Research Gap

Research on tele-migration has advanced our understanding of its implications for global economies, particularly focusing on the evolving landscape of developed nations. Baldwin and Forslid (2020) identify a substantive gap in the current body of knowledge, highlighting that while existing literature has extensively examined how tele-migration will reshape rich countries, its potential consequences on developing nations remain relatively unexplored. Their research introduces a thought-provoking notion, envisioning a scenario where digitech renders conventional manufacturing jobs obsolete, propelling the idea that services, made tradable by tele-migration, could serve as an avenue for developing nations to export their comparative advantage of cost-effective labour. In parallel, Baldwin (2019) underlines the vulnerabilities posed by tele-migration to developed countries, as the introduction of tele-migrants from developing nations displaces domestic white-collar employees with a more cost-efficient labour force.

While the existing literature has predominantly centered on emerging trends and novel prospects within the realm of tele-migration (Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al., 2020), Baldwin (2022) discussed potential barriers to tele-migration and proposes initial policies that could facilitate this form of export. Schlogl (2020) examined significant trends and potential scenarios regarding global structural change, particularly focusing on the challenges faced by developing economies related to their technological and economic development due to tele-migration. The study spans multiple domains including employment, value added, global trade, and technological upgrading, and suggests that a continued expansion of the service sector alongside economic development will shape the future of structural transformation. However, a noteworthy gap exists in the literature concerning the internal and external factors driving tele-migration adoption, and its subsequent influence on the performance of tele-migrants. Unlike previous studies which have primarily concentrated on the broader global economic

implications, technological shifts, emerging work paradigms, and potential threats posed by tele-migration, the present study embarks on a unique approach. It addresses the lack of knowledge regarding the factors fostering the adoption of tele-migration within a developing nation context and how it is altering the performance of tele-migrants. Notably, this study introduces a novel perspective by applying Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory to the tele-migration context, bridging a gap in the existing literature. By framing the tele-migration phenomenon through the lens of this theoretical framework, this study contributes a novel and robust dimension to the discourse surrounding tele-migration, offering valuable insights for both scholarly deliberation and practical application.

### **1.3 Research Aim**

The aim of this research is to investigate the internal and external factors that motivate individuals to adopt tele-migration. The study also explores how tele-migration affects their performance.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- To explore the factors including both internal and external that encourage the adoption of tele-migration in startups.
- To explore how tele-migration alters the tele-migrant's performance.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

- What factors including both internal and external encourage the adoption of tele-migration in start-ups?
- How does tele-migration alter the tele-migrant's performance?

### **1.6 Definitions**

*Globotics*. Baldwin (2019) defined the term as a combination of two trends globalization and robotics.

*Globotics transformation.* As described by Baldwin (2019) remote intelligence (RI) and artificial intelligence (AI) together effected the global economies and gave rise to the globotics transformation (Cronin, 2020).

*Globalization.* Process of interaction that includes the causes, course, and results of transnational and transcultural combination of human and non-human exercises (Al-Rodhan & Stoudmann, 2006).

*Remote work.* The regular work that is performed from any site other than the office using the technological connections (Schall, 2019).

*Tele-migration.* The trade that happens when workers while sitting in one country telecommute into the offices in another country using online platforms and technological gadgets (Baldwin and Forslid, 2020).

*Tele-migrant.* A tele-migrant is a talented skilful person living in one continent or a country telecommute and provides his services to an office in another continent or a country (Baldwin, 2019).

*Offshorability of jobs.* The ability to perform a certain job from abroad without losing the quality of the work (Blinder & Krueger, 2013).

*Startup.* As defined by Ehsan (2021) a startup is a firm that is growing due to the incorporation of innovation into its products and services and operations with the help of IT/ICT enabled services.

*Employee performance.* The result of work in terms of its quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties according to responsibilities given to him (Campbell et al., 2010).

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The sophisticated advancements in the digital and communication technologies have been a significant player in flourishing the innovative ways of work and workplace arrangements. Skillful people have started adopting the new ways of work like tele-migration, where they work in foreign offices without physically migrating to another country or continent. There, they are appreciated and encouraged by foreign employers, leading to high levels of employee productivity, work quality, low levels of employee burnout, and increased job satisfaction. The results of the study could lead to further research and exploration of the tele-migration phenomenon, its adoption factors by the people of a developing country alongside how it is altering their performance.

### **1.7.1 Significance to Practice**

Tele-migration has expanded opportunities for employees who want to work outside the traditional workplace setting. It can relatively benefit both the employees and the employer they are working for in terms of financial benefits and offers more flexible hours for managing productivity (Baldwin and Dingel, 2021). The question here is what factors encourage the tele-migrants to adopt tele-migration instead of taking a regular 8-hour job in a fixed physical setting in their own country. The study may help organizational leaders become aware of the factors that encourage their domestic talent to work for foreign companies instead of working for them. Further, it may help them create such flexible policies and procedures that support employees' desire to adopt tele-migration. The study may also help aspiring tele-migrants to get aware of the consequences of tele-migration mainly how it will alter their performance and routines once they adopt it.

### **1.7.2 Significance to Theory**

The diffusion of innovation theory was put forward by Roger (1983) is considered as a pivotal framework for studying and understanding that how technological innovations get diffused and

are potentially adopted by the individuals and/or organizations. Acknowledging Roger's diffusion of innovation theory as the pioneer in the diffusion and adoption research, this study uses his theory as the most appropriate to study the innovative way of work - tele-migration phenomena and its diffusion in the working arrangements and its consequences.

### **1.7.3 Significance to Social Change**

As technology improvements, various authentic online platforms and telecommunication apps become available employees seek access to the online job market to enhance and increase their remote work options without relocating to any other country. This research is useful for those who are strategically considering entering the realm of tele-migration. The research provided information and data that may help the current Pakistani government's initiatives promoting the online work in designing various training programs for the tele-migrants of Pakistan to better exploit this opportunity and confront its challenges.

### **Summary**

Today, globalization and digital technologies has enabled the trade in services where several occupations are offshorable and as a result various innovative working arrangements has introduced in the service sector. The extant literature provides a complete picture of the remote work, tele-migration, and online workforce of the developed countries and its consequences that these countries are experiencing but lacks research that provides the information related to adoption of these innovative ways of work in developing countries and how it is altering their workplace arrangements.

The research questions emerged from studying the tele-migration phenomenon and provides the researcher and practitioners a better understanding of the internal and external factors that encourage the tele-migrants of a developing country to adopt tele-migration and how it is altering their work performance. The study used a qualitative research method to explore this emerging phenomenon of tele-migration. With the help of Roger's (1983) Theory of innovation



(DOI), the theoretical framework of the study was developed that is discussed in the next chapter.

The next chapter is a comprehensive review of the extant literature on tele-migration and address how this phenomenon is experienced in both developing and developed nations.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this section the existing research about the key points that this thesis is based on will be discussed. These are remote work, introduction of globalization and communication technologies in remote work, trade in service sector, tele-migration, tele-migrant, startup, Diffusion of innovation theory. The approach to conduct this review was to start from the general knowledge related to the topic to the specific ideas. The theoretical framework, which was built on the diffusion of innovation theory is presented in relation to the diffusion of globalization and Digitech in the service sector.

### **2.1 Literature search strategy**

The predominant search terms used for literature search were tele-migration, tele-migrant, remote work, online work, innovative workplace arrangements, service trade, online workforce of developing countries, startup, diffusion of innovation theory, employee performance. The database used were Google, Google Scholar, ProQuest, SAGE journals, JSTOR, Emerald Insight.

Roger's Diffusion of innovation (DOI) Theory (1983) was used as a foundation for the theoretical framework. The extant research that demonstrates the development of the concept and its future were included. These works included Baldwin (2019), Baldwin and Forslid (2020), Baldwin and Dingel (2021), Dingel and Neiman (2020).

### **2.2 Diffusion of innovation theory (DOI)**

#### **2.2.1 Why Roger's DOI?**

According to Tu (2018) the diffusion of innovation theory developed by Roger (1983) is considered as a pivotal framework for studying and understanding that how technological innovations get diffused and are potentially adopted by the individuals and/or organizations. Acknowledging Roger's diffusion of innovation theory as the pioneer in the diffusion and adoption research, this study uses his theory as the most appropriate to study the innovative

way of work - tele-migration phenomena and its diffusion in the working arrangements and its consequences.

### 2.2.2 Theoretical concept

Diffusion and adoption of innovation and consequences of the innovation adoption on the users are the final steps of the Rogers (1962-1995) innovation process. He describes this process as the entire process of recognizing a need or problem, conducting research, developing and commercializing an innovation, disseminating it to users, and observing its effects is encompassed in the decisions, actions, and outcomes (Roger, 1983).



**Figure 3:** Phases of innovation development process (Adapted from Roger, 2003)

In accordance with the research questions that guide this study, the focus is on the diffusion and adoption of tele-migration by the tele-migrants of a developing country Pakistan and its consequences on the performance of the tele-migrants.

#### 2.2.2.1 Diffusion and Adoption

For the potential adopters of the innovation, this stage is the awareness stage. According to Porter and Heppelmann (2014) at this stage the relationships between different stakeholders of an organization become very vital towards the diffusion and adoption of innovation. All the stakeholder needs to be in synchrony to make the diffusion process effective when diffusing the innovation. As different stakeholders must be acting as different entities in producing the innovation. These could be the government agencies, change agents, regulating agencies, and

other stakeholders that possess the ability to disseminate the innovation to its potential adopters (Gomes & Osman, 2019).

#### **2.2.2.2 Consequences**

As a result of adoption of innovation, the changes that occur to an individual and/or organization count as consequences of the adoption. Consequences can even be for the non-adopters of the innovation who reject it (Gomes and Osman, 2019). Roger (1983) classified these consequences as the desirable or undesirable consequences, direct or indirect consequences, and anticipated or unanticipated consequences. According to Gomes and Osman (2019) at this last stage of the innovation development process, the problem or the need that originated the whole process has or has not been solved.

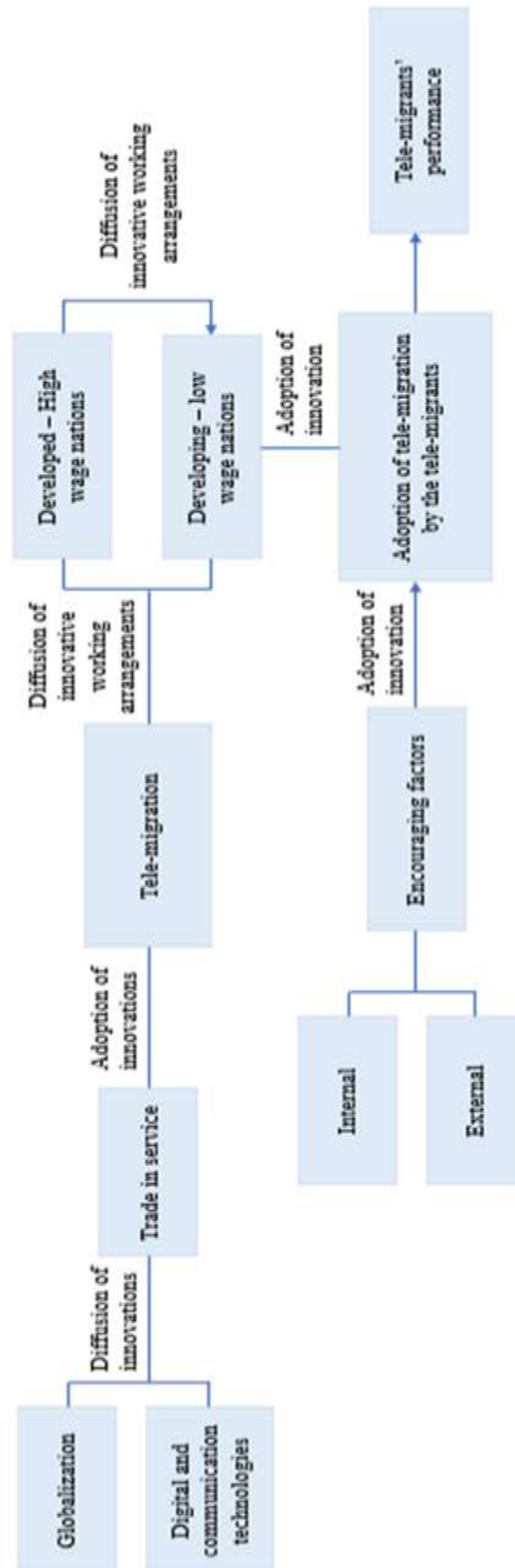
After studying the innovation development process, now the focus of the study is towards the potential adopters of the innovation, more specifically startups, and how they perceive it and eventually adopt and implement innovations in their practices.

For entrepreneurs it is crucial to design such services that are innovative and unique in nature. In this era of innovation, internet, globalization, and connectivity, individuals are interested and enthusiastic about new and innovative concepts that can be beneficial for their businesses (Modgil et al. 2022). According to Zanello et al. (2016) innovation does not necessarily need to be newly introduced to the world as a whole or to any certain market in specific. It could be simply new to the firm that has its impact on the productivity and employment. Hence, the diffusion of innovation theory is most suitable to explore the tele-migration phenomenon. As stated by Baldwin and Forslid (2020) till date the benefits and drawbacks of globalization and automation have been primarily experienced by the manufacturing sector in both developing and developed countries. But in future, the professional and service-sectors jobs will also feel the advantages and disadvantages of this trend. So, the innovation in the working paradigms such as tele-migration is now diffusing into the service sectors of both developed and developing countries. The consequences of adopting this innovative working arrangements are

both desirable and undesirable for the developed countries that are early adopters of this innovation such as due to tele-migration an employer can have access to a pool of talented and skillful workers worldwide and he does not need a fixed workstation/ office settings for the employees. It cuts off a lot of expenses for him to run the company. On the other hand, the undesirable consequences are as service sector and professional jobs there are replaced by the tele-migrants of the developing countries who are willing to do them at low wages. So, it has undesirable consequences on the domestic talent are losing their jobs. The consequences may not be a signal of major job losses, but they could however be a more deterioration in wage rates and working conditions.

The diffusion of innovation theory also supports the diffusion of innovative working arrangements of the developed countries into the developing countries where the labor in the developed countries is underpriced as compared to the developing countries, so it is mostly representing as an export opportunity for developing countries and import opportunity for developed countries (Baldwin and Dingel, 2021). The consequences of this innovation in the developing nations can be counted as desirable that opens multiple opportunities for the skillful workers of developing countries to work in foreign offices and avail monetary and non-monetary benefits.

### 2.2.3 Theoretical Framework



**Figure 4:** Theoretical Framework of the study (By researcher)

### **2.3 Globalization**

Globalization describes the growing interdependency of the world's economies that emanates from trade in goods, services, technology, and people across borders (Kolb, 2018). This interdependence has economic effects in terms of generating and increasing competition between the foreign and local businesses of different countries. This economic globalization increases employment opportunities in some countries and unemployment in others (Molnar et al. 2008).

Globalization has been through three phases: the first phase was the period leading up to 1914. This was the period when cross-border trade and immigration were quite large due to the flexible governmental policies and limitations. The second phase of globalization started from the World War II to the late 90s where with the help of improved communications and policy liberalization the multinational corporations expanded their operations across the nations. According to Khondker (2021) during this phase, an innovative technology from the Third Industrial Revolution, the internet was emerged that connected people all over the world directly. It allowed the global integration of value chains, production, and distribution all over the world, so increasing the sum of imports and exports in trade to nearly half of the world GDP. Built on the foundation of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Globalization 4.0 is the third phase of globalization that involves the cutting-edge modern technologies enabling the movement of goods, services, ideas, and people across the world. The introduction of lucrative digital technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Internet of Things, Blockchain, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) constitute the very basis of a revolutionary model of production and business management that ensures the organizational sustainability and enhances creativity and innovativeness of business operations across the globe (Tripathi, Oivo, et al. 2019). According to (Baldwin, 2018) Globalization 4.0 has changed the perspective of service sector through digital technologies and Digitech that is resulting in various opportunities and challenges for the service sectors and professionals.

### **2.3.1 Understanding the globalization's three unbundlings**

According to Baldwin's globalization's unbundling framework (2016) in the pre-globalized world, distance isolated people and production resulted in high trade costs, communication costs, and face-to-face costs. Since 19<sup>th</sup> century when the transport technologies improved due to industrial revolution, the trade costs reduced i.e., "the first unbundling". The transport of goods became easier, and production and consumption unbundled across the national borders. Soon, the raw material and final product started trading across the countries giving comparative advantage to the countries with specialized industries (Kimura, 2017).

The introduction of ICT (information and communication technology) brought about 'the second unbundling' of globalization from 1990s. Kimura (2017) stated that the communications costs reduced that accelerated the exchange of ideas across the national borders. Sophisticated international production networks started emerging along with the domestic industries. Due to exchange in ideas, the advanced technology in the North and labour in the South started sharing the production that created 'the great convergence' of income levels of the people of North and South (Baldwin, 2016)

Technological advancement accelerated globalization and 'the third unbundling' has emerged in both the developed and developing countries. The innovative communication technologies reduced the face-to-face costs. The tasks and jobs are now done by the people in various locations and the international data flow is more tightly connecting people across the world. According to Baldwin (2019) the technological developments like 'telepresence', 'telerobotics' and 'tele-migration' has dramatically changed the nature of globalization. Together, these technologies are allowing the service jobs to be physically unbundled from the workers as now it is possible for them to perform a job within another country without being physically present there. Such innovative working arrangements are expanding the range of jobs that are posing a direct international competition. Many professional jobs in rich countries are being done by the tele-migrants of poor countries. By physically unbundling the service jobs from their workers,



the third unbundling of globalization is broadening new horizons in business world and is opening new opportunities and posing challenges for both developed and developing nations.

#### **2.4 Digital and Communication Technologies**

Digital communication is the physical transfer of data from one point to another point or to multiple points (Ashtari Talkhestani et al. 2019). In digital communication the discrete messages are transferred along the digital and analog channels (Nguyen et al. 2022). The DCT includes all the tools and their applications which connect the peoples throughout the world (Nguyen et al. 2022). These tools include different applications of the internet including the E. mail, WhatsApp, Facebook, Short Message Service (SMS), Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) and YouTube etc. (Lu et al. 2020). All these tools of technology are responsible for connecting people and sharing information. All the sources of the DCT mainly depend on the internet (Nguyen et al. 2022).

The internet is mainly responsible for connecting the peoples throughout the world and making the world a global village (Ashtari Talkhestani et al. 2019). Nowadays, the Digital and Communication Technologies have its applications in every field of life e.g., they involve in security, education, research, commerce, banking and communication (Lee et al. 2022). There are a lot of benefits of Digital and Communication Technologies including increased flexibility, reduced operational costs, improved productivity, improved revenue, enhanced performance, improved employee satisfaction, working abilities and experience (Lu et al. 2020). The technologies were prepared to solve the problems faced by the peoples all over the world and to improve the standards of the life of the human beings (Lee et al. 2022). Technologies acutely work to resolve the solution of hurdles and make human life easier (Ashtari Talkhestani et al. 2019). In recent years, digital technology has brought about significant transformations in nearly every aspect of human life including communications, the workplace, entertainment, travel, banking, and shopping (Zhang et al. 2021). Digital technology is defined as any

electronic device, automated system, piece of technical gear, or a resource that creates, processes, or stores data (Ashtari Talkhestani et al. 2019).

There are many pieces of digital technology, websites are among the most widely used ways for people to access the internet (Nguyen et al. 2022). Websites are a great source of information and have become more interactive (Zhang et al. 2021). The prevalence of smartphones reflects how quickly digital technology has advanced (Minoli & Occhiogrosso, 2018). As a result of mobile phones, both spoken and written communication have been transformed. Nowadays, we have smartphones with digital technology like cameras, calculators, and maps (Flew et al. 2019).

Machine learning, deep learning, and computer vision are the most emerging trends in artificial intelligence. In a cloud computing system, large amounts of data are gathered, recorded, stored, and then accessed on (Minoli & Occhiogrosso, 2018). It has aided in increasing public awareness of data and analytics (Minoli & Occhiogrosso, 2018). The usage of digital robotics is becoming more sophisticated and widespread (Flew et al. 2019).

## **2.5 Trade in Service**

The sale and delivery of an intangible product between two parties or between two different nations is called trade in services (Casadei et al. 2022). Trade in services records the value of services exchanged between residents and non-residents of an economy, including services provided through foreign affiliates established abroad (Mann, 2021). This indicator is measured in million USD and percentage of GDP for exports, imports and net trade (Casadei et al. 2022). Trade in goods is subject to tariffs that discriminate across countries. Trade in services is not subject to any tariff, but rather to technical barriers that rarely discriminate across countries (Peng et al. 2020). The global economy and the growth and development of countries are increasingly influenced by it as it generates opportunities for greater income, productivity, employment, investment, and trade (Mann, 2021).

According to Serafica (2019) the growth of service trade is anticipated to be a potential catalyst for global trade, propelled by various factors such as advancement in technology and increased income levels. The World Trade Organization (WTO) (2019) reported that the growth rate of services trade from 2005 to 2017 outpaced that of goods trade at 5.4% annually on average. Baldwin, Grozoubinski and Rodrik (2022) state that from 2011 to 2019, global trade of goods grew by 4% while other Commercial Services (OCS), primarily referring to office work, increased by 50%. Today, trade in services constitute almost quarter of the world's export earnings (Baldwin et al. 2022). The WTO (2019) forecasts that this trend will continue to expand, particularly with the advancements of digital technologies, demographic shifts, higher income levels, and climate change. These significant developments will pave the way for innovative forms of services trade, effecting the demand for services, and potentially impacting the trade of certain services while opening new opportunities in market (Serafica, 2019).

According to Ferracane and Marel (2019) the growth of services trade can be attributed to two key factors i.e. advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT), especially in the realm of telecommunication, and liberalized regulations regarding services. The global reach of internet has also played a significant role in expanding the scope of cross-border trade in services. Baldwin et al. (2022) state that as digitalization continues to advance, the proportion of service traded directly to consumers through applications, platforms, and other electronic networks will continue to rise. In today's market digital services, including publishing, audiovisual, financial services, intellectual property, and telecommunications have broader global reach than the manufacturing in goods (Ferracane & Marel, 2019; Liberatore et al. 2022; Serafica, 2019). The digitalization of various services coupled with the aid of ICT applications and data-driven solutions, has facilitated the expansion of digital services trade across the globe.

## **2.6 Tele-migration**

There virtual and physical mobility of workers is influenced by several factors including

socioeconomic and demographic development, the state of labor markets, and integration processes in the global economy. The emergence and widespread adoption of tele-migration have been significantly influenced by digital and communication (Jetha et al. 2021).

The global penetration of digital technologies, the expansion of technical capabilities for remote work in real-time, and the increased affordability of information and telecommunication services have facilitated the ability of the workers to work from location, including their home, and export services in a cross-border format, at any time of the day (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). This innovative working arrangement has compressed distances and reduced their importance in the implementation of professional competencies, leading to the delocalization of economic activity.

The term “tele-migration” was first introduced into the literature in 2019 by Richard Baldwin, a professor of international economics, in his book “The Globotics Upheaval: Globalisation, Robotics and the Future of Work”. Referring to globalization 4.0, he defines tele-migration as people belonging to one nation and working in offices of another nation using the online platforms and technological gadgets. Such people are known as tele-migrants - a tele-migrant is a skillful person living in one continent or a country, telecommunicates and provides his services to an office in another continent or a country (Baldwin, 2019). Tele-migration is a work arrangement in which the employees can work from their home country or convenient locations instead of relocating to a fixed workstation of another country, using communication technologies and online platforms to interact with their employer, co-workers, and clients (Serrat, 2021; Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). According to Baldwin et al. (2021) the traditional trade of services in Columbia often involves the sending of skillful and talented people of big companies to other countries or bringing the customers to Columbia but tele-migration is different, it allows the Columbians to work for foreign companies while sitting in their homes. These tele-migrants can do a high- tech job at a low wage rate (Baldwin, 2019).

This innovative work arrangement allows the talented workers from abroad to telecommute into the workplaces of another country and compete for service sector and professional jobs there. According to Tsapenko and Grishin (2022) employers, including small businesses can have access to a pool of talented workers and performers across the globe and enable them to quickly hire the most suitable candidate who is an expert in his field. Tele-migration also facilitates the formation of international teams of workers willing to solve the personnel problems of the companies and improve work efficiency. According to Kuek et al. (2015) distributing the tasks among such mixed work teams allows the businesses to concentrate their resources on the primary areas of business activity, enhancing the maneuverability and flexibility. Taking the example of (Baldwin et al. 2021) suggests that this export in services could be done including the “Shared Services Centers” that are set up by multinationals or it can be done by the selling of the services to the foreign customers by the specialised Columbian firms i.e., business process outsourcing (BPO), knowledge process outsourcing, and call centers. Here, another example that we can see is of India that is host to many businesses process outsourcing (BPO) activities and call centers outsourced by western firms. This rapid development of the service-sector has enabled the country to construct several groundbreaking multinationals like Wipro, HCl and Infosys (Varghese, 2017).

According to Tsapenko and Grishin (2022) tele-migration, an innovative approach of personnel management helps employers, small businesses and companies save expenses related with setting up foreign branches in the regions where experts and specialists reside. This also saves them from the costs related to the relocation of the in-demand foreign workers to their country of employment. All the interactions between the employer and employees happen via online platforms that only requires internet connectivity and technological gadgets (Nash et al. 2018). Furthermore, this practice effectively spares employees from incurring the financial burdens that typically associated with the relocating to the country of employment (Martin, 2017). Hiring foreign employees from different geographical backgrounds fosters cultural diversity in

the workforce which as previous studies show, stimulates creativity, increase efficiency, and make the organization more appealing to potential foreign employees (Kovács-Ondrejko et al. 2021). Ultimately, these factors enhance the competitiveness and effectiveness of business operations (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022).

Tele-migration involves the movement of workers in the digital realm and is intrinsically linked with the processes in the development of global economy (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). Baldwin (2019) has attributed tele-migration as an opportunity for the low-income economies as they get more exposed to worldwide employment opportunities. They get to offer and deliver their services at low-wage rates making no compromise on the quality of the service. Baldwin and Forslid (2020) suggest that it is a win-win situation for both the employer and employee as companies in high-income countries can hire a tele-migrant at a low-wage rate as compared to the employee they can hire from their own country at a standard wage-rate (higher than they will pay to a tele-migrant). The global transactions are between the workers (sellers of services) from the countries with low cost and the employers (buyers of services) from high-cost countries who are willing to pay high wages (Graham et al. 2017). A tele-migrant is also able to earn more due to dollar-exchange rate of his own home country (Brinatti et al. 2021). The significant price differential enables both workers and the employers to benefit in the global market for information services and other related services without the need for physical migration (Graham & Anwar, 2019).

According to the point of view of the respondents of the BCG survey conducted by Kovács-Ondrejko et al. (2021) the most attractive and appealing countries for cross-border remote work are the high-wage nations like United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, and Great Britain. Kovács-Ondrejko et al. (2021) state that the main thing for this attraction is compensation package, nature of the job and the dependability of the employer. The BCG survey further highlighted that United States is the most sought-after location among all these advanced economies. According to the statistics presented by Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al. (2020)

employers who are importing the services from tele-migrants are concentrated with 75% located in just 4 countries, namely US (53.4%), Australia (8.3%), UK (7.4%) and Canada (6.4%). Moreover, majority of the workers (over 60%) exporting their services abroad are concentrated in just 5 countries, namely India, Philippines, Pakistan, Ukraine, and America. Their statistics further indicates that majority of the employers around 88% are from OECD countries – the high wage and developed nations whereas 70% of the workers who work as tele-migrants are from non-OECD countries – mainly low wage and developing nations.

The analysis done by Brinatti et al. (2021) regarding the remote wages shows that employee's location is a significant factor that accounts for almost one-third of the variability in remote wages. Their research indicates that the observed wage difference is strongly linked with the GPD per capita of the employee's location and are not influenced by the employer's location. The wages expressed in the local currency fluctuate with the employee's country's dollar exchange rate and is promptly responsive to changes in the wages of foreign competitors. The distribution of online workforce globally, observed by Bayudan-Dacuycuy et al. (2020) from the data presented in Online Labor Index (2020) shows that 52% of the global online workforce is from the three Asian countries- India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. On the other hand, the top three countries that import the services from low-wage nations are the advanced economies of English-speaking countries: US, UK, and Australia (John et al. 2018). According to their observation, a significant percentage of online workers of People's Republic of China, India, Russia, Ukraine, Viet Nam, and Pakistan export their services in the field of software development/technology.

## **2.7 Tele-migration- a different type of remote work**

This section is dedicated to clarifying the terminology used in the context of remote work and how tele-migration can be differentiated from them. Given in the table 1 are the definitions of the terminologies along with their examples used in the literature in the context of remote work:

**Table 1.** Definitions and examples of different type of remote work

Terms	Definitions	Examples
<b>Tele-migration</b>	A novel work arrangement that enables skilled workers to reside in one country and work in offices in another (Serrat, 2021).	A tele-migrant can occupy a high-skilled occupations or strategic positions in the foreign companies that require higher education. These are accountants, engineers, architects, software developers, programmers, creative writers, designers etc. An accountant from Poland virtually teleports into the office in New York using digital technology in the morning and teleports back in the evening. This would surely help the New York firm to get the job done at lower wage rate and would allow the Polish accountant to earn a higher salary (Baldwin, 2019).
<b>Telework and telecommuting</b>	A work adaptability plan under which teleworker plays out the duties and obligations of such worker's situation, and other approved exercises, from a supported worksite other than the area from which the worker would somehow work (The Telework Enhancement Act, 2010).	Telework and telecommuting is most prevalent in the service sector mostly in the jobs that can be done from outside the premises of a fixed workstation. Teleworkers regularly use the ICTs for work and are mostly found in the information and communication, financial, public administration, defense, education as well as the professional and technical activities. These workers provide their services within or/and cross-country while working from home (Gschwind & Vargas, 2019).
<b>Outsourcing</b>	The demonstration of getting semi-completed products, completed products or services from an external organization assuming these exercises were previously conducted internally (Dolgui & Proth, 2013).	An organization transfers the responsibility of its functions on contractual basis such as HR, finance, legal, IT services, advertising, software development, customer contact, data entry, transactional processes to both domestic and foreign vendors. These independent vendors take the responsibility of executing and sourcing their services to these businesses with fee-for-service outsourcing (McIvor, 2010).



<b>Freelancing</b>	In the media and creative industries, independent workers are referred to as freelancers (Kitching & Smallbone, 2012).	Freelance work is independent and self-directed that is formed by a freelancer who is identified as independent contractor. A freelancer works for different clients and get compensation on project basis often associated with providing expert services in writing and creative occupations and today it has expanded to software development and technology occupations (Kuhn & Galloway, 2019; Stephany et al., 2021).
<b>Telepresence</b>	A collection of cutting-edge videoconferencing technologies that include multiple high-definition screens, eye-level alignment from room to room, and immersive systems that make the environments on both sides of the room match, creating the impression of being in the “same room” (Strengers, 2015)	Videoconference applications like Skype, Messenger, Google Hangouts, Viber are widely used telepresence tools that allow their users to be remotely present in different locations. Telepresence robots have an iPad screen with a camera, speaker and microphone that allows videoconferencing on wheels and a person uses to be virtually present somewhere and feels as if he is present there (Beno, 2018; Peha, 2019; Wang et al., 2021).
<b>Gig work</b>	Electronically mediated job situations in which people use websites or mobile apps to identify short-term tasks or projects, interact with clients, and make payments (Kuhn & Galloway, 2019).	A gig work is assessed through the digital platforms and through the traditional ways like advertising or networking. Gig work engages a gig worker mainly in the task-based work that requires lower skills such as ridesharing or microwork and sometimes in the knowledge intensive or creative work for a longer time such as IT consulting, graphic designing, coaching (Caza et al. 2022).

### 2.7.1 The location of the worker differentiates tele-migration

In alignment with these definitions and the concept of tele-migration as described by Baldwin, it can be inferred that the location of the worker or employee differentiates tele-migration from all other types of remote work i.e., a tele-migrant remains in his city/country and work for a

company overseas. Such companies adopt the technology and make the work arrangements easy for the tele-migrants to work for them. According to Baldwin (2019) a tele-migrant virtually teleports to the office in another country in the morning using digital platforms and gadgets and then teleports back to his home in the evening. However, in telework and telecommuting an employee performs his duties and responsibilities from his home, or any other location and that location does not necessarily have to be in another country like in the case of tele-migration. Teleworking can happen within or/and cross-country like home-based telework where employees do their work from home using ICT for the sake of work-family balance and due to the large distances to and from work within the country (Ollo-López et al. 2021). Furthermore, unlike tele-migration gig work and outsourced activities can be performed by any local or global vendor (McIvor, 2010) it does not necessarily to be performed by the workers overseas.

### **2.7.2 The role of a tele-migrant differentiates tele-migration**

The participation of the tele-migrant as an employee or as a team member of his international office differentiates tele-migration from other modes of remote work. Baldwin (2020) states that tele-migration is when a person is virtually going to the office in another country and is participating as a team member using his different gadgets, online tools, and platforms. However, in other types of remote work it is not necessary for a person who is working online to be an employee or team member of the firm he is working for i.e., a freelancer is self-employed and is an independent worker who works for any organization without being its permanent employee (Akhmetshin et al. 2018) and is compensated on the project basis (Kuhn, 2016; Stephany et al. 2021). Furthermore, a gig worker engages in a task-based work (Caza et al. 2022) and is not bound to any organization, he gets done the assigned gig or task and moves to the next one (Barlage et al. 2019). In terms of outsourcing, tele-migration is different from it as in outsourcing, a company outsources its operations or projects to external suppliers on a contract base that is not for a long term (Ishizaka et al. 2019). Such companies need temporary

expertise for any specific task or project. An organization pursues selective outsourcing involving the transfer of limited responsibilities and activities related to the business process, transitional outsourcing involving outsourcing a process on temporary basis or can pursue total outsourcing involving the outsourcing of an entire process to the local or global vendor (McIvor, 2010).

Tele-migration is different from telepresence as telepresence is set of technologies that a person uses to be virtually present somewhere and feels as if they are present there. For this he uses telerobots that enable him to be at place other than their true location. For example, “EmBot” is a human-sized robot that rolls in a conference room on two wheels. It streams a live video of an employee of the office who is a resident of another country that is thousand miles away. But EmBot is more than just a face on a screen. It can easily turn towards whoever is speaking and can also chase a colleague down the hall. It is an example of telepresence technology that allows the job done by a “tele migrant” from abroad (Peha, 2019).

## **2.8 The merits of tele-migration**

- *Leveraging innovative technologies to revolutionize work, enhance productivity, and foster global talent acquisition*

The benefits of tele-migration are manifold and noteworthy. This innovative approach to work enables workers to seamlessly perform their professional duties from their home country, thereby transcending the limitations of the traditional office settings. By leveraging the cutting-edge communication and digital technologies, tele-migration provides employees with the freedom to work from anywhere. It allows the employees and employers to work from any location by accessing a range of business operations through the internet (Ugwu et al. 2022). According to Boma-Siaminabo (2022) digital resources like cloud storage, web hosting, email and other related web-based applications are now provided to the virtual team of workers. According to Baldwin & Forslid (2020) there are four factors that drive tele-migration. First

factor is domestic telework (audio-visual telecommunication from home i.e., Zoom or Skype etc.) that has made working from home easy and manageable. Tele-migrants using such video-conference (VTC) softwares including Zoom, Microsoft's Skype, Microsoft's Teams, Adobe Connect, Google Hangouts, Google Meet etc. can share information and data in real time without being physically located together at a workstation. According to Pfano and Beharry (2016) the mere access to advanced technology does not guarantee the effective and efficient performance and work productivity of the employees, it is the effective use, relevance, and appropriateness of the technology to the office tasks that lead to improved and effective outcomes.

Baldwin and Forslid (2020) state that the second factor driving tele-migration is machine translation (translate the unknown language, lowering the language barriers i.e., Google translate) that has made it easier for the tele-migrants to do their jobs despite their poor language skills. Machine translation is extensively used tool by multilingual groups as it allows the individuals to communicate in various languages allowing them to speak (write) and listen (read) in almost all the languages (Yasuoka & Bjorn, 2011). Technologies like Google Pixel Buds, Google-assistant-enabled headphones are effectively aid in translating basic inquiries like simple sentences to more complex sentences (Niño, 2020). According to Gaspari et al. (2015) machine translation has simplified people's daily tasks and provide them with rapid access to gathering, processing, and communicating information (Savoldi et al. 2021).

The last factor that drives tele-migration is the new technologies that has torn the geographical barriers (Baldwin & Forslid, 2020). For example, with the help of the technologies of augmented reality (AR) (projecting digital image on to a real setting using different gadgets like headset, glasses, smartphone screens) and virtual reality (VR) (like holographic telepresence) a person feels present at a place other than its actual location (Peddie, 2017).

Tele-migration provides employees with the freedom to work from anywhere at any time that

results in heightening productivity, enhancing work-life balance, and reducing overhead costs of the employees (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). According Gousev and Yurevich (2021) the work productively while saving the cost has led to an increase in tele-migration. Joint research conducted by the University of Chicago and Mexico Autonomous Institute of Technology found that the productivity of about 40% of work-from-home respondents is better than the in-person at workplace productivity (Silvermann, 2020). According to another research conducted by Stanford highlighted that the productivity of US work-from-home employees increased from 20% to 30% as compared to their office-based colleagues that further led to cost savings of approximately 2000 dollars per telecommuter per year for the company (Inc., 2018). According to Ozimek (2020) this improvement in productivity is attributed to the employees' performance and reduced turnover rate.

Tele-migration enables the businesses to access a pool of global talent with diverse skill sets and perspectives, thereby fostering innovation and growth. Workers have the access to multiple job opportunities anywhere in the world connected to the Web (Tsapenko & Grishin, 2022). Professionals and skilled people can engage in highly paid and interesting jobs while staying rooted to their home country. Furthermore, people with lower levels of education and limited employment prospects can also perform simple jobs to stay afloat especially in the regions with high unemployment rates and underdeveloped economies (Graham & Anwar, 2019).

Ultimately, the advantages of tele-migration are rooted in its ability to catalyze a paradigm shift in the way work is conceptualized and executed, unlocking new possibilities for personal and professional fulfillment, as well as organizational success.

## **2.9 Tele-migration in a Startup**

Considering the increasing importance of startup in employment creation and economic growth, this study tried to view the role of tele-migration in the development of a digital startup and startup ecosystem. Tripathi et al. (2019) described a startup ecosystem as it operates in the

settings of a particular region and involves multiple stakeholders like entrepreneurs, investors and other people that share a common interest in the ecosystem. These stakeholders then collaborate with different organizations that support them like governments, funding agencies, and educational institutions. They further described that together all these stakeholders and supporting organizations create an infrastructure that promotes the formation of a common network. This network then supports the establishment of startups on a small scale that creates new jobs at a large scale supporting the economy of their country. The factors that play significant role in the growth of this ecosystem are an efficient interaction among the stakeholders involved, the skills and talents available in a specific region (Tripathi et al. 2019). So, in this context tele-migration helps to acquire diverse talent and skillful workforce from anywhere in the world can strengthen the growth of a startup ecosystem. In addition, the digital gadgets, and platforms that the tele-migrants use support an efficient communication and interaction which is also a growth factor of a startup ecosystem (Tripathi et al. 2019).

The elements and sub-elements, important to a startup ecosystem are human capital, geography, culture and language, global market, industry, technology, and innovation (Tripathi, Seppänen, et al. 2019) all can be strengthened with tele-migration. For example, a successful startup relies on human capital, it is because of a talented and skillful founder along with his employees who worked at the early stage of the startup, help in its growth and expansion. So, the necessary talent can be acquired via hiring tele-migrants with diverse expertise and experiences. Moreover, digital technologies are tearing down the language barriers for tele-migrants (i.e., machine learning) so a tele-migrant sitting in a geographically distant home without adapting any other country's culture can easily adjust to the global market that is another important.

Tele-migration can also help startups to access global markets by providing them with a diverse workforce with different language skills, cultural knowledge and business contacts. This can help the startup to develop new partnerships and expand into new markets. In addition, tele-migration can help startups to leverage emerging technologies and innovative practices from

around the world, enabling them to stay competitive and keep up with the latest trends in their industry.

Furthermore, tele-migration can reduce the barriers to entry for startups, making it easier for entrepreneurs to launch new ventures with minimal resources. By hiring remote workers, startups can save on office rent, utilities, and other costs associated with running a physical workspace. This can help startups to allocate more resources to research and development, marketing, and other critical activities that drive growth and innovation.

Tele-migration has a significant role to play in the development of a digital startup and startup ecosystem. By facilitating access to diverse talent, global markets, and emerging technologies, tele-migration can help startups to overcome the challenges associated with building a successful business. As such, it is important for policymakers, investors, and other stakeholders to recognize the potential benefits of tele-migration and support initiatives that promote its use in the startup ecosystem.

### **Summary**

This section focused on the existing research related to key aspects of the study, including remote work, globalization, communication technologies, trade in services, tele-migration, startups, and the Diffusion of Innovation theory. The literature search strategy encompassed a range of databases and terms related to the topic. Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory was chosen as the theoretical foundation, with various works included.

The concept of tele-migration involves the virtual movement of skilled workers from one country to work in offices located in another country, facilitated by advanced digital and communication technologies. This innovative approach has been driven by the global penetration of digital tools, remote work capabilities, and affordable communication services. The benefits of tele-migration include increased productivity, work-life balance, cost savings for both employers and employees, and the opportunity to tap into a diverse global talent pool.

Tele-migration also fosters innovation by bringing together workers with various skill sets and perspectives. It transcends geographical barriers, allows for effective communication and collaboration, and provides access to specialized expertise without the need for physical relocation. Tele-migration can play a vital role in startup ecosystems by enabling startups to access diverse talent, expand into global markets, and leverage emerging technologies. It can reduce barriers to entry for startups, allowing them to allocate resources more efficiently and focus on critical activities like research and development.

The next chapter outlines the fundamental research philosophy, design, and approach that guided the study. The techniques and methods used to collect and analyze data, which serves as the basis for the subsequent discussions and conclusions are also discussed.



## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This chapter outlines the research philosophy, design and approach followed in the study and discusses the techniques and procedures used for data collection and analysis for further discussion and conclusion.

This chapter will also discuss the key ethical considerations that were involved in the study.

### 3.1 Research Philosophy

The study revolves around the subjectivist ontological approach. This approach posits that social phenomena arise because of the perceptions and subsequent actions of the social actors who are involved in them (Saunders et al. 2019). The researcher followed this approach as the study generated the idea of reality based on the experiences and perceptions (Saunders et al. 2019) of the participants. Here the intent was to understand a tele-migration phenomenon and explore the factors that drive it. Through this, in-depth knowledge was gained to understand how it alters tele-migrant's performance.

The study followed an interpretive epistemological stance and attempted to interpret the meanings that were created after gathering the information from the participants. The study broadens the horizon by developing an understanding of the internal and external factors that encourage tele-migration adoption by taking the perspectives of the participants. Constructs regarding how tele-migration is altering the tele-migrant's performance were divided based on the interpretations given by the participants. The research relied upon concepts, ideas and perspectives at an abstract level making the study more generalized, thus giving it an interpretative form.

The researcher employed an inductive approach in analyzing the data. Inductive approach in qualitative research involves the interaction of researchers with the data that allow the emergence of concepts, patterns, and theories from the data without any preconceived

assumptions about the expected outcomes (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018). For this study, the researcher primarily used the collected data to derive the themes and concepts relevant to the research questions (Azungah, 2018).

The study followed an interpretive paradigm. The Interpretive paradigm commends notions regarding specific human experiences and their surroundings as perceived from various subjective perspectives (Malterud, 2016). Malterud (2016) stated that the researchers who support interpretative paradigm hold the view that true knowledge can only be attained through profound understanding and interpretation of the subject. Interpretive paradigm was followed in this study for developing a deep understanding of the concept (Rahi, 2017) derived from the interpretations of the subjective experiences of the participants (Malterud, 2016) and moved from generalizing the results to a broader population of interest (Woo et al. 2017).

### **3.2 Research Approach**

This study employed phenomenological approach to interpret the meanings of the participants experiences in relation to the tele-migration phenomenon. The current study focuses on understanding the meaning of tele-migrants' experiences by searching the themes and interpretatively engaging with the data following the interpretative phenomenology (Neubauer et al. 2019). Phenomenological approach is an attempt to describe the experiences from the opinions, ideas, or perspectives of the individuals (Gill, 2014) and the findings of such study is a collection of the descriptions of the meanings for individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomena (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). Belle et al. (2015) employed phenomenological approach to describe and understand the essence of teleworkers' experience of organizational belonging. Likewise, Rahiem (2020) examined the lived experiences of the participants and discussed the interpretations of a phenomenon using the qualitative phenomenological approach. For this study the adoption of a phenomenological approach aligns seamlessly with the research objectives, as it offers an ideal approach to delve deeply into the factors surrounding the adoption of tele-migration. Phenomenology enables us to explore the encouraging factors

from the participants' perspectives, unveiling their lived experiences and providing a holistic understanding of the motivations. Additionally, in exploring how tele-migration alters the performance of tele-migrants, a phenomenological approach allows us to capture the richness of individual experiences and interpretations, shedding light on the interplay between tele-migration and performance outcomes. This approach ensures a comprehensive exploration that goes beyond surface-level factors, allowing for a nuanced understanding of both the external and internal factors of tele-migration adoption and how it subsequently alters the performance of tele-migrants.

For this study grounded theory was not an appropriate approach because of the limited and insufficient literature on the tele-migration phenomenon to develop a theory as according to Charmaz (2014) Grounded Theory is designed to develop well-integrated ideas and concepts to develop an understanding and it provides the explanation of the phenomenon being examined. It would have been a suitable approach if the aim of the study was to build a theory, grounded in the data that was gathered through iterative process of coding for theory generation. Ethnographic study was also considered an inappropriate approach for this study as an ethnographic study define and describe how a cultural group interacts in their natural environment and further explores a cultural phenomenon and examines the group's collective behaviors and language (Bryman, 2016).

### **3.3 Research Methods**

The research methodology adopted for this research is purely qualitative. This method was selected due to its suitability in conducting an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of tele-migration. By adopting qualitative methodology, the researcher is equipped to thoroughly engage with the participants' experiences, understanding the significant things happened in their lives that influenced their decision to adopt tele-migration (Mayer, 2015) and gaining insight that how tele-migration is altering their performance.

Quantitative and mixed methods approach was inappropriate for the study as quantitative method examine the relationship between the theoretical constructs and variable to predict the research outcomes (Yin, 2009). Further, mixed methods approach combines both qualitative and quantitative elements, but the study only used the qualitative elements, so the mixed methods approach was also not appropriate for this study.

According to Bryman (2016), interviews come under the qualitative method of data collection. Following the inductive approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted that allowed the researcher to keep an open mind about what needed to be known so that theories and concepts could be drawn from the data (Bell et al. 2022).

### **3.4 Semi-structured interviews**

According to Busetto et al. (2020) the choice of a research method should be based on the research question and objectives of the study. So, semi-structure interviews method was selected to be the most appropriate qualitative research method for this study as they are extensively used data collection method within the social sciences (Evans & Lewis, 2018). The semi-structured interviews are used to get insights into a person's subjective experiences, his opinions, and motivations (Busetto et al. 2020; Flick, 2022). To address their research question, Obada-Obieh et al. (2021) conducted semi-structured interviews from the employees who had been working from home to explore the challenges and threats of mass telecommuting. Likewise, the current study conducted the semi-structured interviews from the participants and analyzed the data using thematic analysis. The interviews were conducted from 16 participants selected through purposive sampling technique. The study used semi-structure interview method having a series of open-ended questions allowing the respondents to be flexible in responding to the questions (Newcomer et al. 2015). The interviews were conducted face to face and/or through online platforms with consent of the participants. The interviews were audiotaped and/or videotaped.

The focus group discussion method was not considered appropriate for this study as it is used

to identify a range of opinions on any specific issue or is normally used to understand the norms and values of a community (Hennink et al. 2020). The study did not select observation method as it is used to gain insights into a person's actual behaviors in a certain setting and the observer is completely or partially participating or a non-participant of the study (Ciesielska & Jemielniak, 2018).

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

As this study is explorative in nature, non-probability sampling was the most practical technique for it. According to Gill (2014) phenomenological approaches use the homogenous and purposive sampling to recruit only those participants who share a lived experience and can offer meaningful perspectives and point of view of the phenomenon. The study used purposive sampling for the interviews that is typically used for qualitative research (Flick, 2022) where the respondents were included based on a homogenous purposive sampling strategy.

### **3.6 Participants and Procedure**

The researcher collected the primary data as first-time data to answer the research questions by gathering the information from the interview method including the semi-structured interviews.

The interviews were conducted with:

- The CEOs and Co-founders of startups who are working as tele-migrants in different foreign markets.

The basic criteria to select them is they must be full-time employees in foreign offices and their startup is exporting services to that specific employer. CEOs and Co-founders exporting their services abroad must have a minimum of two years of experience with tele-migration.

The rationale behind this is that the CEOs and Co-founders of startups that are implementing tele-migration practices were able to provide a better perspective on the tele-migration, the external and internal factors that encouraged them to adopt it, how it is altering their work performance and how they are benefited by the tele-migration.

### **3.7 Sample Size**

According to Bartholomew et al. (2021) the sample size for phenomenological research should be small enough to appropriately express the consciousness of the participants and the meanings of their lived experiences that aligns with the primary phenomenological methods. (Patton et al. 2016) did not support the idea of a universal rule for determining the sample size for a qualitative study and stated that by nature the sample size of 86 is emergent and flexible for qualitative studies. Further stating Morse (2000) he suggested that the sample size of six to ten for a phenomenological study is an adequate sample size. Using phenomenology, the researcher for this study intended to collect data from a homogenous population taking semi-structured interviews. A total of 16 interviews were conducted including the interviews from experienced and knowledgeable CEOs and Co-founders of startup teams working as tele-migrants in different foreign offices.

The aim of the researcher was to keep on collecting data until the saturation point. Saturation in the data is achieved when no further information is added by the participants and the researcher is not learning anything new (Azungah, 2018). So, the researcher continued taking interviews till the emergence of new themes in the participants interviews and stopped taking interviews when the saturation point was reached.

### **3.8 Respondents**

#### **3.8.1 Demographics**

The study focused on the encouraging factors of the tele-migration adoption and how the tele-migrants' performance is altering due to tele-migration, so the demographical information did play an integral role in this study. The researcher ensured that all the participants met the required criteria for the participation in the study. All the 16 interviewees met or exceed the criteria to participate, which were to be full-time employee in any foreign company and associated with a startup in Pakistan that is exporting its services to that certain foreign company.

The sampling of the respondents needs to be addressed thoroughly as it is important to the validity of the study. In this study, a total of 16 semi-structured interview were conducted from the CEOs and Co-founders (16 interviews- 12 males and 4 females) of eight different startups of Pakistan (6 Islamabad-based startups and 1 Lahore-based startup and 1 Faisalabad-based startup) as shown in the table below:

**Table 2:** Data Collection through Semi-structured Interviews from respondents

Respondent	Location	Designation	Industry	Gender
<b>R1</b>	Islamabad	CEO	Education	Male
<b>R2</b>	Islamabad	Co- Founders	Education	Male
<b>R3</b>	Islamabad	Co- Founders	Education	Female
<b>R4</b>	Lahore	CEO	Creative	Male
<b>R5</b>	Lahore	Co- Founders	Creative	Female
<b>R6</b>	Islamabad	CEO	IT	Male
<b>R7</b>	Islamabad	Co- Founders	IT	Male
<b>R8</b>	Faisalabad	CEO	IT	Male
<b>R9</b>	Faisalabad	Co- Founders	IT	Male
<b>R10</b>	Faisalabad	Co- Founders	IT	Male
<b>R11</b>	Islamabad	CEO	Creative/IT	Male
<b>R12</b>	Islamabad	CEO	IT	Male

<b>R13</b>	Islamabad	Co- Founders	IT	Male
<b>R14</b>	Islamabad	CEO	Creative	Male
<b>R15</b>	Islamabad	Co- Founders	Creative	Female
<b>R16</b>	Islamabad	CEO	IT	Female

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations of Research

For the researcher ethics remained the top priority throughout the research. It was assured that no psychological, emotional, physical, or social harm occurred prior to and during the interviews. To avoid ethical misconduct, the study followed the informed-consent rules to conduct the interviews. A consent form mentioned with introduction, purpose, duration, and data collection procedures was sent to potential participants in person and/ or through email. No interview was conducted without a prior signed consent form from the participant. It was made sure that the participants fully understood the research process in which they took part. Further, the participants were informed that their interviews will be audio and/or videotaped and the quotes from the interview will be used in the write-up of the thesis, ensuring that no participant can be identified from them. The use of any inappropriate, discriminatory, or other offensive language was avoided in the questions and interview. The researcher protected the participants' identities, and pseudonyms were assigned to each participant and the startup. The innovative ideas of entrepreneurs and startups' operations were kept confidential too. The participants were informed about this process to motivate them to take part in the study. Further, it allowed any participant to withdraw at any point in the study.

The data will remain with the researcher till the acceptance of this thesis work. Transcripts and recordings will be discarded thereof to avoid any risk in the future regarding confidentiality.



### **3.10 Data Collection**

The instruments to gather primary data for this qualitative study were interviews (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019). A interview guide was designed and developed as a research instrument (Lee, 2018). Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and probing questions were also asked to evoke in-depth information (Newcomer et al. 2015). The interview questions were well aligned with the research questions. The interview guide addressed the encouraging factors of the participants for tele-migration adoption and how it is altering performance of these tele-migrants. The interview guide was reviewed by one of the GEC members of the researcher to verify if it is appropriate and that the instructions are clear and understandable.

A pilot study to assess the interview guide was also conducted prior to the main interviews which helped the researcher in ensuring that all the participants understood the concept of tele-migration and understood the interview questions.

Potential participants were sent an e-mail or/and DMs requesting for their volunteer participation for the study. The selected participants met the selection requirements for the study. Upon completion of the interview, the participants were given the chance to ask their questions and further comments. At the end of the interview, they were informed that their identities will remain anonymous, and their responses and any additional information will be kept confidential.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews and/or online interviews via different video-calling applications. The data collected from the interviews were then transcribed by using transcription apps available on Google Play. The transcribed data was uploaded into ATLAS.ti that is commonly used software to analyze qualitative data in qualitative research methods (Islam & Aldaihani, 2022). Quotation, codes, categories, and themes were generated that helped to analyze the data.

### **3.11 Interview Guide**

An interview guide included the list of questions and areas which had to be covered during the

interview and acted as a 'cheat sheet' for the interviewer. It also included the participant information sheet, participant consent form and teleconference oral consent script. The interview guide was approved from two academics including the GEC members (Dr. Adeel Tariq and Dr. Ayesha Abrar). Their feedback was incorporated in the interview guide and the researcher made a couple of changes accordingly. The interviewer kept on adding extra questions about unexpected but relevant areas that when appeared during the interview process. It was important for the researcher to ask the participants relevant questions based on their perceptions and experiences.

The interview started with simple open-ended questions which were easy to understand for the interviewees. Later, the interviews moved on to those questions that specifically focused and covered the research questions. The questions were provided with the factual answers and made the participants comfortable. Overly personal questions were avoided in the interview so as not to offend the respondent.

Timing was another crucial element of the interview for the researcher. The interviews for this study varied in length, as some of the participants were more experienced and fluent in speech. The time of interviews was 40 minutes to 1 hour max. The researcher also highlighted the main questions which were more important to the research during the interviews so to get the detailed answers for that.

### **3.12 Analytical Procedure**

Interviews and data analysis were done simultaneously. As the qualitative data is non-numeric information as such transcripts, notes, and audio recordings (Dudovskiy, 2013) thematic analysis method was used to identify, analyze, and report the repeated patterns from the data.

There are various approaches to conduct thematic analysis, but the most usual form of the thematic analysis is the six-step analysis as suggested by (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Thematic analysis is considered an effective approach that helps in determining the people's opinions,

perceptions, knowledge, ideas, and experiences. It also helps in creating value from a set of perspective data like interviews and transcripts and other forms of surveys (Baten & Amadi, 2020).

To find the answers to the research questions it is necessary to collect the data from the relevant participants who can add rich value to your research. Thematic analysis gives this flexibility to interpret a large set of data with ease and easily sorting and assigning themes to it. As this analysis is purely based on the subjective judgement of the researcher so the researcher controlled her own interpretations while dealing with the raw data set.

### **3.13 Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interview responses and was conducted in six steps: familiarizing with collected data, generating initial codes (coding), searching for the themes (generating categories), reviewing of the themes, defining, and Naming themes, and producing the report by writing up the final results.

Coding, categories, and themes were generated with the help of a software 'Atlas.ti' where the transcribed interviews were uploaded, and quotations were made and renamed for coding that generated several themes which were then put under different categories. Those categories then helped in generating the themes.

### **Summary**

This chapter included the detailed description of the qualitative design method and the rationale behind it. The purpose of the study was to explore the internal and external factors that encourage 16 tele-migrants associated with a startup in Pakistan and had a minimum of two years' experience in tele-migration. The protocol for the qualitative study was to conduct semi-structure interviews with the participants selected through a purposive sampling technique, until saturation was reached. Second was to code transcript and gather them into categories and themes. Third was to provide a data-supported perspective on the responses of the participants

on the internal and external factors that encouraged them to adopt tele-migration and how their performance is altering due to tele-migration.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This study aims to explore the internal and external factors that encourage tele-migration adoption and to understand how tele-migration is altering the employee's performance. The target sample includes the tele-migrants interviewed to elicit responses on what internal and external factors encouraged them to adopt tele-migration as a profession and how it alters their work performance. Therefore, the purposive sampling technique was adopted. Various startups in a developing country Pakistan, were contacted to enlist potential interviewees. All the interviewees were CEOs and Co-founders of the startups that are exporting their services abroad. The interviews can be considered significant since all the interviewees are experienced CEOs and Co-founders who shared realistic information during the interview.

The research questions developed for the study were:

- **RQ1.** What factors including both internal and external encourage the adoption of tele-migration in start-ups?
- **RQ2.** How does tele-migration alter the employees' performance at these startups?

This section summarizes the research findings derived from the thematic analysis conducted on the interviews to determine the factors that encourage the tele-migration adoption and its consequence on the work performance of the tele-migrants.

### 4.2 Thematic Analysis Results

The discussion below is based on the derived themes used to formulate this research as shown in the table below:

**Table 3:** Findings from the Thematic Analysis (themes and sub-themes obtained after analysing the data)

Category	Themes and sub themes		Merged initial codes
Understanding the circumstances behind Tele-migrants' choice to pursue Tele-migration as a career	Opportunity-driven choices	Professional advancement and opportunities	Internet-based Access of opportunities
			Enhanced home country prospects
			Global exposure urge
			Growth aspiration
	Resilience and adaptability	Relocation hassle avoidance	
		Pandemic resilience	
	Desire for Fair and Just Working Conditions	Ethical and equitable work environment	Local job exploitation avoidance
	Strengthening economic well-being	Financial well-being and support	Financial empowerment
			Support of government initiatives
			Enhanced job satisfaction
Factors that encourage tele-migration adoption	Freedom of mobility	Opportunity to work from diverse settings	
		Not limited to a fixed workspace	
		Remote Work Flexibility	
	Global Work and Culture	Global exposure and skill enhancement	
		International market familiarity	
		Cultural awareness and self-development	
		Global Customer Insights	
		Boost to confidence and esteem	
	Flexibility and Security	Financial incentives and security	
	Global Work and Culture	Flexible work arrangements	
		Remote work convenience and adaptability	
		Adaptation to changing work realities	
	Skill Development in Tele-migration	Skill and knowledge acquisition	
Technological proficiency and innovation			
Learning of new skills			
Internal factors that encourage tele-migration adoption			

			Inquisitive nature and exploration
		Transparency in Process	Transparent Communication for Productivity
Digital platforms for effective communication			
Elimination of communication gaps			
Timely Information for Efficiency			
Conflict Prevention			
Fostering Productive Boundaries	Isolation work preference		
	Introvert interaction avoidance		
	Supervision freedom		
	Colleague distance desire		
	Isolation work preference		
External factors that encourage tele-migration adoption	Limited job prospects in the local market	Global Skills and Tech Trends	
		Lack of opportunities in the home country	
		Global job market exploration	
		International opportunities for skill utilization	
		Recognition and reward for expertise	
	Skill based compensation by Overseas employers	Overseas skill-based compensation	
		Exporting services based on valued talents	
		Influence of home country economy	
		Foreign currency conversion advantage	
		Tele-migration boosting foreign exchange gains	
		Boosting Home Country's Economy	
	Government Policies and Regulator Flexibility for Empowering Tele-Migration	Government flexibility in empowering tele-migration	
		Beneficial policies and regulation	
		Facilitation for financial transactions	
		Supportive laws for banking and payments	
		National freelancing facilitation policy impact	
	Technological advancements	Technological advancements driving tele-migration	
		Online work opportunities	
Enhanced access to lucrative prospects			

			Adapting to changing work trends
			Covid-19 impact on tele-migration
			Shift to internet-based work platforms
Tele-migration alters the employee's performance	Routine	Remote Work Challenges	Time Management and Discipline
			Balancing Work and Personal Life
			Health and Well-being Impact
		Work-Life Balance	Sleep Sacrifice Dislike
			Overthinking and Work-Life Balance
	Work Performance	Performance Enhancement	Enhanced Performance and Productivity
			Skill Development and Training
		Communication and Confidence	Communication Skill Enhancement
			Confidence and Self-Control Improvement
		Global Inspiration and Learning	Inspiration from Global Tele-migrants
Learning International Workplace Legalities			
Work Quality	Workplace Diversity	Diverse Workplace Experience	

**Research Question 1.** What factors including both internal and external encourage the adoption of tele-migration in start-ups?

Majority of the respondents adopted tele-migration after experiencing the physical job in their own home country where in their subjective opinions they were exploited by the local companies as they did not get the deserved appreciation for their work and the compensation against their working hours. Furthermore, the companies usually demanded them to work extra hours without any compensation. Another major issue for them was the limited communication with their employer where there lacked the mutual respect and information sharing between the employee and the employer so many tele-migrants due to these certain issues moved towards the tele-migration. As said by one of the respondents:

*'The timings here are not good, even if they mention that you must work like 8 hours per day, you are being asked to work more than that and there is no extra bonus or compensation for the extra hours'* (R 14)



*'The first thing is the salary, I used to work in Pakistan, I know there are salary limits for the freshies and newbies' (R 1)*

*'I wanted to do tasks that I complete and then I can enjoy the rest of the day' (R 6)*

The participants who faced the issues of lack of opportunities in their home country also adopted tele-migration to avoid the massive struggles that comes with relocation, where they had to take a clean slate of their lives in another country or continent. So, instead of relocating they can get the experience of working across the border while sitting in the comfort of their homes, saving their expenses, travel hassles, and time.

*'I should say, that, relocation is not always, easy for everyone, living out of your own culture, travel somewhere else and then face some language barriers and start your life from zero is not easy' (R8)*

Most of the participants adopted tele-migration to become financially independent while studying. The late working hours due to the different time zones helped them to manage their jobs while studying in the daytime. The freedom of mobility and location independence that comes with this profession also helped the participants to manage their studies efficiently alongside their work.

*'I adopted it to be honest because I had classes in the daytime and a regular day time job does not allow you to take class breaks' (R 6)*

A major issue for the participants was the lack of opportunities for the freshies who do not have experience in their respective industries. Such participants adopted tele-migration as their skills were recognized by their foreign employers and they were provided with the jobs including better incentives as compared to the local companies. These participants are of this stance now that the experience of working in any foreign company has improved our impression and now, we are provided with better opportunities in our home country.

*'Every few months they teach me new things and skills. If I am bored with one thing, I can ask my manager to give me another task' (R 2)*

The government of Pakistan's initiatives like "DigiSkills" and "E-Rozgaar" also played a vital role in equipping few of the participants with the knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques necessary to seize the opportunities available on online marketplaces internationally to earn a living and their growth leads to a flourishing national economy.

*'There was a course named DigiSkills that government of Pakistan is providing us free. I did that course and in that I did a basic course of freelancing and tele-marketing and that encouraged me to learn new skills and became a means to encourage me for this adoption' (R 6)*

### **The internal factors that encourage tele-migration adoption**

*Freedom of mobility* was one of the most prominent internal factors that encouraged the participants for tele-migration adoption. The freedom of mobility that comes with tele-migration helped the participants to do their jobs from anywhere and not be bound at a specific location for their jobs. As mentioned by the participants they can even do their jobs while travelling, when they are on vacation and when they are managing other activities side by side.

*'As a tele-migrant I like the freedom of time and freedom of mobility which this mode of work gives me' (R 14)*

Other respondents highlighted:

*'I like freedom of mobility like if I am on vacation, I can continue my work from there and again the compensation it offers as compared to a local company is better' (R 4)*

*'When you start enjoying this freedom you don't want to fall back from it. Even if you are on trips and vacations you can work from there as well. You are not bound to any place' (R 6)*

*Flexibility* in working hours that allow the tele-migrants to get their jobs done at ease and whenever they want to do it was also an encouraging factor that drove this adoption. This flexibility with working hours allows the participants who are managing their studies with this job to work at any time that is possible for them. This flexibility of hours also allows the female tele-migrants who are mothers or stay-at-home spouses and managing their family life and work together. For them flexibility of working hours is the major drive for this adoption.

*'Even if you have completed the task but you still must stay in local office to complete your work hours. So, that's where you are wasting your time and not doing any other thing. So, for me the time flexibility and flexible working hours that's a good thing' (R 14)*

*'The hours are flexible like I have given tasks from my employer, and I complete that task and submit it so that's what I like about my job' (R 04)*

For most of the participants another internal factor in this adoption was they did not want to be watched by someone while working and being answerable to them on the spot as then they felt anxious. Also, they wanted to avoid physical interaction with their employer and other colleagues as per their introvert personalities so tele-migration provided them with this freedom of working in isolation without socializing with colleagues. As mentioned by one of the respondents:

*'I really wanted to avoid visiting people. I did not want to meet people in person, so, it really helped me' (R 12)*

*'We work in such environments where someone is watching you the whole time so when you are working as a tele-migrant no one is physically present around you to boss around' (R 06)*

*'I can socialize but I preferred not to. I can socialize if there is a situation where I need to, but I don't choose to so being an introvert this profession was the best option for me'*

**(R02)**

*Exposure and Experience of International Job* was another significant internal factor for the participants who adopted tele-migration instead of taking an 8-hour physical job in their local companies. The tele-migrants had the urge to explore and gain the international market exposure, they wanted to get the exposure of an international company, their work culture, their work ethics, and practices. Majority of them also wanted to familiarize themselves with the international clients and customers, their thoughts, and beliefs. In their subjective opinions this exposure was a much-needed exposure for them that gave a real boost to their self-esteem and confidence. This exposure they would not be able to get unless they move to that certain country so due to tele-migration, they are gaining this exposure while sitting in their home country. As respondents highlighted this:

*'Working with organizations that have expanded their businesses overseas gives you the necessary experience and exposure that one requires'* **(R 16)**

*'I am getting to know a lot of international clients and how things work outside Pakistan, and this is getting me to different places and let me have international exposure'* **(R 15)**

*Financial incentives* are the major internal factor for the tele-migrants for this adoption as according to the participants considering that they are from a developing country and their country's economy is an emerging economy, it was exceedingly difficult for them to earn a handsome amount of money while working in any local company. So, to get a better compensation against their working hours they adopted this mode of work. The amount that they earn when converted in their own country's currency it become twice or thrice of what they could get while working in any local company. So, this was a significant attraction for the participants to adopt tele-migration. The participants also highlighted the issues of the limited

wage rates of their own country especially for a freshie who do not own years of work experience. So, for such participants tele-migration paved a way to earn good living in less time. As highlighted by the respondents:

*‘The currency exchange rates, or the currency conversion rates are increasing day by day. Whether it’s dollars or pounds or any other good currency. The high currency exchange rates help me to earn a handsome amount of money’ (R 8)*

*‘I am in Pakistan knowing there are salary limits for the freshies and newbies, he would be paid around 50 thousand to 1 lac maximum, not more than that. But in European countries or in America the people there, their salaries are like two times or three times more even for the freshies’ (R 14)*

The participants also mentioned that while working as a tele-migrant they also compensated for their extra working hours by the foreign companies that would never be possible in the local job market.

*‘You are being asked to work more than the working hours in local companies and there is no extra bonus or the compensation for the extra hours’ (R 14)*

According to the participants in terms of remuneration, tele-migration is better than a regular job in any local company as foreign employees compensate them for their services including salary or hourly rate, bonuses, commissions, and any other payment like overtime pay etc.

Few participants highlighted that the company values them and compensate them according to our in-demand skills.

*“I even get overtime payment while I am of-the-job training, that keeps me motivated to some extent” (R 05)*

According to the participants, tele-migration has reduced the expenses of their startups in every way possible. There is no need for a physical office now and the startups can operate virtually.

Due to tele-migration, it is possible for them to hire competent and skillful staff from anywhere in the country. Furthermore, other expenses like the energy cost, cost of office supplies and equipment and cost for maintaining the power backup systems have been reduced. These startups do not need to provide their employees with any physical assets, instead the employees manage everything on their own. As highlighted by the respondent:

*'Our employees work efficiently from their homes, increasing their productivity. On the other hand, being an employer, I do not need to provide my employees with anything but the salary. This reduces the expenses of my business, and I can save and invest that money into my business'* (R 12)

In tele-migrant's opinions, they can earn a salary that they can spend on themselves instead of paying the traveling cost, food costs at the office, clothing, and other personal grooming costs.

*'I am happy as I have chosen a career where I do not have to get dressed daily, pay for traveling fares and be conscious of seeing presentable and groomed in the office. This reduces my expenses and allows me to enjoy the full salary'* (R 3)

Learning of new skills, the urge to learn about international workplace culture and ethics, the international legal framework and about the international clients and customers was another internal factor for the participants for adopting tele-migration. Majority of them wanted to be technologically adept person as they recognized the significance of tele-migration and how drastically this mode of work is going to grow in the next few years, so, majority of them adopted this profession to learn about this phenomenon, how things work in this profession and how you can exploit this opportunity to gain experience and exposure of companies and communities abroad while sitting miles away in another country.

*'You can gain experience while you are working. You can gain the exposure; you can learn work ethics and culture'* (R 7)

*'I learned a lot; I learned a lot about the international customers. So, yes, I feel blessed I am working with such people who are teaching me enough that I can use my skills anywhere I want' (R 2)*

Security was one of the main reasons for the female participants where they and their families were concerned about their security at workplace and other related issues like workplace harassment at the workplace. Due to this relocation was also not a workable possibility for them, so they were attracted to tele-migration to earn a living while sitting in a safe secure place of their comfort.

### **The external factors that encourage tele-migration adoption**

*Lack of opportunities* was one of the most significant external factors that affected the decision of participants to earn their living by adopting tele-migration. Majority of them had trouble in getting a job in their own country that was secure and compensating them according to their education, capabilities, and skills. They believe there still are extremely limited opportunities available especially for the students, fresh graduates, and people with less industry experience. These participants then explored the international markets and exploited the opportunities available there resulting in the adoption of tele-migration.

As highlighted by the respondents:

*'So, the thing is in Pakistan we have lack of opportunities, lack of opportunities in this sense that it does not matter if you have done BBA, LLB or MBA. Whatever degree you have completed there will not be any good opportunities for you unless you really have someone who will push you forward or carry you up' (R 7)*

*'The most important external factor for me is that because of the internet the world has become a global village where you can find many opportunities' (R 12)*

*In- demand skills* proved to be another external factor as mentioned by the participants as their skills were in demand in the European market where the employers recognized their skills and offered them a better job than the job they were doing in the local companies.

According to the participants in their home country, no matter how skillful they are they could only earn a limited amount of salary. Many of them are now being paid as per the skill-based pay system by foreign companies. Furthermore, it was easy for the participants to export their services based on their skills that were respected and compensated well by the foreign employers.

*'If we talk about skills, in Pakistan they are not very well recognized. But if we talk about foreign countries, they recognize the skills' (R 40)*

*'In European countries they respect and value your skills' (R 33)*

*Developing economy* of Pakistan was another external factor that played a significant role in the adoption of tele-migration by the participants. This was an encouraging factor for them as the foreign currency exchange rates are quite high in Pakistan, so it allows them to earn a quite handsome amount salary when converted into Pakistani currency. Furthermore, few of the participants mentioned that by adopting tele-migration, their foreign exchange earnings are regarded as vital to the economic growth of their country.

*'One of the things about external factors is the economy as considering our country's current situation, so the thing is we are doing in Pakistan like people who have references, so you don't make a good amount of living while being skillful' (R 12)*

*Government policies and regulators* of Pakistan regarding tele-migration and other related modes of work are flexible that facilitate the tele-migrants. As mentioned by the participants these policies encouraged them more towards tele-migration and acted as an external factor for this adoption. As highlighted by the participants these policies allow them to have access to



bank loans, credit cards, and the ease of sending and receiving payments abroad against their services, any software purchase, online platform usage and other similar expenses.

*'I had heard that people who are working in foreign companies for them government was giving few tax breaks. That was an encouraging factor for me' (R 1)*

*'The flexible government policies and regulators were a factor for me to adopt tele-migration' (R 6)*

*'As you might know about the regulations in Pakistan, like the government here has been. Like they want people to work, and they want people to bring in the dollars, so the government usually had laid off the tax and service duty on working online so that is good motivation even for me too like if I am doing any business' (R 14)*

Technological advances along with the innovation in the industry like shifting work paradigms are fueling tele-migration and making it easier for the tele-migrants to communicate and find work at online marketplaces. Furthermore, the cross-border payment platforms are making it easy for the tele-migrants to get paid for their services, regardless of the location of their employers. So, according to the participants it is not only providing them with the wealthy opportunities but also allows them to keep pace with the changing work paradigms and technological advances.

Due to *Covid19*, when the businesses shifted to online platforms, tele-migration rose to its peak. Few of the participants adopted tele-migration at that time because they were not able to find physical jobs in their home countries and were also not be able to migrate to any other country for their jobs.

*'During COVID remote jobs were becoming a new trend and I think this is what made me, and many others encouraged me to adopt it. Also due to the pandemic jobs in my own country were becoming scarce, it became difficult to find a job that gave you the necessary experience and even paid well' (R 30)*

*'We can put a pandemic in it and lack of opportunity because of course when the pandemic started everything close people even lost their job and because at that time, I was home doing nothing, so I started the tele-migration, and it really helped me to get exposure of this mode of work and I got attracted towards it' (R 15)*

**Research Question 2.** How does tele-migration alter the employees' performance at these startups?

The majority of the tele-migrants were concerned about their sleep schedule because of the time difference they sacrifice their regular sleep at night and work all night for their jobs. According to the participants they are disobeying the law of nature that asks them to get sleep at nighttime. For the participants it was exceedingly difficult to cope with this work routine in the first few months of their jobs.

*'I mean you have to work at night obviously because of the time difference and different time zones so you must work according to their time not your own time, so you have to adjust your sleeping patterns' (R 7)*

Few participants highlighted that being a tele-migrant, they cannot give enough time to their families even while working from home. But for most of the participants, tele-migration helped them to stay close to their families and helped them to maintain a work-life balance where they equally prioritize the demands of their work and personal life.

*'You can earn from anywhere but if you are not growing then you shouldn't opt for this profession. I would say you cannot go out, you cannot give time to your family' (R 7)*

*'Even if you are on trips and vacations you can work from there as well. You are not bound to any place. You are sitting with your family, and you are doing your work that is a huge benefit' (R 06)*

Moreover, tele-migrants usually get the national, public, regional, official, and unofficial

holidays as observed in the country they work in, so they mostly are working on the holidays that are observed in their home country. To complete their tasks prior to such holidays, they need to do work extra hours per week that also affect their routines during such period.

*'You have to sacrifice your regular holidays or the holidays that you enjoy in your own country because you know we are working for America or Canada or whatever country, you have to work according to their customs like there you can say if its Christmas you will be getting holidays but when we have holy occasions we won't be taking off'* (R 7)

Furthermore, few participants tend to be happy with their work routines as they believe that tele-migration allows them to maintain a healthy lifestyle and gives them more time for physical activities, hobbies, and interests, and has improved their personal relationships. While for a few participants it is otherwise like they are facing difficulty in finding time for themselves and for their social lives staying in this routine.

*'If the employer gives you this flexibility you need to complete the task in 6 hours, then you can set them according to your routine anytime. This is a huge benefit of this profession'* (R 6)

*'I have lost contact with a lot of my friends and there is a communication gap between me and my family as everyone is working in daytime and you are getting up in the afternoon and then when they come back from their work and institutions, and they are resting but you have just started your day. These are the things that are affecting my routine basically'* (R 12)

Tele-migration helps participants to maintain a better work-life balance. As highlighted by a CEO of a startup:

*'It helps me to focus on my startup in the daytime as well from home that gives me plenty of time to balance my work and personal life'* (R 14)

According to tele-migrants, their work performance has been positively affected by tele-migration. Working in foreign companies with a healthy work culture supports them to perform their best, they have their highly professional, competent, and skillful employer and colleague whom they look up to and they become a source of motivation for them. Most of the participants agreed that tele-migration has helped them in learning and enhancing their skills including communication skills, technological skills, problem-solving, and time management skills. According to the participants it has enhanced their adaptivity that is helping them to grow in the industry and they are learning multiple skills at the same time.

*'I can work from the comfort of my room and don't have to sit in an uncomfortable chair for 8 hours straight. But it has also impacted my social skills, rather than going out and interacting with people I think I now prefer to stay at home and not interact at all' (R 16)*

*'It has enhanced my skills like technological skills, communication skills and I have also learned a lot of different things considering that here it takes a lot of time and energy to get command of a skill but through tele-migration I am learning multiple skills at the same time' (R 12)*

All the tele-migrants believe that their productivity and work efficiency has increased and improved as working from their comfort zones when their minds are relaxed, and they are able to take break between work help them in performing well. Their efficiency also increases as when they don't need the whole working hours for completing a task, they efficiently complete their tasks before the deadline and enjoy the rest of the time unlike the conventional jobs where they have to be physically present and sit idle to complete the working hours.

*'Like I work in my comfort zone like I complete my task and then I can enjoy the rest of the day' (R 4)*

Transparency in the processes and communication proved to be another reason for enhancing the work performance of the tele-migrants as the digital platforms assist in smooth, transparent, and effective communication between the tele-migrants and their employers. When there is no communication gap and tele-migrants are provided with all the necessary information at the appropriate times it increases their work efficiency. Furthermore, the transparency in the work processes does not allow organizational politics or personal conflicts to obstruct a tele-migrants productivity and efficiency. As highlighted by the respondents:

*'I guess the factor of punctuality is their work ethics like their work culture is very transparent that also encourages me to work good as well' (R 4)*

The punctuality and dedication to work of foreign employers and team inspired the tele-migrants to develop punctuality, time management skills, self-control and encourage them to enhance their work ethics and performance.

*'I believe it is also very good as I know my employer is very punctual, so I have also need to be punctual and the respect is mutual like it is a very healthy relationship. This might not be the same case if I was working for a local company' (R 4)*

The healthy employee-employer relationship at work helped in developing mutual trust and respect between tele-migrants and their employers that paved the way for high employee morale, effective communication between them leading to the better performance of the tele-migrants. As highlighted by the respondents:

*'We do work, or we do work smartly, when we work as a tele-migrant and, obviously, there are some factors again, that there are few things that some bossy nature of the employer that somehow affects your performance' (R 8)*

Few participants also highlighted that their performance is compromised to some extent due to isolation, loneliness, and night shifts. They get bored, lazy and it becomes difficult for them to

find time for themselves and other activities that is eventually impacting their mental and physical health. Being unable to be physically present in an office setting makes them feel stressed and less motivated to complete their tasks. So, for them the motivation that we can get while being a part of a big team and having in-person interaction with them is lacking in tele-migration.

*'Because my routine changed to nighttime staying up and sleeping for six hours in the day, so I was sometimes lazy and sometimes sleepy, so this work performance is somehow compromised' (R 15)*

Due to lack of socialization and in-person interaction also leads to lack of personal development opportunities for the tele-migrants.

*'You talk to the same people and cannot learn new things, personality grooming that can be done in physical environment is missing here' (R 14)*

According to the participants the foreign employers, managers, and team leaders appreciate their work and their efforts as compared to the local jobs where if there's an unhealthy employer-employee relationship exists, no one will appreciate their work.

The participants' highlighted that this recognition and appreciation by the employer directly affect the employee's job satisfaction and performance at the workplace.

*"I feel motivated, respected when my employer and team leader appreciate my work. This improves my self-confidence as well" (R 3)*

According to the participants, the clear and precise guidelines of the foreign employers improve their work quality. It helps them to understand their tasks and what the employer is expecting from them. So, putting effort into the right tasks allows them to meet and exceed the expectations of their company.

*'Clear guidelines by the foreign employer, you work better, you get appreciation and respect for' (R 5)*

*'The US based companies are very like they are very much on point, they just need work from the employee. Like if you work you will get respect, but here in Pakistan you go to the offices and see tell you thousands of things to do and follow' (R 6)*

Few participants are provided with different necessary tools, equipment, and on-the-job training that in their opinions help in using their skills to complete their tasks with the highest standards.

*'But with tele-migration that does not happen they help you adjust, provide you with the necessary tools and equipment and even train you to perform your tasks better' (R 16)*

The workplace diversity also set the grounds for the improved quality of tele-migrants' work. The majority of the participants believe that looking at the professionalism, skillfulness, and work quality of their colleagues from around the globe allows them to improve their work quality, skills and professional attributes.

*'Basically, when you work with foreign employers you get different feedbacks and your work quality improves. Plus, those companies have worked with different tele-migrants from different countries so they also share their work with you and give you their feedbacks so considering that in mind you work according to that and it improves your work quality. Also, as you are working sitting on different online platforms then you also get to see different portfolios of different tele-migrants so from that you get motivation, inspiration and from that you keep on improving your work quality' (R 6)*

## **Summary**

This chapter has examined the findings of the qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted by following the interview protocols to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study. Several themes and categories from the coding process of the thematic analysis

were presented. The primary themes that emerged from the analysis were understanding the circumstances behind Tele-migrants' choice to pursue Tele-migration as a career, factors that encourage tele-migration adoption and tele-migration alters the employee's performance. The results reveal the internal and external factors that encourage tele-migrants for its adoption and its consequences on their work performance.

Chapter 5 includes further discussion of the interpretation of these findings, contributions, limitations, and future research recommendations and implications of the study.



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### Discussion

The growing interdependence of the world's economy has enabled the trade of goods, services, technology, and people across borders (Kolb, 2018). The integration of the world's markets has increased the demand in the service sector (Bi et al. 2019). The export of services plays a key determinant of the competitiveness of a firm in the market and drives the export growth. The advancing digital and communications technologies have accelerated globalization into its third unbundling that stems from outdoing the geographical distances with technological breakthroughs (Kimura, 2017). The cost of communication technologies has been reduced that made the services much easier to trade (Bi et al. 2019). The innovations brought by globalization and digital and communication technologies diffused in the trade in services that has made it easier for people sitting in one country to export their services to another country. According to Baldwin (2016) the international data flow is increasing the ability of people to perform their tasks and jobs from anywhere in the world. The adoption of innovations in services trade has allowed the labour services to be physically unbundled from the laborers (Baldwin, 2016) and this trade in services give rise to the "tele-migration. Tele-migration is an emerging trend that is reshaping the future of work. It has created work and workplace flexibility for both the workers and firms (Baldwin, 2019). Furthermore, it has created development pathways for service sectors where an employer can have access to a pool of diverse talent from different geographical backgrounds (Baldwin et al. 2021). Such innovative working arrangements are now diffusing into the developed and developing countries and are adopted in the business settings. Guided by Roger's diffusion of innovations theory (1983) and using it as a pivotal framework for studying and understanding the diffusion of tele-migration and its adoption by the individuals

and/or startups, the current study finds the factors including both internal and external that encourage the tele-migrants of a developing country Pakistan to this adoption and how it is altering the performance of the tele-migrants.

The findings of the study suggest that internal factors that encourage a tele-migrant to adopt tele-migration are Freedom of Mobility, International Job Experience and Cultural Immersion, Financial Incentives and Enhanced Compensation, Flexible Working Hours and Secure Work Environment, Skill Development in Tele-migration, Transparency in Process and Fostering Productive Boundaries.

***Freedom of Mobility.*** Freedom of mobility is one of the most prominent internal factors that encouraged the participants for tele-migration adoption. The freedom of mobility that comes with tele-migration helped the participants to do their jobs from anywhere and not be location bound for their jobs. The location independence of tele-migration allows the tele-migrants to diverge from the regular workplace locations. They perform their tasks from anywhere that in conventional jobs are done in a central workplace. They use the media to interact with others from and outside their organization. According to De Menezes & Kelliher (2017), these work arrangements allow for part-time work, flexible working hours, and compressed working weeks that save the workers' overtime hours and allow them to do from outside the workplace. As mentioned by the participants, they can even do their jobs while travelling, when they are on vacation, and even, when they are managing other activities side by side. Moreover, participants adopted tele-migration to avoid the massive struggles that comes with relocation, where they had to take a clean slate of their lives in another country or continent. So, instead of relocating they can get the experience of working across the border while sitting in the comfort of their homes, saving their expenses, travel hassles, and time.

***Flexible Working Hours and Secure Work Environment.*** Flexibility in working hours, which allows tele-migrants to do their tasks whenever they wish, is another motivating element that

encouraged the tele-migration adoption. This flexibility allows people who are balancing their academics with this profession to work whenever it is convenient for them. All tele-migrants say that their productivity and job efficiency have increased and improved as a result of working from their comfort zones when their brains are relaxed and they are able to take breaks between work. Their efficiency increases as well because when they do not need the entire working hour to complete a task, they efficiently complete their tasks before the deadline and enjoy the rest of the time, as opposed to traditional jobs where they must be physically present and sit idle to complete the working hours. Furthermore, few participants are satisfied with their work schedules because they believe tele-migration helps them to keep a healthy lifestyle, offers them more time for physical activities, hobbies, and interests, and has enhanced their personal connections.

This flexibility of hours also allows female tele-migrants who are mothers or stay-at-home spouses to manage their family life while working. Moreover, security is one of the key reasons for the female participants, as they and their families were concerned about their workplace security and other connected issues such as workplace harassment. Because relocation was not an option for them, they were drawn to tele-migration to earn a living while sitting in a safe and secure location of their choice.

***Fostering Productive Boundaries.*** For most of the participants another internal factor in this adoption was they did not want to be watched by someone while working and being answerable to them on the spot as then they felt anxious. Also, they wanted to avoid physical interaction with their employer and other colleagues as per their introvert personalities so tele-migration provided them with this freedom of working in isolation without socializing with colleagues. This trend is likely to increase in future where the people would like to maintain a specific distance from their colleague in hostile work environments. Tele-migrants who want to avoid in-person interactions as per their introvert personalities also encouraged to adopt tele-

migration as it provides them with this sort of freedom as well. They also can enjoy this freedom of not following any work dress code and office timings.

***International Job Experience and Cultural Immersion.*** International job experience is another important factor for tele-migrants who urge to explore and gain international market exposure, exposure to international companies, their work culture, ethics, practices, and exposure to international workplace laws and strategies. Working internationally broadens the horizons of the tele-migrants and give them opportunities to understand how things work overseas. These tele-migrants to soak themselves in a new environment, workplace culture and to take in varied and rich experiences adopted tele-migration.

Exposure of the international market, the exposure of an international company, its work culture, their work ethics, and practices, familiarization of the international clients and customers, their thoughts, and beliefs and developing networks are a much-needed exposure for tele-migrants that give a real boost to their self-esteem and confidence. This exposure tele-migrants can get without physically migrating to the countries they export their services to.

This exposure is also helping the tele-migrants to grow in the industry, exploring new workplace cultures and ethics along with the learning of new skills.

***Financial incentives and Enhanced Compensation.*** Financial incentives is the major internal factor for this adoption for the tele-migrants of a developing country. As Pakistan's economy is an emerging economy, it is exceedingly difficult for people to earn a handsome amount of money while working in any local company. So, considering the limited wage rate of their own home countries, tele-migrants are fascinated by the better compensation and incentives that foreign companies are offering them. Moreover, they opt for this mode of work because of the high exchange rates of foreign currencies which pave a way to earn a good living in less time. The amount that they earn when converted in their domestic currency it become twice or thrice of what they can get while working in any local company. So, this is a significant attraction to adopt tele-migration.

The limited wage rates especially for a freshie who do not own years of work experience also encourage for the adoption of tele-migration in a developing country. Furthermore, the country's regulators that provide the tax incentives allow the tele-migrants to earn a handsome living that also keep them motivated and increase their productivity (Bogoviz et al. 2018).

***Transparency in Process.*** Transparency in the processes and communication proved to be another reason for enhancing the work performance of the tele-migrants as the digital platforms assist in smooth, transparent, and effective communication between the tele-migrants and their employers. When there is no communication gap and tele-migrants are provided with all the necessary information at the appropriate times it increases their work efficiency. Furthermore, the transparency in the work processes does not allow organizational politics or personal conflicts to obstruct a tele-migrants productivity and efficiency.

***Skill Development in Tele-migration.*** It is important for people to keep pace with rapid technological innovations and learn new skills. Due to the advancement in technology and digital platforms, it has become important for people to learn new skills and keep pace with the changing world. So, tele-migrants recognizing how drastically this mode of work is going to grow in the coming years to be technologically adept people recognize the significance of tele-migration and how drastically this mode of work is going to grow in the next few years.

The urge to learn about international workplace culture and ethics, the international legal framework and about the international clients and customers is another internal factor for the tele-migrants for adopting tele-migration as they want to be technologically adept person and recognize the significance of tele-migration and how drastically this mode of work is going to grow in the next few years, so, majority of them adopt this profession to learn about tele-migration phenomenon, how things work in this and how they can exploit this opportunity to gain experience, acquiring new skills (Albrieu, 2021) and exposure of companies and communities abroad while sitting miles away in another country.

The findings of the study suggest that the external factors that encourage a tele-migrant from a developing country to adopt tele-migration are Limited job prospects in the local market, Skill based compensation by Overseas employers, Government Policies and Regulator Flexibility for Empowering Tele-Migration and Technological advancements. The trouble of getting a job in a developing country that is secure and compensate well according to the education, capabilities, and skills compels people to take up tele-migration. The limited opportunities for the fresh graduates, students and less experienced people also becomes an external factor that compel them to explore the international market for the opportunities and resulted in the adoption of tele-migration by these people. The European market recognize and respect the skills of tele-migrants from the developing countries and offer them job opportunities at a low wage rate as the employee they would hire from their own country. So, it is a win-win situation for both the employer and the employees. Furthermore, the European companies following the employment laws also compensate the tele-migrants according to their skills and extra work hours.

***Limited job prospects in the local market.*** Pakistan is considered one of the talented nations in the world but due to the inadequate employment system, many of the talented people find it difficult to showcase their skills. Due to this lack of job opportunities most of the skillful people remain jobless. According to the “Special survey for evaluating socio-economic impact of covid-19 on the wellbeing of people” (2020), the labor market of Pakistan dropped by 13% in the April-June quarter of the year 2020 due to which 20.7 million people of the country are left out of the work. The low-skilled young workers were affected the most due to this situation and are still struggling with the unemployment.

For the tele-migrants of Pakistan lack of opportunities become one of the most significant external factors that affect the decisions of tele-migrants to earn their living by adopting tele-migration. Getting a job that is secure and compensate according to the education, skills, and capabilities are hard in a developing country like Pakistan. In addition, there still are extremely

limited opportunities available especially for students, fresh graduates, and people with less industry experience. The tele-migrants explore the international markets and exploit the opportunities available there resulting in the adoption of tele-migration.

***Skill based compensation by Overseas employers.*** In-demand skills are the most sought-after skills in any industry or sector of the job market. The people who possess them are most likely to succeed in getting jobs. According to Hoftijzer and Gortazar (2018), factors like technological development, economic growth, demographic change, and globalization together determine the demand for skills in the job market of European countries. The skills of tele-migrants are respected and valued in the European market and enable them to export their skills to foreign countries. Due to globalization, employers from a developed economy are now able to find a skillful pool of employees from anywhere in the world (Baldwin, 2019). So, these in-demand skills act as one of the external factors for the adoption of tele-migration that enable the tele-migrants from developing countries to export their skills to foreign countries where they are respected and compensated well.

According to the participant's home countries, no matter how skilled they are, they can only make a certain amount of money. Many of them are now compensated on a skill-based basis by overseas corporations. Furthermore, it was simple for participants to export their services depending on their talents, which were valued and generously compensated by overseas companies. Another external element that influenced the participant's adoption of tele-migration was Pakistan's developing economy. Pakistan's economy is an developing economy (Shakri et al. 2022) with developing infrastructure, industrialization with a low human development index, less growth and poor per capita income. Because of the economic fragility and volatility, Pakistani rupee lacks strong correlations with the other currencies (Downey, 2022). The foreign currencies exchange rates are quite high in the country that allows the tele-migrants of Pakistan to earn a quite handsome amount salary when converted into Pakistani currency. Furthermore, by adopting tele-migration, their foreign exchange earnings are

regarded as vital to the economic growth of their country. This was a motivating element for them because the foreign currency conversion rates in Pakistan are fairly high, allowing them to earn a sizable wage when translated into Pakistani money. Furthermore, a few participants stated that by utilizing tele-migration, their foreign exchange gains are viewed as critical to their country's economic prosperity.

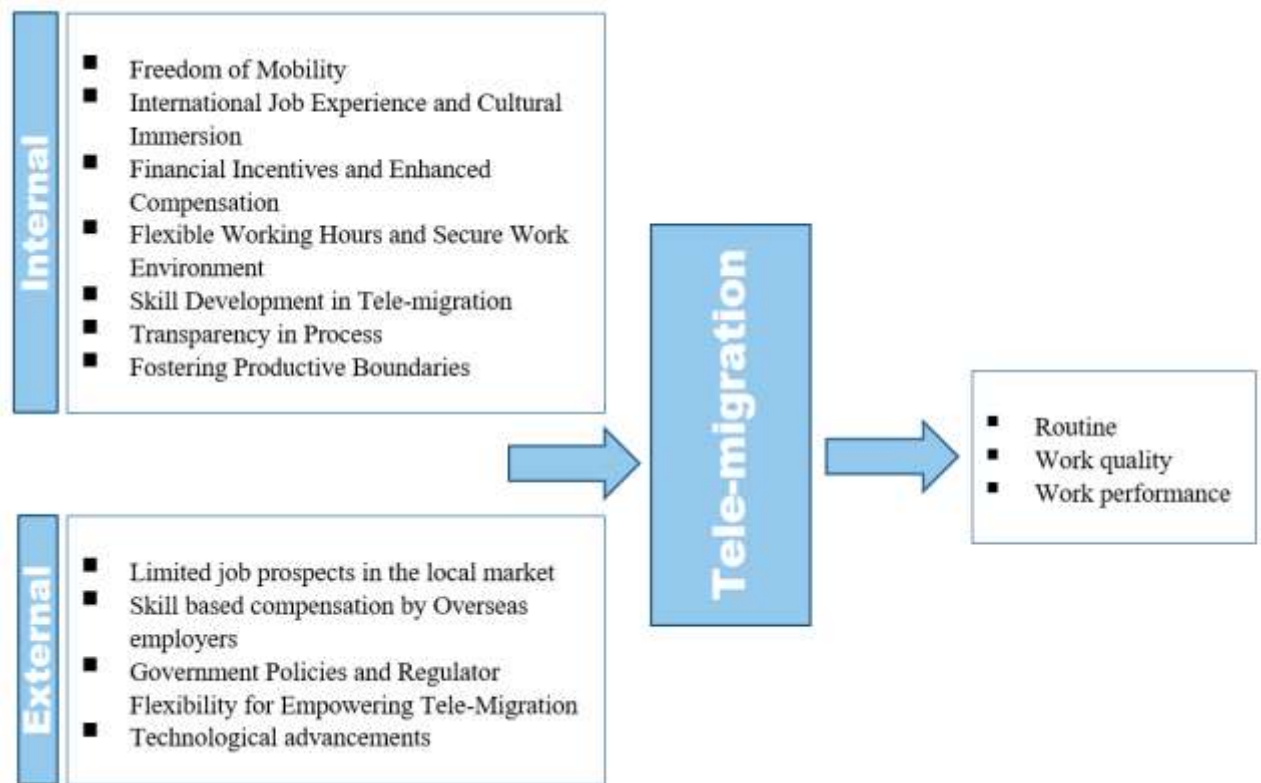
***Government Policies and Regulator Flexibility for Empowering Tele-Migration.*** Government policies and regulators of Pakistan regarding tele-migration and other related modes of work are flexible that facilitate the tele-migrants. These policies allow tele-migrants to have access to bank loans, credit cards, and the ease of sending and receiving payments abroad against their services, any software purchase, online platform usage and other similar expenses (National Freelancing Facilitation Policy, 2021).

These flexible government policies and regulators prove to be an external factor that encourage the tele-migrants to adopt tele-migration and not only earn a handsome living but also allow them to put their inputs in the stability of the national economy.

***Technological advancements.*** Tele-migration is being driven by technological advancements and altering work paradigms, which make it simpler for individuals to interact, find work on online markets, and receive money through cross-border platforms. Tele-migration not only opens up more lucrative prospects, but also allows participants to stay up with changing work trends and technology breakthroughs. Businesses migrating to internet platforms caused a spike in tele-migration during the COVID-19 epidemic. Because tele-migrants were unable to find physical occupations in their native countries or relocate elsewhere for work, several participants chose to tele-migrate. Covid19 severely affected the global economy and the workplace arrangements as due to the lockdowns and travel bans globally (Mitchell et al. 2022). Covid19 digital transformation enabled people to work from anywhere in the world and compete for the jobs globally while sitting in their home countries (Baldwin, 2019, 2020).



According to (Hošman, 2020) this new wave of globotics is causing significant changes in the workplace in wake of Covid19. This globalization of workforce (Mitchell et al. 2022) allows the tele-migrants to approach the job markets globally in different manners than the conventional practices.



**Figure 5.** Encouraging factors and consequences of tele-migration

Guided by the theory of diffusion of innovations (Roger, 1983) the study further finds that how after the adoption of the tele-migration the performance of the tele-migrants is altered. It is altering the tele-migrants' routines, their work performance and work quality that is increasing their productivity and enhancing multiple skills.

**Routine.** Working across different time zones is challenging for the tele-migrants as they need to overlap in work hours with their team members and employers. It sometimes become difficult for them to set up a time that works for the entire team. Mostly, the tele-migrants in Pakistan need to work at night to keep up with their team tasks and efficient communication. This

disturbs the sleep schedules of the tele-migrants and mostly they struggle with this difference in time zones.

Working in different time zones also sometimes lead to loneliness and limited social interactions. Tele-migrants struggle in balancing their personal and work life. But it depends on the person how he manages his tasks and make a balance of his routine. For many tele-migrants, tele-migration helps them to stay close to their families and helps them to maintain a work-life balance where they equally prioritize the demands of their work and personal life.

Moreover, due to national and cultural differences, tele-migrants usually get the national, public, regional, official, and unofficial holidays as observed in the country they work in, so they mostly are working on the holidays that are observed in their home country. To complete their tasks prior to such holidays, they need to do work extra hours per week that also affect their routines during such period.

Apart from all the struggles, many tele-migrants tend to be happy with their work routines as they believe that tele-migration allows them to maintain a healthy lifestyle and gives them more time for physical activities, hobbies, and interests, and has improved their personal relationships. While for others it is otherwise like they are facing difficulty in finding time for themselves and for their social lives staying in this routine.

**Work Performance.** The work performance of the tele-migrants is positively affected as working in foreign companies with a healthy work culture supports them to perform their best. It becomes possible for them to be around highly professional, competent, and skillful employer and colleague whom they look up to and get motivation from them. Tele-migration also helps in learning and enhancing the skills mainly include the communication skills, technological skills, problem-solving, and time management skills. It also enhances the adaptivity of tele-migrants that is helps them to grow in the industry and they are learn multiple skills at the same time.

In terms of productivity and work efficiency, working from the comfort zones with clear and relaxed minds enhances the productivity and efficiency of the tele-migrants. Their efficiency also increases as when they don't need the whole working hours for completing a task, they efficiently complete their tasks before the deadline and enjoy the rest of the time unlike the conventional jobs where they have to be physically present and sit idle to complete the working hours

Transparency in the processes and communication proved to be another reason for enhancing the work performance of the tele-migrants as the digital platforms assist in smooth, transparent, and effective communication between the tele-migrants and their employers. When there is no communication gap and tele-migrants are provided with all the necessary information at the appropriate times it increases their work efficiency. Furthermore, the transparency in the work processes does not allow organizational politics or personal conflicts to obstruct a tele-migrants productivity and efficiency.

The punctuality and dedication to work of foreign employers and team inspire the tele-migrants to develop punctuality, time management skills, self-control and encourage them to enhance their work ethics and performance.

The healthy employee-employer relationship at work helps in developing mutual trust and respect between tele-migrants and their employers that pave the way for high employee morale, effective communication between them leading to the better performance of the tele-migrants.

The performance of tele-migrants can be compromised to some extent due to isolation, loneliness, and night shifts. They sometimes get bored, lazy and it becomes difficult for them to find time for themselves and other activities that is eventually impacting their mental and physical health. Being unable to be physically present in an office setting makes them feel stressed and less motivated to complete their tasks. So, the motivation that we can get while being a part of a big team and having in-person interaction with them is lacking in tele-

migration. Furthermore, due to lack of socialization and in-person interaction also leads to lack of personal development opportunities for the tele-migrants.

**Work Quality.** Tele-migration also proves to be a source of improving the work quality of the tele-migrants. The competent and efficient employers from the developed countries give clear and precise guidelines that improve the work quality of the employees with less work experience and competencies. It helps them to understand their tasks and what the employer is expecting from them. So, putting effort into the right tasks allows them to meet and exceed the expectations of their company.

Tele-migrants when provided with different necessary tools, equipment, and on-the job training from their foreign companies enhances their work quality and help them to complete their tasks with the highest standards.

The workplace diversity also set the grounds for the improved quality of tele-migrants' work. Looking at the professionalism, skillfulness, and work quality of their colleagues from around the globe allows tele-migrants to improve their work quality, skills, and professional attributes.

### **5.1 Contributions to Research and Practice**

The study seeks to make contribution to research and practice in the tele-migration phenomenon. It offers a novel framework into the tele-migration literature by exploring the internal and external encouraging factors of tele-migration adoption and how the performance of tele-migrants is altered due to tele-migration.

For researchers, this study can be used as the foundation as to our best knowledge, no study has yet presented the internal and external factors that encourage the tele-migration adoption in a developing country and its consequences on the performance of tele-migrants. The findings of the study can be used by future researchers to further study the tele-migration phenomenon in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the findings of the study will help organizational leaders to know about the factors that encourage their domestic talent to work for foreign companies instead of working for them. Further, it will help them create such flexible policies and procedures that support employees' desire to adopt tele-migration. The study will also help aspiring tele-migrants to get aware of the consequences of tele-migration mainly how it will alter their performance and routines before entering into the realm of tele-migration.

### **5.1.1 Theoretical Contributions**

This study constitutes a substantial theoretical contribution to the tele-migration literature by offering a comprehensive framework that delves into both the internal and external factors encouraging tele-migration adoption, as well as the resultant alterations in the performance of tele-migrants. The incorporation of Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory, a framework proposed by Roger (1983), serves as a pivotal foundation for understanding how technological innovations diffuse and are embraced by individuals and organizations. This study recognizes the pioneering role of Roger's diffusion theory in shaping diffusion and adoption research, making it an apt framework to investigate the innovative work approach of tele-migration, its diffusion across working arrangements, and its subsequent implications.

### **5.2 Implications of the Study**

This study holds significant implications as it sheds light on the burgeoning opportunities created by digital disruption for both individuals and start-ups. Its focus on the internal and external factors driving tele-migration adoption is paramount, offering practitioners a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that shape the success and challenges faced by tele-migrants. Recognizing the growing influence of tele-migrants in developing economies and their global workforce impact, this study equips practitioners with vital insights to effectively manage tele-migrant teams and enhance their performance.

By exploring both internal and external factors in the tele-migration landscape, this study aids

practitioners in making informed decisions and strategic policy formulations. Policy makers, in particular, can leverage these findings to design targeted policies that stimulate service export for overall economic growth while addressing unemployment concerns. Start-ups and organizations will benefit from understanding the factors that draw domestic talent to foreign companies, enabling them to tailor their strategies accordingly. Importantly, aspiring tele-migrants can gain valuable foresight into the transformative effects of tele-migration on their performance and routines, aiding in well-informed decision-making before entering into the realm of tele-migration.

### **5.3 Limitations and Future Research**

Despite its contributions, the study is subject to several limitations that call for future research to be conducted. As the research on tele-migration is at its embryonic stage so the major limitation of the study is limited availability of data. A limited number of authors have specifically worked in tele-migration. Furthermore, no traces in the literature linking tele-migration with start-up have been found. So, it became difficult to establish a link between tele-migration and start-up.

For future work, the study recommends that it is important to continue exploring tele-migration and its economic and social impacts on developing nations. There exists a lead for the future research to discuss the sustainability and growth of a start-up due to the tele-migration (separately and combined). The study also recommends that a scale should be developed, and quantitative studies should be conducted in future that can provide the insights stating the barriers and challenges tele-migrants are facing so that it can help the government and policy makers to design policies to regulate tele-migration.

The study attempts to conduct only 16 semi-structured interviews from tele-migrants from various start-ups. It recommends for future studies to conduct the research with a larger sample and study the impact of tele-migration on both genders separately and research how it is altering the performance and routines of married and unmarried tele-migrants.

The study sheds light on another research direction to explore tele-migration in line with the factors driving start-up ecosystem and how a start-up ecosystem can be possibly build including another stakeholder- a tele-migrant.

#### **5.4 Conclusions**

Tele-migration is an emerging trend that is reshaping the future of work. It has created work and workplace flexibility for both the workers and firms. Furthermore, it has created development pathways for service-sectors where an employer can have access to a pool of diverse talent from different geographical backgrounds.

The purpose of the study has been to explore the factors including both internal and external that encourage a tele-migrant from a developing country to adopt tele-migration. The study suggests that the internal factors that encourage tele-migration adoption are freedom of mobility, international job experience and cultural immersion, financial incentives and enhanced compensation, flexible working hours and secure work environment, skill development in tele-migration, transparency in process, fostering productive boundaries while the external factors comprise limited job prospects in the local market, skill based compensation by Overseas employers, government policies and regulator flexibility for empowering tele-Migration and technological advancements. Tele-migration is altering the performance of the tele-migrants in terms of changing their routine, performance and work quality that is increasing their productivity and enhancing their skills.

The study concludes that the existing work on tele-migration in start-up is very limited in the literature and there is a dire need to explore tele-migration in this context. Our study provides an important first step to direct the attention of the researchers towards exploring the tele-migration in the developing country, Pakistan. The insights of this research will not only contribute into emerging literature of tele-migration but will also assist in flourishing the use of tele-migration in the start-up.

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## Appendix

### A.1 Interview Guide

**Date:**                      **Name of the Interviewee:** Tayyaba Irum                      **Interview #:**  
**In person/ Teleconference:**                      **Start Time:**                      **End Time:**

#### Background?

- **Gender:**
- **Age:**
- **Education:**
- **Industry:**
- **Years of experience:**

**1. Tell me a little about your work, what do you do? What does it involve?**

#### Experience with tele-migration?

**2. When did you adopt tele-migration?**

**Probe:** Please share from where you got the notion of tele-migration.

**3. Describe what attracted you to adopt tele-migration?**

**Probe:** Were you fond of this work yourself or were you recommended to opt for it?

What do you say was the inspiration to adopt this work?

**4. In your opinion, how is tele-migration better than a regular job in your own country?**

#### Factors that encouraged the adoption of tele-migration.

**5. Could you talk about the reasons why did you adopt tele-migration as a profession?**

**Probe:** What situations/issues pushed you to take it up as a profession?

**6. Could you tell me more specifically the internal factors that encouraged you for the tele-migration adoption?**

**7. Would you also highlight the external factors that encouraged you to adopt tele-migration?**

**How tele-migration altered the performance?**

**8. Could you share how tele-migration has changed your work routine?**

**Probe:** What do you like and dislike about working remotely?

**9. What are your thoughts on tele-migration altering your work performance?**

**Probe:** How is being unable to physically present in your office positively or negatively affecting your performance?

How is your job attitude shaping up considering that you work for a foreign company?

**10. Looking back on your experience with tele-migration do you agree that tele-migration became a means to improve your work quality?**

**Probe:** [If someone says yes] How? Please share examples.

[If someone says no] Why? Please share the reasons.

**Follow-up question (general)**

**11. Any further thoughts you would like to share?**

.....

## **Appendix**

### **A.2 Participant Information Sheet**

The researcher cordially invites you to participate in this research study. Kindly take your time to review the following details carefully to understand the purpose of the study, why it is being conducted, and what it will involve.

Should you have any queries or require additional information, please do not hesitate to ask.

#### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The study aims to explore the factors both internal and external that encourage a tele-migrant to adopt tele-migration. This study also aims to understand the consequences of tele-migration such as how it is altering the employee's performance.

#### **Why have I been chosen to take part?**

You have been selected as a participant in this research study because of your involvement in tele-migration work. Your experience and insights on this subject are essential in aiding the researcher's comprehension of this phenomenon.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, the researcher will provide you with a consent form to fill out and sign. If you decide to withdraw from the study at any point, you are free to do so without providing any explanation.

#### **What will happen if I take part?**

You will be asked to take part in a 20 to 30 minutes long interview with a researcher, Tayyaba Irum, about your experience with tele-migration. You will also be asked about the factors that encouraged you to adopt it as a profession and how it is or has altered your work performance. The interview will be recorded with your consent, and you may request the researcher to stop the interview at any time. You are not obligated to answer any specific question that you do not feel comfortable answering.

#### **Where will the interview take place?**

The interview location can be chosen by you, or it can be conducted via video telephony applications. If you are in Rawalpindi/Islamabad, you have the option to choose an in-person interview or a teleconference interview. For participants outside of Rawalpindi/Islamabad, the interview will be conducted through a teleconference at a time and on a platform that is convenient for you.

**Are there any risks or benefits in taking part?**

The researcher will do their best to ensure that the interview is conducted in a comfortable and respectful manner. However, if you feel uncomfortable at any point during the interview, you have the right to withdraw from the study without any consequences.

**Are there any benefits in taking part?**

You will be helping the researcher in developing an understanding of tele-migration phenomena, its adoption factors, and the ways it is altering an employee's performance.

**Will my participation be kept confidential?**

The confidentiality of all the information obtained during the interview will be strictly maintained. The audio recordings will be transcribed and participants' identifying information will be replaced with pseudo-names to ensure anonymity. Any quotes used in the write-up of the research will not reveal participants' identities.

**Where be the results of the study used?**

The results of the study will be included in Tayyaba Irum's MS research thesis and submitted to the supervisor at NUST Business School. The dissertation may be submitted for publication in academic journals or presented at conferences.

**Who is funding this research?**

This research is not funded and is being conducted solely for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of an MS degree.

**Who is doing this research?**

This research and interviews will be conducted by Tayyaba Irum Shakil, an MS student at Nust Business School, Islamabad.

**How can I find out more?**

You can contact Tayyaba Irum at any time, who will be happy to answer your queries related to this research.

NUST Business School

National University of Science and Technology

Contact # 03365443820

Email: [Tayyaba.msie20nbs@student.nust.edu.pk](mailto:Tayyaba.msie20nbs@student.nust.edu.pk)

Thank you for reading this document

This information sheet is for you to keep.

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## Appendix

### A.3 Participant Consent Form

**Researcher:** Tayyaba Irum Shakil

1. I acknowledge that I have read and fully comprehended the information sheet for this research. The researcher has given me the chance to ask any additional questions I may have, and they have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without having to provide any explanation.
3. I consent to take part in this research study.

Participant name	Date	Signatures
Researcher	Date	Signatures

1. I acknowledge that my interview responses may be used for research publication purposes. I understand that my confidentiality and anonymity will be upheld and that it will not be possible for anyone to identify me in any publications.
2. I give permission for my interview to be audio recorded and used for research purposes.
3. I acknowledge that my responses may be used in publications only if the researcher agrees to maintain the confidentiality of the information as required for this research.

## Appendix

### A.4 Participant Teleconference Consent Form

#### Teleconference: Oral Consent Example Script:

Hello, I am Tayyaba Irum, an MS student from NUST Business School. I will be giving you the introduction of my research project on tele-migration. Additional information is provided on the participant information form that you have already received.

Can you confirm whether you have read the participant information form? If so, are you still interested in participating in this research project as a participant?

[Await confirmation]. Before proceeding, I would like to provide you with additional details about the research to ensure that you have a clear understanding of what is required of you:

- There are no expected risks or discomfort associated with this research. However, if at any point during the study you feel uncomfortable, you have the right to withdraw your participation.
- Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are not obligated to agree to take part. If you have any questions or concerns before or during the interview, please do not hesitate to ask me.
- If you feel uncomfortable answering any particular question during the interview, you may request the researcher to skip that question.
- You must know that this research is approved by my supervisor Dr. Adeel Tariq who is an assistant professor at NUST Business School, Islamabad.
- I may use short quotes of what you say during the interview, in my thesis write-up, but I will ensure your anonymity.
- Before we proceed, I would like to inform you that I will be audio-recording this interview with your consent.

Would you like to confirm if you are still interested in participating in this research after considering the additional details provided?

Can I have your consent to contact you again if I require further clarification of your insights?

[Await confirmation] If you have no further questions or concerns and are comfortable with all the details provided, please confirm and I will proceed with the interview.



**Researcher:** Tayyaba Irum Shakil

**Participant:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

## Appendix

### A.5 Transcripts

#### Interview Guide

**Name of the Interviewee:** Qazi

**Interview #:** 07

**In person**

#### Background?

- **Gender:** Male
- **Age:** 24
- **Education:** Masters
- **Industry:** IT Sector
- **Years of experience:** 5 years

#### 1. Tell me a little about your work, what do you do? What does it involve?

Alhamdulillah, my family is running their own business...my father, my chachu, all of them, we have a very well-established business but, the thing is uh my father is not here with us, he is abroad, in UAE so I just wanted to focus on something where I can make a living and study as well. So, I started an online job then now have established my own startup where we provide software related like testing and solutions to a foreign company, but you know when you do these kinds of jobs, the only con of this job is that you cannot focus on other things in life because this becomes the most vital part of your routine day in day out. To be honest with you, you can make a handsome amount of living out of it and two, if you are good at it, you can really grow in this business.

#### Experience with tele-migration?

#### 2. When did you adopt tele-migration?

5 years back

#### Probe: Please share from where you got the notion of tele-migration.

Well actually, one of my cousins used to work in a company, I won't name that company, but uh he used to work there and he told me that you know I am working part-time and I am studying as well so that became some kind of motivation, that became something that we can work, we can study and plus we can also you know uh be educatively active. So that's how I got this motivation to start as a tele-migrant.

#### 3. Describe what attracted you to adopt tele-migration?

That's true, exactly as I told you already because that was just a recommendation, that was just kind of a motivation like he didn't...yes exactly inspiration because I was in an awe because you know when you see you are young, you can earn money plus you can educate yourself plus you can pay all of your..whatever you want in life, you can get that because money is essential for everything in life....that just became a kind of...uh...inspiration or motivation so that's how it got spotted.

Probe: Were you fond of this work yourself or were you recommended to opt for it?

My cousin recommended it to me.

**What do you say was the inspiration to adopt this work?**

**4. In your opinion, how is tele-migration better than a regular job in your own country?**

Well, there are a lot of points that I can put about this topic because you know tele-migration is something that you don't have really to be physically migrated from one country to another right? You don't have to pay the taxes or the money for the visa, for everything for the hustle to go through, you can get an international exposure, you can get to know the community while living in your own country while working for someone that has all the exposure of the you know the outer world. So, it is you know kind of a very good thing because people of Pakistan of our community, we don't you know, know much about the outer world, we don't know much about how things work outside of Pakistan so in case you know in case you wanna be professional in case you wanna be on time, in case you wanna know that how you can grow, this is a really good opportunity I would say.

So, the thing is uh Tayyaba, the thing is that when you work for someone that pays you from another country right, you are working for them because they know they can get a cheap labour out of you right. They know that we are a developing country and...lets suppose we are living in America, you are my boss, and I am your employee, and I am your employee I am gonna work for you for like 50 bucks an hour, now convert that 50 bucks in Pakistani rupees, that's gonna be a wholesome amount of money. But when we are working in Pakistan, they are gonna pay us less and they can get more work out of us. So, uh that's the thing that its beneficial for developing country but not for the developed countries because that's how they can you know uh keep their own community out of getting jobs because this is what, if you know back In the day like in 2019, 2018 it was a whole protest going on in America because of tele-migration or telemarketing because they were losing jobs and we were earning out of it. Let me give you a better example of it, like if you have seen life insurance agents, I bet you have seen them. they used to go from door to door or to people or specific person to buy a policy and they are going to make some you know money out of it. But now, they won't have to do that, now they can sit at a computer and get the information of a person and they can send them an email if he likes it, he can buy that, if he doesn't you know...so this is how AI has impacted everything I guess, not just industry, everything has been impacted by AI.

**Factors that encouraged the adoption of tele-migration.**

**5. Could you talk about the reasons why did you adopted tele-migration as a profession?**

**Probe: What situations/issues pushed you to take it up as a profession?**

**6. Could you tell me more specifically the internal factors that encouraged you for the tele-migration adoption?**

The internal factors that I told you already that if you could make a good living out of it. If you are good at your job and if in this sort of work you are passionate about and you work with all of your energy so you can make a handsome amount of money out of it. That is kind of an internal factor for me and other than that but Alhumdullilah I did not had any financial kind of issue but for financial independence you know that was another factor as well and you know in something that you do not have to have much experience. You can gain experience the experience while you are working. You can gain the exposure, you can learn work ethics and

culture. These were the bunch of factors that encouraged me to take it up as a profession. Learning, work ethics, being professional and how westerns work, how they deal with the people and the situations so uhh.. that was that was also one of the factors.

**7. Would you also highlight the external factors that encouraged you to adopt tele-migration?**

One of the things about external factors is the economy as considering our country's current situation, so the thing is we are doing in Pakistan like people who have references so you don't make a good amount of living while being skillful. If we talk about skills, in Pakistan they are not very well recognized. But if we talk about other countries, they recognize the skills so if we talk about exposure and how things work and the other external factor is that cheap labor that we are emerging country so the thing is when they see that we are from a developing country so they can pay us less and that what becomes an external factor as well and we can work at night and earn a good amount. So, the thing is in Pakistan we have lack of opportunities, lack of opportunities in this sense that it does not matter if you have done BBA, LLB or MBA. Whatever degree you have completed there will not be any good opportunities for you unless you really have some who will push you forward or carry you up. So that also affects a person to takes up step in this direction because as I have said already you can earn a handsome amount of money but it's not a piece of cake, I mean you have you have to work at night obviously because of the time difference and different time zones so you have to work according to their time not your own time so you have to adjust your sleeping patterns you have to adjust every single thing that goes in your life you have to adjust for your job. So, everything is fine like handsome salary, good living but these are also a big part of all this. Like if someone wants to opt for this profession that they have to make sacrifices in return.

**How tele-migration altered the performance?**

**8. Could you share how tele-migration has changed your work routine?**

**Probe: What do you like and dislike about working remotely?**

How it impacted me was that when I started in this field then you see you have to sacrifice your sleep, you have to sacrifice your going out routine, you have to sacrifice your regular holidays or the holidays that you enjoy in your own country because you know we are working for America or Canada or whatever country you have to work according to their customs like there you can say if its Christmas you will be getting holidays but when we have holy occasions we won't be taking off so you can say these are a bit disadvantage that comes with this job and other than that health factor is another important thing that needs to be highlighted because when you don't sleep at night like because you know Allah has made us in this way that you have to work in the morning and you have to sleep at night but when you are doing tele-migration you disobey this law and you know there is no social life, you cannot go out with your family and friends. Even if you are married you cannot give proper time to your spouse as well that is kind of things that I dislike about this. If we talk about the pros and cons then if I come to pros then Ahhh If you are in healthy environment than you can grow in this field but if you see this like ahh I would suggest that go in this life like three months and decide if you keep on doing this or not. Like in three months if you haven't grown financially if you haven't grown you know ahh ahh you would say ahh you haven't been promoted to any other position so that's that's not a job for you. You should do something else. Because you can earn from anywhere but if you are not growing then you shouldn't opt for this profession and in dislikes,

I would say you cannot go out, you cannot give time to your family, you cannot sleep well like regular sleeping, no holidays so yeaahh kind of a lot of cons and benefits as well because at the end of the day it's not about the money. It's about you, it's about yourself, it's about your family so you need to take care of a few things as well, you shouldn't be stuck up at one thing only.

### **Glass Ceiling**

Well, Tayyaba, I will answer this very honestly. Let's suppose you are working for me, and I am from America, and you are working for me but under someone else and he is also working for me as well. And now there won't be any direct communication between you and me. There will be any middleman who can be your manager or anyone from the department concerned so have you ever heard the word hierarchy, so hierarchy means that there is a system. For example, food chain that is how hierarchy is like its start with an employee then his team lead and then his manager then senior manager and then CEO and above CEO the owner, the owner of the business. So, when the people don't want to bring you up then you just can't go up so that's your answer, I mean that's a clear-cut answer. Like let me be very honest it happens in Pakistan, its very common like no matter how good you are, how skillfully you are if someone is not liking your personality, they don't like how you work, how you talk they just envy you and that envy changes into a work battle and in that work battle, the employee loses his track, you know mental stability, its frustration like when you are not growing you feel a frustration because you see a person comes in the job after you and he is growing to be manager in next month and I have been here like for a year and I haven't grown but you know you have the potential and you are working really hard but you are still not growing so that is something that is not up to you. That is on the management side they let you grow, what matter is what they want you to do. But in America there are different kinds of mindset. Like for example, there you can call your boss and people by their first name, they don't get offended by it. So, in a company where the management won't be on the same page about these things employees won't be able to grow. I hope that answers your question.

### **9. What are your thoughts on tele-migration altering your work performance?**

**Probe: How is being unable to physically present in your office positively or negatively affecting your performance?**

In case of productivity this is what the research saying that people work more productively at home, like why? Because you are relaxed, your mind is relaxed, you know that no one is watching over you, you know that you will be answering yourself like when you go to bed you will question yourself about what you did the whole day so yeah that's how it impacted me and along with that being able to work from home is a blessing in disguise like during pandemic. It's a blessing in this sense that you see people around you who lost their jobs, you know downsizing and what not even when you go to the market you do not see the same staff because they have been downsized. Everyone needs to earn money at this point because it's a necessity in life. So being able to work from homecountry across the country in your own comfort zone then I guess it's a very good thing and you stay productive but also it has consequences like you lose track. You cannot focus on your work so these are the factors that you need to take this into account. So, as a tele-migrant you have to be very professional, you have to answer yourself as I have to earn halal as we also are Muslims so yeah as no one is watching you.

**How is your job attitude shaping up considering that you work for a foreign company?**

Actually let me tell you one thing here if you are working locally in a government job you see all of them are becoming lazy as they have a fixed salary that they get at the end of the month even if they work or not but working as a tele-migrant, working for a foreign company and when you are not in a physical environment like you cannot physically meet then it's something, something ahh you have to totally rely on your performance means you are a race car driver and you are driving a very good car and until that car is running you are a best driver but when the car will breakdown someone else will take over you so that's how this profession goes, if you are up one day and next day you are down, they won't ask you that today you are down instead they will ask you why you are not up? So, you must keep on doing hard work at the same pace every day. But working locally this won't be the behavior of anyone like we like to stay in our comfort zones I mean this is a fact that we should agree on. But working for a foreign company you have to act smart; you have to work efficiently; you must work passionately as well so that you can go forward, and you can carry on with your job and get promoted and its easy it's easy to get promoted being a tele-migrant but in a company here in Pakistan you won't get much appreciation for your work. That's how it is.

**10. Looking back on your experience with tele-migration do you agree that tele-migration became a means to improve your work quality?**

**Probe: [If someone says yes] How? Please share examples.**

**[If someone says no] Why? Please share the reasons.**

Work quality, like it truly based on what I work I don't know if you have read this book like in that book named "Rich dad, poor dad" in that the person said that there shouldn't be only one stream of income. Like you shouldn't rely on only one source of income like if you are making money from west or get a part-time job as well then you know if you lose one you don't lose another one. So if you talk about my work, like my work betterment or my quality of work like that is only based on this work only. Like the skills you are learning from this job, and you grow in these skills, these will be related to your work like I become more professional, I will have good communication skills, I will be a good listener and my technological skills will be improved.

**Follow-up question (general)**

**11. Any further thoughts you would like to share?**

I believe you have covered everything.

.....

**Sample Transcript with initial codes**



Interview with Qaid.docx

2. Would you also highlight the external factors that encouraged you to adapt tele-migration?

One of the things about external factors is the economy as considering our country's current situation, so the thing is we are living in Pakistan like people who have references so you don't make a good amount of living while being skilled, if we talk about skills, in Pakistan they are not very well recognized. But if we talk about other countries, they recognize the skills so if we talk about exposure and how things work and the other external factor is that cheap labor that we are emerging country so the thing is when they see that we are from a developing country as they can pay us less and that what becomes an external factor as well and we can work at night and earn a good amount. So, the thing is in Pakistan we have lack of opportunities, lack of opportunities in this sense that it does not matter if you have done BBA, LLB or MBA, whatever degree you have completed there will not be any good opportunities for you unless you really have some who will push you forward or carry you up. So that also affects a person to takes up step in this direction because as I have and already you can earn a handsome amount of money but it's not a piece of cake, I mean you have you have to work at night obviously because of the time difference and different time zones so you have to work according to their time not your own time so you have to adjust your sleeping patterns you have to adjust every single thing that goes in your life you have to adjust for your job. So, everything is fine like handsome salary, good living but these are also a big part of all this. Like if someone wants to get for the profession that they have to make sacrifice in return.

**How tele-migration altered the performance?**

1. Could you share how tele-migration has changed your work routine?

**Probe: What do you like and dislike about working remotely?**

How I expected we was that when I started in this field then you see you have to sacrifice your sleep, you have to sacrifice your going out routine, you have to sacrifice your regular holidays or the holidays that you enjoy in your own country because you know we are waiting for America or Canada or whatever country you have to work according to their customs like there you can say if its Christmas, you will be getting holidays but when we have holy occasions we won't be taking off as you can say these are a bit disadvantage that comes with this job and other than that health factor is another important thing that needs to be highlighted because when you don't sleep at night like because you know Allah has made us in this way that you have to work in the morning and you have to sleep at night but when you are doing tele-migration you disobey this law and you know there is no social life, you cannot go out with your family and friends. Even if you are married you cannot give proper time to your spouse as well that is kind of things that I dislike about this. If we talk about the pros and cons then if I come to pros then Allah if you are in healthy environment then you can grow in this field but if you see this like ah I would suggest that go in this life like three months and decide if you keep on doing this or not. Like in three months if you haven't grown financially if you haven't grown you know ah ah you would say ah you haven't been promoted to any other position so that's not a job for you. You should do something else. Because you can earn from anywhere but if you are not growing then you shouldn't opt for the profession and in dislike, I would say you cannot go out, you cannot give time to your family, you cannot sleep well like regular sleeping, no holidays so yeah kind of a lot of cons and benefits as well because at the end of the day it's not about the money, it's about you, it's about yourself, it's about your family so you need to take care of a few things as well, you shouldn't be stuck up on one thing only.

**Class Ceiling**

Well, Tayyaba, I will answer this very honestly. Let's suppose you are working for me, and I am from America, and you are working for me but under someone else and he is also working for me as well. And now there won't be any direct communication between you and me. There will be any middleman who can be your manager or anyone from the department concerned as how you ever heard the word hierarchy, so hierarchy means that there is a system. For example, food chain that is how hierarchy is like its start with an employee then his team lead and then his manager then senior manager and then CEO and above CEO the owner, the owner of the business. So,

Developing economy 1  
Lack of opportunities 1  
Difficulty in working in... 1  
Dislike the sacrifice... 1  
Impact on physical h... 1  
Lack of work-life b... 1  
Family life impacted... 1

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1. What are your thoughts on tele-migration allowing your work performance?

**Probe: How is being unable to physically present in your office positively or negatively affecting your performance?**

In case of productivity this is what the research says that people work more productively at home, like why? Because you are relaxed, you need to relax, you know that no one is watching over you, you know that you will be answering yourself like when you go to bed you will question yourself about what you did the whole day so yeah that's how it impacted me and along with that being able to work from home is a blessing in disguise like during pandemic. It's a blessing in this sense that you see people around you who lost their jobs, you know downsizing and what not even when you go to the market you do not see the same staff because they have been downsized. Everyone needs to earn money at the point because it's a necessity in life. So being able to work from home country across the country in your own comfort zone then I guess it's a very good thing and you stay productive but also it has a downside like the you lose track. You cannot focus on your work so these are the factors that you need to take this into account. So, as a tele-migrant you have to be very professional, you have to answer yourself as I have to work hard as we also are humans so yeah as no one is watching over.

**How is your job attitude shaping up considering that you work for a foreign company?**

Actually let me tell you one thing here if you are working locally in a government job you see all of them are becoming lazy as they have a fixed salary that they get at the end of the month even if they work or not but working as a tele-migrant, working for a foreign company and when you are not in a physical environment like you cannot physically meet them its something, something when you have to totally rely on your performance means you are a taxi car driver and you are driving a very good car and until that car is running you are a taxi driver but when the car will breakdown someone else will take over you so that's how this profession goes. If you are up one day and next day you are down, they won't ask you that today you are down instead they will ask you why you are not up? So, you must keep on doing hard work at the same pace every day. But working locally this won't be the behavior of anyone like we like to stay in our comfort zones I mean this is a fact that we should agree on. But working for a foreign company you have to adapt that, you have to work efficiently, you must work professionally as well as that you can get forward, and you can connect with your job and get promoted and its easy the way to get promoted being a tele-migrant but in a company here in Pakistan you don't get much appreciation for your work. That's how it is.

1. Looking back on your experience with tele-migration do you agree that tele-migration became a means to improve your work quality?

**Probe: If someone says yes? How? Please share examples.**

**[If someone says no? Why? Please share the reasons.]**

Work quality, like it truly based on what I work I don't know if you have read the book like in that book named "The 4th Deadly Sin" that the person said that there shouldn't be only one stream of income. Like you shouldn't rely on only one source of income like if you are making money from one or get a part-time job as well then you know if you lose one you don't lose everything. So if you talk about my work like my work betterment or my quality of work like that is only based on the work only. Like the skills you are learning from this job, and you grow in these skills, these will be related to your work like I become more professional, I will have good communication skills, I will be a good listener and my technological skills will be improved.

**Follow-up question (general)**

1. Any further thoughts you would like to share?

I believe you have covered everything.

Increasing productivity 1  
Lack of professional... 1  
Lack of appreciation... 1  
Efficiency improved... 1  
Communication... 1  
High employee morale 1  
Lack of work-life b... 1  
Lack of work-life b... 1