Examining the Effects of Negative Work Outcomes on Telecommuting

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is threefold: 1) to examine the factors that impact employees' willingness to telecommute, 2) to examine the factors that lead employees to limit the number of days they spend telecommuting, and 3) to determine whether the more common and accepted telecommuting is within one's department has an impact on these relationships.

Background

- Telecommuting is an alternative work arrangement in which the employee travels or commutes to work via technology (Narayanan, Menon, Plaisent, & Bernard, 2017).

- Telecommuting has grown tremendously in the last decade, up 115% since 2005, and offers many benefits to employers, employees, and society (Global Workplace Analytics & FlexJobs, 2017; Martin & MacDonnell, 2012; McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003).

- Companies are increasingly providing employees the option to telecommute, but many employees are hesitant to take full advantage of the work arrangement.

- Previous research has shown that individuals tend to have a negative attitude towards telecommuting when they perceive the work arrangement offers more disadvantages than advantages (Vega, Anderson, & Kaplan, 2015).

- Cooper & Kurland (2002) found that individuals often limit the amount of time they spend telecommuting because they fear becoming professionally isolated.

- This study aims to uncover the perceived barriers to telecommuting, offering practitioners a better understanding to design telecommuting programs that minimize the risks to the employee and maximize the benefits to the organization.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F: Perceptions of social isolation, professional isolation, career harm, job insecurity, long work hours, and coworker resentment will be negatively related to employees' willingness to telecommute.

Hypothesis 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F: Perceptions of social isolation, professional isolation, career harm, job insecurity, long work hours, and coworker resentment will be negatively related to telecommuting intensity.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does telecommuting normativeness moderate the relationship between perceived consequences of telecommuting and willingness to telecommute?

Research Question 2: Does telecommuting normativeness moderate the relationship between perceived consequences of telecommuting and telecommuting intensity?
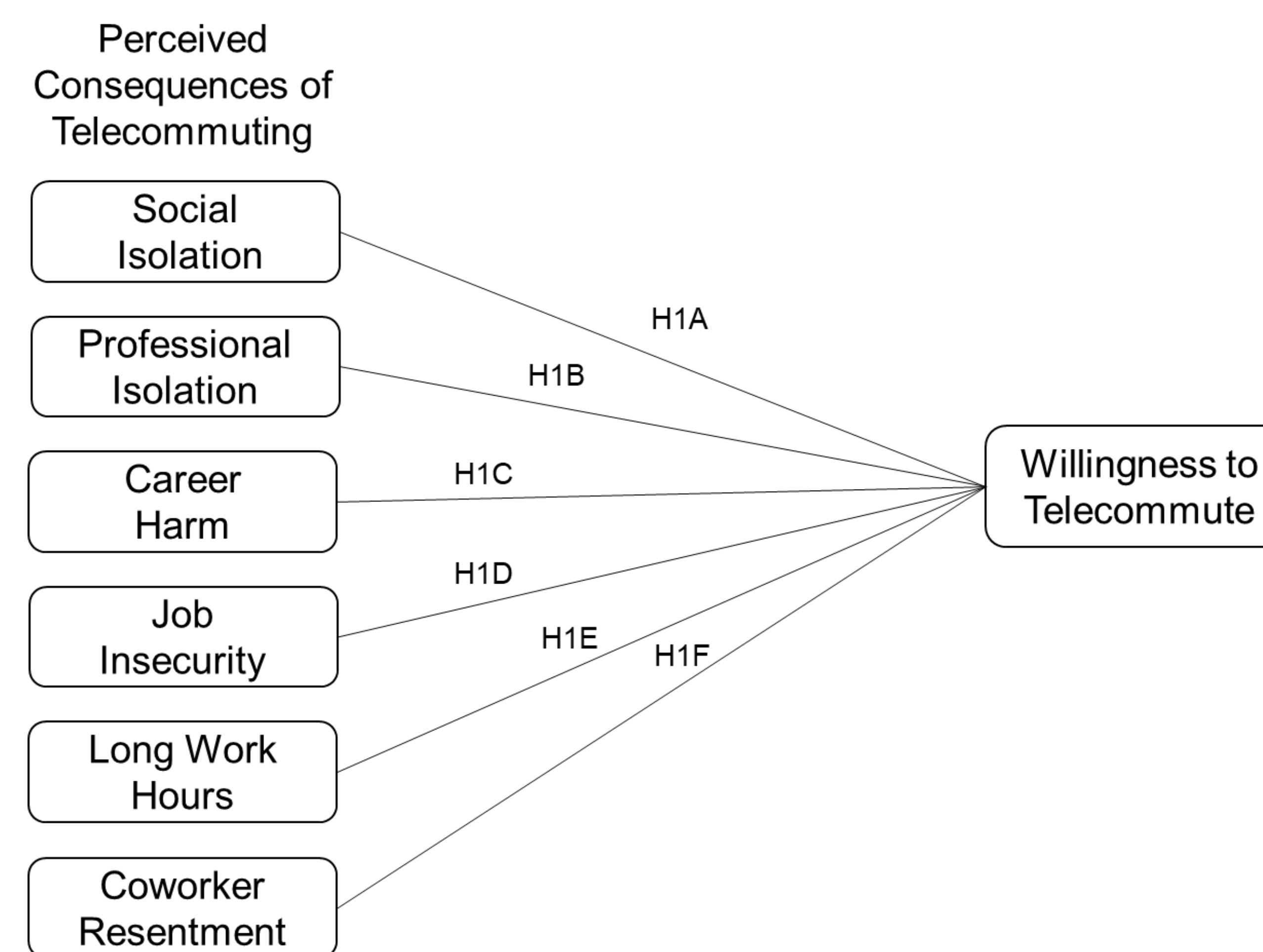

Figure 1: Proposed relationships between perceived consequences of telecommuting and employees' willingness to telecommute.
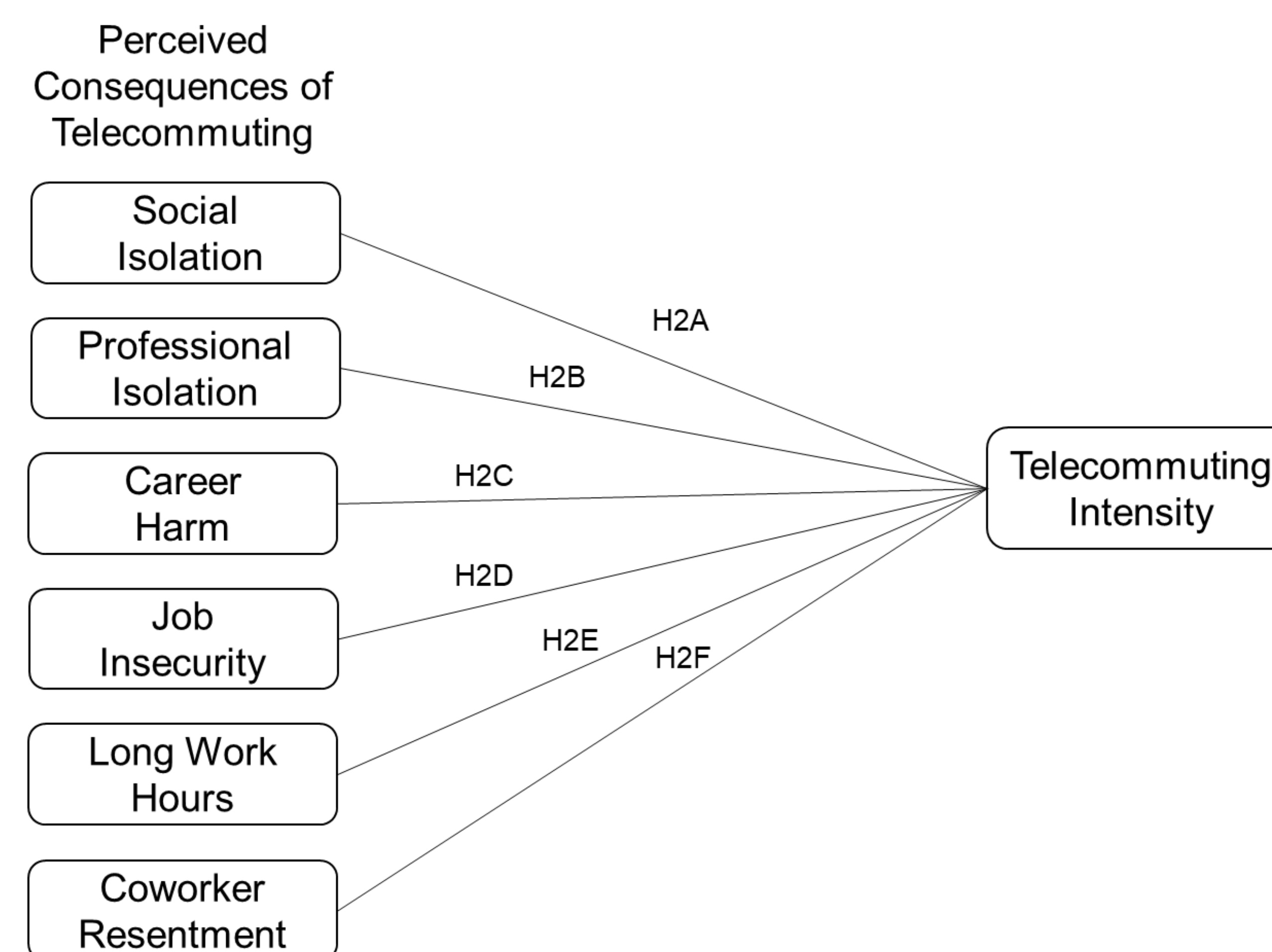

Figure 2: Proposed relationships between perceived consequences of telecommuting and telecommuting intensity.

Methodology

Participants
To be eligible to participate in the current study, individuals must meet the following criteria: at least 18 years of age, currently employed in the United States, work at least 30 hours per week, and have the option to telecommute in their current position.

Procedures
An online survey will be distributed to contacts of the principal investigator via social and professional networking sites and email. A snowball sampling method will take effect in which participants will help recruit other participants by asking their colleagues to participate. Participants will answer several measures corresponding to each of the variables in the models. Many of the items were adapted from their original scales or written for this study.

Proposed Analyses
This study will use correlation and regression analyses to assess the proposed relationships. Hierarchical regression will be used to predict employees' willingness to telecommute and telecommuting intensity. It will also be used to examine the moderating role of telecommuting normativeness.

References

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