

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

**MASTER THESIS**

**ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF FLEXIBLE WORKING  
PRACTICES  
-MOROCCAN WORKING WOMEN'S PERCEPTION-**

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**ISTANBUL, 2023**

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PRACTICES  
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**by**

**NOUHA FATHI**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in  
Management**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR  
PROF. MAHMUT ARSLAN**

**ISTANBUL, 2023**

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Management.

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This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University.

Date of Submission

Seal/Signature

## ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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## ÖZ

### ESNEK ÇALIŞMA UYGULAMALARININ ETİK BOYUTLARI -FASLI ÇALIŞAN KADINLARININ ALGISI-

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İşyerinde esnek çalışma uygulamalarının etik boyutları, özellikle Fas gibi gelişmekte olan pazarlarda, küresel ekonomide büyük bir öneme sahiptir. Bununla birlikte, bu konunun önemine rağmen, etik yönlerini inceleyen çalışmalarda belirgin eksiklikler gözlemlenmektedir. Bu çalışma, Faslı çalışan kadınların bakış açısından esnek zaman uygulamalarının etik boyutlarını inceleyerek bu boşluğa yönelik bir yaklaşım sunmaktadır. Fas bağlamında etik, esneklik ve iş dinamikleri arasındaki karmaşık etkileşim, derinlemesine yapılan mülakatlar aracılığıyla incelenmektedir. Bu araştırmanın elde ettiği bulgular, çalışan refahını ve kurumsal başarıyı güçlendiren etik çerçeveleri ve politikaları oluşturmak için önemli içgörüler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın, etik ve işyeri esnekliği arasındaki ilişkinin detaylı bir anlayışına katkıda bulunarak, Fas'ta etik bir çalışma ortamının teşvik edilmesine yönelik tartışmaları ve kararları zaman içerisinde şekillenmesini sağlayacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler :** Etik, Etik Boyutlar, Esnek Çalışma Uygulamaları, Fas, İş-Yaşam Dengesi, Uzaktan Çalışma.

## ABSTRACT

### ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES -MOROCCAN WORKING WOMEN'S PERCEPTION-

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The ethical dimensions of flexible time practices within the workplace are paramount in the global economy, especially in emerging markets like Morocco. Despite its significance, there needs to be more research exploring the ethical aspects of this topic. This study addresses this gap by examining the ethical dimensions of flexible time practices from the perspective of Moroccan working women. Through in-depth interviews, we uncover the intricate interplay between ethics, flexibility, and work dynamics in the Moroccan context. The findings offer valuable insights for shaping ethical frameworks and policies that enhance employee well-being and organizational success. This research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the relationship between ethics and workplace flexibility, guiding future discussions and decisions in promoting an ethical work environment in Morocco.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Ethical Dimensions, Flexible Work Practices, Morocco, Teleworking, Work-Life Balance.

## DEDICATION

To my Parents, Malika and Abdessamad, your unwavering emotional and financial support throughout the past years has paved the way for me to pursue my academic studies with enhanced quality. Your belief in me has been my driving force.

My husband, for his support, and my father-in-law, for his genuine interest in my development – your presence has motivated me.

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With sincere gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to you all.

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ISTANBUL, 2023

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## **LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AMIC	Moroccan Association of Capital Investors
CESE	Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental (French)
FW	Flexible Work
FWA	Flexible working arrangement
FWC	Family-Work Conflict
FWP	Flexible Working Practices
MCS	Mental Health Scores
MEFRA	Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Administrative Reform
PCS	Physical Health Scores
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
TPME	Task, Purpose, Method, And Effects
WFC	Work-Family Conflict
WLB	Work-Life Balance

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1. Introduction and Background

The contemporary workforce has undergone a significant transformation, with an increasing emphasis on flexibility and mobility in working models. This shift has been influenced by changing needs and advancements in technology, as proved by Field(Gérard & Patricia, 2017). The popularity of flexible work practices, encompassing telecommuting, part-time employment, flexibility in time, remote work, and freelance opportunities, has been on the upswing. These practices provide workers with increased freedom in managing their schedules, choosing work locations, and negotiating contractual arrangements (Cooper & Baird, 2015). The widespread adoption of digital technologies has further fueled the appeal of FWPs (Hirsch-Kreinsen, 2016), while media portrayals have also played a role in promoting their acceptance (Lingling, Xiongfei, Junkai, & Zhiying, 2019).

As FWPs have become mainstream practices (Soga, Bolade-Ogunfodun, Mariani, Nasr, & Laker, 2022), research interest in this area has seen a resurgence during the previous two decades, driven by global economic changes and cross-sector dependencies (Uddin & Uddin, 2021). The evolving business landscape has prompted organizations to restructure and introduce new working methods to adapt to emerging challenges.

Existing research suggests that flexible work arrangements offer benefits and challenges (Putnam, Myers, & Gailliard, 2013). From a positive point of view, they empower employees with greater control over their work choices, leading to positive outcomes such as increased autonomy, job satisfaction, and improved work-life balance (Bhattacharya & Ray, 2021). On the other hand, the implementation of work-life initiatives by organizations can result in negative consequences such as longer work hours, leading to job stress, reduced leisure time,

And limited compensation, along with feelings of isolation and an unpredictable workweek (Aboagye, Muschalla, Lorenz, & Grimani, 2023). Given the current limited understanding of the effects of flexible work arrangements, A considerable number of organizations are grappling with the decision to maintain remote work or adopt hybrid teleworking forms (Tsedal, 2023), particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic situation.

## **1.2. Aim and Objective of the Study**

### **1.2.1. Research Questions**

How do Moroccan women perceive and experience flexible working practices (FWP) from an ethical perspective?

### **1.2.2. The Objective of the Study and Statement of the Problem**

- The objective of the study:

The objective of this study is to investigate the ethical dimensions associated with the implementation of flexible working practices. The study aims to assess how well these practices align with ethical principles and considerations. By analyzing the ethical implications of flexible working arrangements, such as fairness, work-life balance, employee well-being, privacy, equity, diversity and inclusion, and other relevant ethical aspects, the study seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of their impact on Moroccan working women. The findings of this research will provide insights for organizations, policymakers, and practitioners to enhance the ethical aspects of implementing flexible work arrangements and promote ethical decision-making in the context of flexible working.

- Statement of the Problem:

The Statement of the Problem for this study revolves around the need for more comprehensive research on the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices (FWP), particularly in the context of the Morocco workforce. Despite the increasing

adoption of flexible work arrangements, there is a notable gap in the literature when it comes to addressing the ethical implications and challenges associated with these practices. This research aims to address this gap and explore how FWP aligns with ethical principles, including justice, utilitarianism, and Kantian duty ethics. Additionally, the study seeks to investigate the impact of FWP on work-life balance, employee well-being, and gender dynamics within the Moroccan workforce. By shedding light on these ethical dimensions, the research aims to contribute valuable insights for organizations, policymakers, and practitioners to foster an ethical and inclusive work environment in the era of flexible working practices.

### **1.3. The Significance of the Study**

This study carries substantial significance in the following aspects:

- **Academic Contribution:** This research contributes to the existing academic literature on the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices. By conducting a thorough analysis of the ethical implications associated with these practices, it expands the current understanding of how ethical considerations are addressed and integrated into the implementation of flexible work arrangements. The study provides original insights and findings that will benefit scholars, researchers, and academics interested in the intersection of ethics and flexible working.
- **Practical Relevance:** The findings of this study hold practical implications for organizations, policymakers, and practitioners involved in the design and management of flexible working practices. A comprehensive understanding of the ethical dimensions associated with these practices can assist organizations in formulating policies and procedures that promote ethical decision-making, fairness, and employee well-being. The research outcomes can guide the development of practical guidelines, best practices, and strategies for the ethical implementation of flexible working arrangements.
- **Employee Well-being and Satisfaction:** This study directly addresses the impact on employee well-being and job satisfaction by exploring the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices. It underscores the significance of considering factors such

as fairness, work-life balance, and other ethical considerations to create a supportive and conducive work environment. The insights derived from this research can inform organizational practices that enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and engagement, fostering positive outcomes for individuals and organizations.

- **Gender and geographic perspective:** The significance of this study is twofold. Firstly, it delves into the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices in North Africa, specifically focusing on Morocco. This region has witnessed a growing trend of flexible work arrangements, and examining their ethical implications is vital to ensure that they align with ethical principles and values.

Secondly, the study considers the gender perspective, particularly the experiences and challenges faced by Moroccan women in the labor force. Gender dynamics play a significant role in shaping work experiences, and by focusing on women's perspectives, the research aims to shed light on any potential gender-specific ethical considerations. The knowledge obtained from this investigation will provide valuable insights into the extent of flexible work adoption within the Moroccan labor market. The primary objective of this study is to foster a more inclusive and ethically accountable implementation of flexible work practices with beneficial outcomes for employees and organizations in the North African region.

- **Ethical Decision-making:** The study's findings can contribute to developing ethical decision-making frameworks in the context of flexible working practices. Organizations can utilize research insights to make informed decisions that prioritize ethical considerations and align with societal expectations. This can foster greater trust, transparency, and social responsibility within organizations implementing flexible working arrangements.

In conclusion, this study holds significance in terms of its academic contribution, practical implications for organizations, improvement of employee well-being and satisfaction, gender and geographic insights, and its potential to advance ethical decision-making in flexible working practices.

#### **1.4. Relevance of This Study**

The ethical dimensions of flexible time practices in the workplace are of critical importance in today's global economy, particularly in emerging markets such as Morocco. However, only limited research has explored this topic, particularly in the context of this country and from a woman's perspective. The lack of attention to this area is surprising, given the significant economic, social, and cultural situation that exists, which may have implications for the ethical dimensions of flexible time practices. Understanding these factors is critical for developing effective policies and practices that can promote ethical behavior and prevent unethical conduct in the workplace. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the ethical dimensions of flexible time practices in Morocco.

Moreover, with the increasing adoption of flexible time practices worldwide, it is crucial to examine their ethical implications, particularly in countries where such practices are yet to be common or may be viewed differently. This study's significance is further enhanced by the fact that no previous research has measured the ethical dimensions of flexible time practices in Morocco. This study can offer valuable insights into the factors that shape ethical behavior in the workplace and how organizations can promote ethical practices and behaviors, taking into consideration women's commitments and responsibilities besides work. The findings of this study can also have implications for policy and practice in other emerging markets and help to promote ethical behavior in the global workplace.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1950s, there have been occasional mentions in the literature on technological advancements suggesting that the combination of telecommunications and computing technology had the potential to facilitate work outside of the conventional office setting (Jones, 1957). However, it was not until the 1970s that this concept gained significant attention and became the subject of extensive discussions under various names such as 'telecommuting,' 'flexible,' the 'electronic cottage,' 'networking,' and 'teleworking' (Huws, 1991).

However, these advances came at a time when women joined the labor at a rate never before witnessed. From 1975 to 1994, women's economic activity rate in the European Union increased from 46 percent to 56 percent, while the rate for men declined from 84 percent to 76 percent (Employment, 1995). As more women entered the labor sector, new demands emerged in the social conversation, such as the desire for equal treatment at work, access to childcare facilities, maternity rights, and flexible working practices. These requests sought to acknowledge and fulfill women's dual roles as parents and employees.

In response to the evolving needs of the contemporary workforce, flexibility and mobility have emerged as appealing features of working models. This evolution has taken place over the past decades, reflecting the growing demand for work arrangements that can accommodate diverse lifestyles and individual preferences (Rubery, Keizer, & Grimshaw, 2016). Understanding the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices in different cultural contexts is crucial in today's globalized and diverse work environments. Considering factors like gender, parental status, and occupational status is crucial for understanding the ethical implications of flexible working, emphasizing the need for a nuanced approach (Chung & van der Horst, 2020).

Nowadays, many employees worldwide are looking for positions with flexible working practices, as it significantly impacts work-to-family conflict, job satisfaction, and employee turnover intention (Masuda et al., 2012). FWP are positively related to employee satisfaction, which in turn is related to increased job performance, reduced absenteeism, and lower turnover intentions. Employees who have high levels of job autonomy and supervisor support experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Wheatley, 2017).

Cultural factors exert a significant influence on managers' attitudes and perspectives regarding telework, impacting their support or lack thereof for flexible working practices. These factors shape the managerial landscape and contribute to varying levels of employee support experienced across different cultures (Peters & Dulk, 2003). Recognizing the role of culture in shaping managers' perspectives is vital to understanding the ethical dimensions of telework practices. This highlights the importance of considering cultural factors in order to identify potential differences in the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices across countries (Orhaner, 2022).

By examining the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices in different cultural contexts, we can gain insights into how these practices contribute to employee satisfaction and well-being, ultimately benefiting individuals and organizations.

The paper addresses two core research questions:

- (i) How do Moroccan working women perceive the ethical implications of flexible working practices?
- (ii) What are the potential ethical challenges and benefits associated with flexible working arrangements for Moroccan women?

## **2.1. Different Types of Flexible Time Practices**

Various flexible working practices have emerged in response to the evolving needs of employees and organizations in today's dynamic work environments. Telecommuting or remote work allows employees to work from a location outside of the traditional office, facilitated by technological advancements (Sara S. Johnson, 2020).

Flexible working practices (FWP) differ from traditional work arrangements characterized by inflexible contracts and strict working hours typically found in regulated labor markets (Rubery et al., 2016). FWP includes terms like "co-working spaces," "on-call employment," "on-demand work," "self-employment," "telework," "remote work," "mobile work," "telecommuting," and "virtual work" (Groen, van Triest, Coers, & Wtenweerde, 2018; Tudy, 2021).

Scholars have varying perspectives and terminologies when defining flexible working practices (FWP), resulting in a need for more consensus (Tudy, 2021). This divergence is evident in the interchangeable use of terms such as telecommuting (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015), remote work (Coelho, Faiad, Rego, & Ramos, 2020), co-working spaces (van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020), and on-call work (Mihaela-Emilia Marica, 2019). The absence of a standardized understanding of FWP within the academic literature necessitates recognizing these variations in terminology and conceptualization. Such discrepancies can have implications for the comparability and generalizability of research findings in flexible working practices.

In a recent study, researchers have identified four distinct clusters that categorize different connotations of flexible working practices. These clusters include remote work, spatiotemporal work, on-demand work, and self-directed work. This classification provides a comprehensive framework to better understand the various dimensions observed in the existing literature regarding FWP (Soga et al., 2022).

### **2.1.1. Remote Work**

The first category refers to work conducted outside of traditional office settings, such as location or time, with an emphasis on flexibility (Anna W. Jacobs & Irene Padavic, 2015), encompassing a range of terms, including flex time, flex leave, flexible hours/schedules, and flex place teleworking, remote work, telecommuting, virtual work, part-time jobs, work-from-home.

### **2.1.2. Spatiotemporal Work**

Digital technology plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of flexible working practices (FWP), offering new possibilities for collaboration, innovation, and creativity (Eisenberg & Krishnan, 2018). This transformative approach to FWP emphasizes the interplay between work, space, and time, anchored in a "sharing culture" (Yueh-Shian Lee, 2021). Within this context, concepts such as digital working hubs, co-working spaces, job sharing, and office clubs emerge as critical components, redefining the traditional notion of flexible work by emphasizing the need for shared physical workspaces. By leveraging technological tools, clusters of workers can effectively collaborate, utilizing digital platforms that facilitate seamless communication and foster an environment conducive to innovation and creativity (Eisenberg & Krishnan, 2018).

### **2.1.3. On-Demand Work**

Working on-demand encompasses various terms such as "on-call," "on-demand," and "zero-hours," indicating the task allocation involving concentrated activities within specific timeframes. In contrast, spatiotemporal work emphasizes the flexibility of workspace usage, where individuals are not bound to a particular location (Elfering, Igit, Kritzer, & Semmer, 2020). On-demand work is characterized by its unpredictability, as workers can be contacted at any time without fixed engagement terms with the organization (Mihaela-Emilia Marica, 2019). This resembles the work of freelance delivery agents or drivers who respond to spontaneous customer orders. The results suggest that digital technologies that facilitate on-demand work are mainly used to check worker availability, negotiate with potential workers, and deliver real-time notifications. For instance, such tools include WeChat, specific AI applications, and various mobile phone apps. These digital platforms allow workers to be easily seen by potential employers who need their services quickly while enabling synchronous and asynchronous communication between work contracts.

#### **2.1.4. Self-Directed Work**

This category of flexible working practices focuses on Individuals with the autonomy to shape their job responsibilities or align themselves with existing institutions. It encompasses several terms highlighting this type of flexibility, such as self-employment, self-directed work, freelancing, gig workers, and skunk workers—the primary differentiation between on-demand labor and self-directed labor hinges on the extent of independence afforded to individuals. In the case of "on-demand" approaches, workers are not bound to a particular company, and their working schedules are not predetermined (Eaton, 2012). On the other hand, self-directed workers enjoy a higher level of autonomy in defining their engagement terms, including specific timeframes for short-term projects or "gigs" (Tudy, 2021).

#### **2.2. Gendered Perspectives on Flexible Working Practices**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices (FWPs) that empower workers by providing them control over their work schedules, time, and locations (Kelly et al., 2014). The requirements of flexible working practices (FWPs) vary depending on age and lifestyle, as they enable employees to maintain their preferred lifestyle by offering freedom to choose their work time and location (Michielsens, Bingham, & Clarke, 2013); employees primarily utilize flexibility in order to allocate more time for their families and manage personal matters, thereby reducing conflicts between work and family responsibilities (Dirk & Stefanie, 2013). The impact of managing work and family responsibilities on career experiences is not uniform between men and women. Women often face unique challenges due to gendered roles and societal expectations, particularly about motherhood and the choices they make in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities (Allen et al., 2015). Societal norms pertaining to gender roles often shape women's utilization and expectations of flexible working practices in order to address family-related obligations (J Scott & E Clery, 2013). what makes women more likely to seek and be expected to use FWPs to fulfill family demands (Hilbrecht, 2008). Furthermore, gender has been found to moderate the relationship between flexible working and engagement in housework/childcare, as demonstrated in numerous studies (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). Women tend to dedicate a significant amount

of time to routine housework and childcare compared to men (Jolly et al., 2014), which can often limit their participation in the labor market (Chung & van der Horst, 2018). The fixed nature of routine housework and childcare tasks can create conflicts with work schedules and responsibilities, making it challenging for women to balance both domains effectively.

In traditional families, men are typically the primary earners, while women are expected to assume household responsibilities. Consequently, it is not surprising that working women tend to utilize FWAs more frequently than men in order to manage their household work demands (Chung & van der Horst, 2020; Kossek, Perrigino, & Lautsch, 2022). According to border theory (Clark, 2000), individuals tend to identify with and expand their involvement in the respective spheres when there is flexibility and permeability in the work-family life boundary. Moreover, previous research indicates that FWAs can be particularly advantageous for individuals with demanding work responsibilities (Kain & Jex, 2010). Organizational policies have shifted from being male-centric to being more inclusive (Correll, Kelly, O'Connor, & Williams, 2014).

Similarly, the dynamics of household responsibilities have also evolved, with men now being equally or even more involved in domestic activities compared to the past (Schneider, 2012). In light of this, it is reasonable to anticipate that FWPs could facilitate fathers' involvement in housework/childcare. The gender composition in the workplace has undergone significant changes with the increasing participation of women. However, existing studies have predominantly found a positive association between FWPs and increased engagement in housework/child care among mothers rather than fathers (Kurowska, 2020).

In order to examine gendered perspectives on flexible working practices in Morocco, it is necessary first to assess the level of gender equality in the Moroccan labor force. The labor force opportunities for women in Morocco reveal a notable "glass ceiling" effect. Women hold a mere 0.51% of positions of responsibility in the public or private sectors, compared to 1% for men, despite a significant number of women holding postgraduate degrees. The wage gap in the private sector is also significant, with men earning 30% more on average. Additionally, women chair only 15% of boards of

directors. These statistics highlight the persistent gender inequalities and limited opportunities for women in leadership roles within the Moroccan workforce (CESE, 2022). According to a survey by Morocco's Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (CESE), 81.6% of respondents preferred remote working, citing time and cost savings from commuting. The survey revealed that 89% believed remote work would become a significant trend.

In comparison, 64.4% advocated for a combination of remote and face-to-face work, emphasizing the importance of balancing between the two approaches. Reduced stress, more autonomy, and enhanced attention and productivity were among the benefits mentioned by more than half of the participants. The findings show that Moroccans have positive perceptions and potential benefits of remote work, such as work-life balance and flexibility, indicating growing acceptance among Moroccans (Morocco World News, 2022).

## **2.3. Work-Life Balance**

### **2.3.1. History of Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance was initially predicted by Johnson and Packer (1987) in their prediction of future workforce shifts. Economic and labor conditions in the year 2000 and beyond. The concept of "work-life balance" (WLB) has given rise to other ideas, such as "family-work conflict" (FWC) and "work-family conflict" (WFC). These notions have been introduced in light of the growing concerns among both individuals and companies that work commitments can adversely affect the quality of family life and, conversely, family responsibilities might negatively impact work engagements (Joshi, 2018).

WLB is the practice of people devoting time and effort to both work and non-work activities in order to complete both to a satisfying level, which often demands balancing or offsetting one or more actions on either aspect (Kelly et al., 2014). Kirchmeyer (2000) defines Work-Life Balance (WLB) as the achievement of satisfaction in various aspects of life, which require different resources like energy,

time, and dedication, and ensuring a fair allocation of these resources among all life domains. (Kirchmeyer, 2000).

In its early stages, work-life balance (WLB) was seen as an employee-centric matter, and corporate policies primarily concentrated on managing work-related issues (Graham & Dixon, 2014). In recent times, organizations have undergone a shift from the conventional approach to work-life balance. Instead, they have started to prioritize and value both work and family life. There is now a growing recognition among employers that work and personal life are closely intertwined and mutually influential. The integration of these two domains is increasingly seen as advantageous, benefiting both employees and the overall organization (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Work-life policies have been in use for a while. Still, the majority of them have been tailored mainly for employees with children while overlooking those who have other responsibilities, such as caring for adults, or single employees seeking policies to manage their non-work activities, such as education, hobbies, leisure, socializing with friends, and engaging in spiritual activities (Gascoigne & Kelliher, 2018; Wilkinson, Tomlinson, & Gardiner, 2017).

Work-life studies have often taken one of two directions (Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000); one strategy is to focus on a specific group of people, such as working moms with young Kids, people taking care of old or ailing parents, people who make less money, or couples who have two jobs. This strategy was preferred in the 'early' years of the work-family area, as seen by the regular attention paid to working moms who needed child care. Through population-focused research, the work-life sector has produced vast knowledge about everything from the unique issues faced by dual-career couples to those of single, working moms.

From a generational standpoint, Generational differences affect how people find balance; millennials, for example, want more autonomy than Gen Xers to manage their professional and personal lives simultaneously (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). For them, Sacrificing a job or other commitments to attain balance will not result in satisfaction, so it isn't considered a "perfect balance" if one area compensates for the other (Bal & De Lange, 2015).

Work-life balance (WLB) is widely acknowledged as a serious difficulty for employers and employees. Stress, absenteeism, employee retention, illness, and low morale can all be highlighted as direct effects of inadequate WLB management (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2019). Extensive research has shown that an unbalanced work-life situation has serious consequences, such as fatigue, adverse health effects, limited family time, increased expectations, participation in unethical practices, disruption within families, decreased performance, potential organizational risks, and long-term effects beyond regular work hours (Joshi, 2018). Furthermore, modern policy issues in the realm of WLB include equality, workplace safety, flexible labor markets, and global competitiveness, broadening the range of indicators relevant to this discipline (Hogarth & Bosworth, 2009).

### **2.3.2. WLB From Moroccan Working Women Perspective**

Participants provided three key recommendations to enhance their personal and professional lives in a research study exploring the work-life balance perception among professional Moroccan women across various sectors. The findings revealed that 70% of the participants suggested implementing flexible working hours and telework to achieve better work-life balance. Notably, 13 participants were already benefiting from such arrangements. Additionally, 40 participants proposed the establishment of workplace childcare centers, recognizing the positive impact it would have on their ability to balance their professional responsibilities with their childcare needs. Furthermore, 44 participants emphasized the importance of legislative and company policy changes to support work-life balance, indicating the need for initiatives that promote a more conducive and accommodating work environment (Iekchiri & A.W.Eversole, 2019).

### **2.4. Flexible Working Practices While and After Covid-19**

The adoption of flexible work practices (WFPs), which allow employees to pick the time and location of their work (Shockley & Allen, 2012), has become considerably more widespread due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (Kapoor, Yadav, Bajpai, & Srivastava, 2021).

The workplace has been experiencing continuous transformation ever since COVID-19 created the demand for labor flexibility. Furthermore, as flexible working practices and flexible workplaces go hand in hand, Davidescu emphasizes that job flexibility has to stop being an emergency solution rather than becoming "business as usual" (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020).

Recent research has shed light on the implications of distant labor during the COVID-19 epidemic. Cross-sectional research with 184 teleworkers from three key countries evaluated the impact of teleworking circumstances and reported productivity changes on post-pandemic teleworking inclinations. They discovered that post-pandemic teleworking tendencies were highly connected with employment demand. Still, other teleworking circumstances, such as job change, job control, home office suitability, and childcare, had no influence.

The difficulties addressed in the research published before and after 2019 share commonalities, as shown on the timeline (Fig. 2.1). The COVID-19 pandemic's effects may also be seen in three essential areas of concern: home-work functions, a heavy reliance on digital technology, and a rise of discussions on autonomy versus sharing cultures (Soga et al., 2022). These worries have sparked research on flexible working practices (FWP) as numerous firms continue to use FW models. For instance, according to the research, 38% of jobs that were previously carried out on-site before the COVID-19 epidemic Can now be done remotely in Canada and 37% in the US (Como, Hambley, & Domene, 2021).



### **2.4.1. The Impact of COVID-19 on Life Quality and Well-Being in Morocco**

A novel coronavirus illness (COVID-19) first appeared in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (Ren, Wang, & Wu, 2020). The first verified case of Covid-19 was reported by Moroccan health officials on March 2, 2020. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization formally proclaimed COVID-19 to be a pandemic. This pandemic has alerted worldwide public health institutions (Wang, Horby, Hayden, & Gao, 2020). On March 20, 2020, Morocco, like many other nations worldwide, proclaimed a state of health emergency and implemented a quarantine measure.

According to research examining worker flows during the COVID-19 outbreak, Moroccan women suffered more substantial negative consequences since they were more likely to leave the workforce or face unemployment. In February 2020, 12% of Moroccan employers and self-employed women stopped their labor force participation within a year. 21% of public-sector workers became jobless, while 27% became employers or self-employed. In February 2020, 13% of private wage workers lost their employment, while 23% became unpaid family workers (ElBehairy, Hendy, & Yassin, 2022).

During this challenging period, several initiatives were launched to help the country's economy in many sectors. For example, the Moroccan Association of Capital Investors (AMIC) launched "AMIC Support TPME," an initiative that provides resources and assistance to SMEs through the cooperative support (Mikkel, 2020). In addition, MEFRA established "SMART," an electronic platform for authorization and transaction of online exchanges. Measures were put in place to speed up payments, manage force majeure requests, streamline public procurement, and control consumer product prices, including the use of hydro-alcoholic gels to assist businesses, particularly SMEs.

The economic implications of the epidemic were projected to disproportionately affect Moroccan women. The added work at home caused by school closures and confinement measures mostly affects women, who already perform the majority of unpaid household tasks in Morocco. According to a 2017 survey, Moroccan women spend 38% of their leisure time on housework, while their male counterparts devote as little as 5%. Moroccan women make up 21.3% of the labor force, with the majority working in agriculture and industrial sectors being the most concentrated.

Furthermore, around 17% of women in non-agricultural employment labor informally, which made them especially vulnerable to activity disruption caused by confinement measures (“Morocco Female Labor Force Participation,” 2022).

From a perspective centered on well-being and mental health, according to research, 11,123 people took part, with notable percentages reporting depression (53%), anxiety (49.8%), and insomnia (39.6%). Notably, being female, married, and having children under five years old were associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing severe depression and anxiety (Menouni et al., 2022). In a related context, a study showed that the severity of COVID-19 had a noticeable impact on the quality of life and health well-being of Moroccans, particularly for individuals with chronic health problems. The pandemic moderately disrupted participants' quality of life, with mental health scores (MCS) of 34.49 and physical health scores (PCS) of 36.10. Those with chronic diseases scored lower in mental health (MCS: 29.28) and physical health (PCS: 32.51) (Lemfadli, 2020). On the contrary, a study found that before confinement, high percentages of individuals reported not having problems in various health dimensions: mobility (87%), self-care (93%), usual activities (89%), pain/discomfort (78%), and anxiety/depression (66%). However, during confinement, these percentages slightly decreased for some dimensions: mobility (87%), self-care (97%), usual activities (82%), pain/discomfort (70%), and anxiety/depression (44%). (Azizi et al., 2020). These divergent results underscore the multifaceted nature of the crisis's impact on mental health and could be related to personal and interpersonal functioning, as risk perceptions and protection compared to behavior concerning the transmission of infection are influenced by factors such as self-esteem and self-efficacy (Golub et al., 2007). Additionally, attitudes in relationships can also play a role in shaping these behaviors (Feeney, Peterson, Gallois, & Terry, 2000).

#### **2.4.2. The Impact of COVID-19 On Teleworking Adoption in Morocco**

The COVID-19 health crisis has also accelerated digitalization in the world, with a shift towards e-commerce, online payment, teleworking, teaching at a distance, and online utilities. In addition, telework has emerged as a solution to meet the challenge of the drop in production caused by repetitive confinements and to maintain their economic activity at a distance and preserve a certain level of growth. According to a survey carried out by ReKroute.com on the working conditions of executives, around 50% of Moroccan companies have adopted telework for more than 80% of their staff.

Thus, according to a recent study carried out by the director of (ADD), 80% of companies are in favor of this digital transformation (Mohamed, 2023).

According to statista.com, during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Morocco in the second half of 2020, approximately 23 percent of enterprises, out of a total of 3,600 companies surveyed, adopted teleworking strategies. The data was collected using questionnaires and telephone interviews. When examining the adoption rate by subsector, the information and communication industry had the highest percentage at 65 percent, followed by the energy sector at 47 percent. Additionally, the business services, electronic and electric industries, leather and textiles industries, and education and human health sectors all showed similar adoption rates ranging between 44 to 39 percent. Other industries had an adoption rate of 20 percent or above ("Morocco," 2020).

## **2.5. Criticism of Flexibility**

Flexible working practices (FWP) have been associated with adverse effects in various aspects, including work relationships, conflicts between work and home responsibilities, and impacts on health, organizations, and the economy. These interconnected issues are discussed at the individual, group/organizational, and digital technology levels in the existing literature (Soga et al., 2022). The negative impact of flexible working practices (FWP) spans various aspects, including personal perspectives, mental and social well-being, gender dynamics, and organizational dynamics. One individual shared her experience with remote work, highlighting how the newly introduced flexible arrangements, relying on online tools, have transformed the work-life balance into a 'Never-ending Shift' (Boncori, 2020). Moreover, telecommuting can pose personal threats to identity, esteem, and power while also leading to distractions from childcare responsibilities and presenting challenges to the growth of female participation in the workforce (Raghuram, 2014).

From a mental and social perspective, dispersed teleworkers face the risk of isolation while maintaining cohesion within distributed teams. Additionally, they encounter challenges related to communication delays, potential misinterpretations, limited information flow, and conflicts (Ruiller, Van Der Heijden, Chedotel, & Dumas, 2018). Such issues could hinder efficient collaboration and productivity.

Furthermore, another study shed light on the negative effects of working from home, such as feeling excessively tied to the computer, missing interactions with colleagues, facing limitations in certain tasks, and encountering a lack of interesting work (Bolisani, Scarso, Ipsen, Kirchner, & Hansen, 2020). These factors can impact motivation and overall job satisfaction.

In summary, the collective findings from these studies underscore the multifaceted challenges associated with flexible working practices. These challenges span personal experiences, gender dynamics, mental well-being, social interactions, and organizational dynamics. As a result, a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of FWP is necessary to formulate effective strategies that address these complexities and promote a conducive work environment for all.

The study highlights the diverse challenges linked to flexible working practices (FWP), yet it lacks a systematic framework that categorizes and analyzes these issues comprehensively. Our current research aims to bridge this gap by examining the intellectual landscape surrounding these challenges from a Moroccan perspective.

## **2.6. Ethical Dimensions of Flexible Working Practices**

The foundation of this thesis lies within an intricate conceptual framework that draws from three essential ethical theories: the Justice theory, the Utilitarian approach, and Kantian duty ethics. These theories have been thoughtfully selected to provide a comprehensive and multifaceted exploration of flexible working practices (FWP) within the unique context of Morocco. By employing the Justice theory, we endeavor to scrutinize the notion of fairness and equality within FWP, examining how these practices influence individuals' access to opportunities and their level of payment equity. This perspective allows us to evaluate whether FWP fosters an environment where all employees, regardless of gender or social background, are treated fairly and equitably.

The Utilitarian approach, on the other hand, forms a crucial pillar of our conceptual framework by guiding our investigation into the utilitarian consequences of FWP. We seek to strike a delicate balance between productivity, well-being, and work-life balance, endeavoring to determine whether FWP enhances overall utility and happiness for individuals and organizations alike. Understanding the broader

implications of FWP from a utilitarian standpoint can help us identify potential areas of improvement and address any imbalances that may arise.

Lastly, the integration of Kantian duty ethics lends a profound moral dimension to our exploration of FWP. This ethical perspective enables us to delve into the moral obligations and rights of individuals engaged in FWP, focusing on notions of dignity, autonomy, and human rights. By examining FWP through the lens of Kantian duty ethics, we aim to uncover the inherent ethical implications and responsibilities of both employers and employees, ultimately aiming to foster a work environment that respects and upholds the dignity and autonomy of all individuals.

This intricately woven theoretical framework forms the bedrock of our research, allowing us to gain a holistic understanding of the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices. Through this comprehensive analysis, we aim to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding FWP, informing the development of more sustainable and ethically sound work policies and practices. By embracing these ethical theories, we seek to illuminate the potential of FWP to create an equitable and fulfilling work environment for individuals, organizations, and society as a whole.

### **2.6.1. John Rawls and His Theory of Justice**

The theory of "Justice as Fairness," introduced by Rawls, forms a fundamental aspect of social justice theory, encompassing two central principles. Rawls made adjustments to the wording of these principles over time, with his final version being published in 2001 (Rawls, 2001).

The First Principle of social justice pertains to political institutions and emphasizes that every individual possesses an equal and inalienable claim to a comprehensive system of equal basic liberties, a scheme that must remain consistent across all individuals. This principle ensures that all individuals enjoy the same fundamental rights and liberties, which cannot be arbitrarily revoked. These liberties include freedom of speech, due process of law, and freedom of travel, drawing from the U.S. Bill of Rights and broader human rights frameworks. Rawls acknowledged the right to private property for individuals, corporations, or workers but excluded ownership of the "means of production" (e.g., mines, factories, farms) and the right to inherit wealth from the scope of basic liberties (Follesdal, 2015).

Rawls acknowledged that certain circumstances may warrant the limitation of basic liberties, but only with the objective of preserving overall liberty. In specific cases, it may be justifiable to curtail the liberties of a particular group, especially if their intentions are to harm the liberties of others, in order to uphold a just and equitable society.

The Second Principle of social justice pertains to social and economic institutions and establishes two conditions for social and economic inequalities:

- Firstly, these inequalities must be associated with offices and positions that are accessible to all individuals, ensuring fair equality of opportunity.
- Secondly, these inequalities must work in favor of the least-advantaged members of society, adhering to the Difference Principle.

Rawls stressed the significance of reducing societal inequalities while acknowledging that complete equality may be unattainable due to inherent individual differences, social class, personal motivation, and even luck. Nevertheless, he emphasized the importance of a just society actively striving to minimize disparities where possible, thus promoting fairness and equality in key areas (Rawls, 2001).

### **2.6.2. Utilitarian Approach to Ethics**

Utilitarianism is a moral principle that advocates for actions promoting happiness or pleasure while opposing actions causing unhappiness or harm. When applied to social, economic, or political choices, a utilitarian philosophy aims to enhance the overall well-being of society (Mill, 1864).

In the context of the ethics of work, the utilitarian approach offers a consequentialist perspective, emphasizing the maximization of overall happiness or well-being as the ultimate goal. From a utilitarian standpoint, the ethical evaluation of work practices centers on their ability to produce the greatest overall happiness or utility for the greatest number of people. This approach is rooted in the idea of calculating the net benefits and harms resulting from work-related decisions and actions.

Two forms of utilitarian ethics are commonly employed in the workplace: rule utilitarianism and act utilitarianism.

- Rule utilitarianism aims to maximize benefits for the greatest number of people through the use of equitable methods.
- Act utilitarianism focuses on performing the most ethical actions to promote the individual's well-being.

Employing the utilitarian lens in the workplace involves assessing the consequences of various policies, practices, and decisions on employees, stakeholders, and society. For instance, when considering flexible working arrangements, a utilitarian analysis would explore how such practices impact employees' well-being, productivity, and satisfaction, as well as how they influence organizational effectiveness and societal welfare. If a particular flexible work policy leads to increased work-life balance, reduced stress, and enhanced employee morale, it could be seen as ethically justified from a utilitarian perspective due to the overall positive impact on individual and organizational happiness, as more generally, the approach is associated with positive feelings and avoidance with negative feelings (Elliot & Thrash, 2002).

However, the utilitarian approach also requires careful consideration of potential drawbacks and unintended consequences. For example, if implementing certain work policies disproportionately benefits some employees while negatively affecting others, the utilitarian analysis would need to weigh the balance of overall happiness and potential inequalities. Additionally, the utilitarian approach might raise questions about the distribution of benefits and whether certain groups are being marginalized or excluded in pursuit of overall utility (Rynne, 1998).

Overall, the utilitarian approach in the ethics of work offers a framework for assessing work-related decisions based on their potential to promote the greatest good for the greatest number. By focusing on the consequences of different choices, this ethical perspective aims to foster fair and beneficial practices that contribute to the well-being of individuals and society while considering the potential trade-offs and implications for different stakeholders (Bowden, 2009; Mill, 1864).

### **2.6.3. Kantian Duty Ethics**

In the conceptual framework of our thesis, we have carefully considered various ethical perspectives to illuminate the complexities of flexible working practices (FWP). Among these ethical theories, we have chosen to incorporate Kantian Duty-

Based (Deontological) Ethics. This decision stems from the recognition of the distinctive strengths that Kantian ethics offers in understanding the moral implications of FWP. Kantian ethics, as developed by the philosopher Immanuel Kant, emphasizes the significance of moral duties and principles that are universal and independent of specific consequences (Il\_sevenpillers, 2013). By focusing on the inherent moral obligations and principles guiding human actions, Kantian ethics provides a robust framework for assessing the ethical dimensions of FWP.

By adopting Kantian Duty-Based Ethics, we seek to explore how FWP aligns with the principles of moral duty and autonomy. This approach emphasizes the ethical responsibility to act in accordance with universal moral laws and uphold the dignity and rights of individuals involved in flexible work arrangements (Kant, 2002). Through this lens, we aim to examine how FWP respects the autonomy of employees, fosters a fair and just work environment, and adheres to fundamental ethical principles.

The integration of Kantian Duty-Based Ethics in our conceptual framework allows us to explore the ethical implications of FWP beyond consequentialist considerations. Instead of solely focusing on outcomes and consequences, we delve into the inherent moral duties and obligations that guide decision-making in the context of flexible work practices. By incorporating this ethical perspective, our thesis endeavors to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the ethical dimensions of FWP, offering valuable insights for policymakers, organizations, and individuals seeking to enhance the ethical foundations of flexible work arrangements.

#### **2.6.4. Ethical Dimensions of FWP in Morocco: A Literature Gap Analysis**

In light of the research conducted, it is pertinent to acknowledge the scarcity of scholarly literature specifically addressing the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices (FWP) within the context of Moroccan society and the broader North African region and even in general. While the existing body of work predominantly revolves around practical aspects of FWP and work-life balance, there is a distinct paucity of studies that delve into the ethical implications of such arrangements.

As researchers, this gap in the literature underscores the originality and significance of our study. By delving into the ethical perspectives of FWP in Morocco, our conceptual framework aims to offer a comprehensive analysis that brings into focus the ethical

considerations pertinent to flexible work arrangements, particularly for Moroccan women and employees, and shed light on their situation in the labor force, exploring the opportunities and challenges they encounter while considering the role of religion, culture, and society. By delving into the ethical dimension of FWP from their perspective, we seek to understand how flexible arrangements impact their work experiences, personal lives, and overall well-being.

Navigating the intricacies of ethical dilemmas and challenges arising from FWP in this specific cultural and social context allows us to glean unique insights into the experiences and perceptions of individuals within the Moroccan labor force. Furthermore, extending our examination to encompass the broader North African region promises to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the cultural intricacies that shape the ethical implications of flexible work practices. The lack of discussion on the ethical dimensions of flexibility at work could be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the predominant focus in existing literature might be on practical aspects, such as work-life balance and productivity, rather than delving into the ethical implications of flexible working practices. Additionally, the concept of work flexibility itself is relatively new and rapidly evolving, which may explain the limited attention given to its ethical aspects. Furthermore, the cultural and societal context in different regions, including North African countries like Morocco, could influence the prioritization of research topics, with ethical considerations being relatively understudied. Given the emerging importance of ethical considerations in the modern workplace, there is a growing need for comprehensive research to shed light on the ethical implications of flexible working practices and their impact on individuals, organizations, and society at large.

This study not only seeks to fill the gap in the literature concerning the ethical dimensions of flexibility at work but also aims to understand the scarcity of research on this topic in the context of Morocco.

In conclusion, while the prevailing literature predominantly focuses on practical aspects of FWP and work-life balance, our study endeavors to address the scholarly gap by centering on the ethical dimensions of flexible work arrangements, with a specific emphasis on Morocco. Through this pioneering research, we aspire to pave the way for a more profound understanding of the ethical challenges and opportunities associated with FWP, providing valuable insights for policymakers, employers, and employees alike.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

After the literature review conducted for the research, it became evident that limited research is available on the ethical dimensions of flexible working practices (FWP). In response to this gap, the present chapter elucidates the research design and data collection approach employed in this study. By delving into the methodology and application, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the ethical implications of FWP and its impact on various aspects of the work environment. Through this exploration, we seek to contribute valuable insights to the existing knowledge on FWP and its ethical implications in Morocco.

#### **3.2. Research Design and Philosophy**

The research employs a comprehensive design aimed at providing clarity from the outset. The primary inquiry focuses on the ethical perspective of Moroccan women towards Flexible Working Practices (FWP). A qualitative research method is adopted to explore the subject thoroughly. Integrating qualitative research into intervention studies has garnered increasing attention across various disciplines. It was initially employed in psychological studies when quantifying human behavior posed challenges. In clinical studies, qualitative research allows for a clearer understanding of data and enhances user involvement, thereby increasing overall effectiveness.

##### **3.2.1. Why a Qualitative Phenomenological Research Design?**

In this study, we have opted for qualitative methods to explore the depth and complexity of the research topic comprehensively. Qualitative methods offer an opportunity to delve into the participants' experiences, perspectives, and underlying

meanings (Vanderstoep & D. Johnston, 2009). We specifically chose interviews as our primary tool to gain a profound understanding of the ethical aspects of Flexible working practices from the participants' viewpoint, aiming to examine the everyday experiences of our participants. This approach is well-suited for capturing nuanced and contextual factors that quantitative methods might overlook. Additionally, qualitative research allows us to generate detailed insights and contribute to a deeper comprehension of the research area. Through interviews, we can ensure that participants understand our questions, provide relevant answers, and share real examples from their daily life experiences with flexibility; this may uncover additional factors not yet documented in the existing literature.

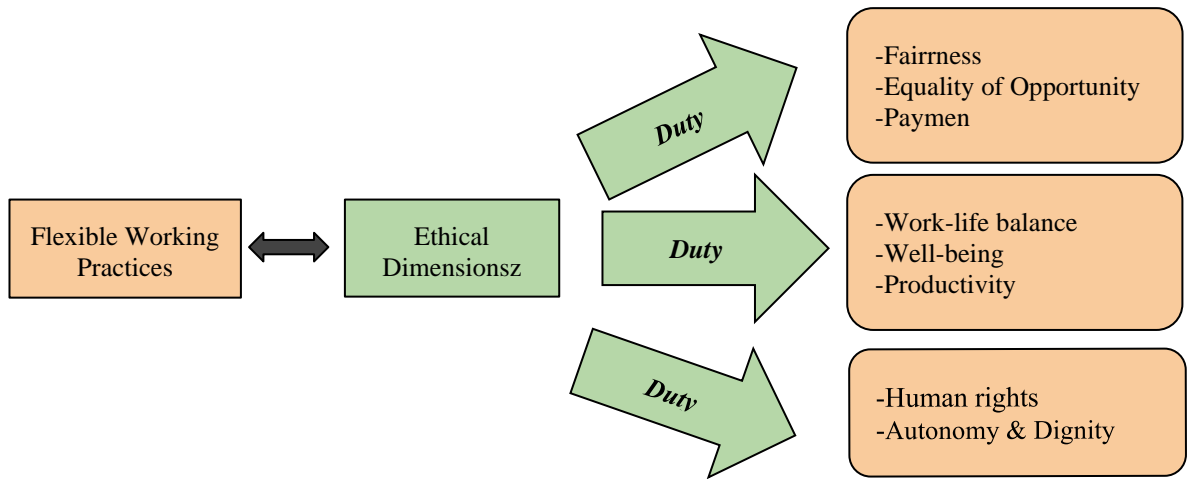
By incorporating qualitative measures, the researcher also emphasizes personal experiences and the cultural context of Morocco in the study. The subjects' positive experiences and perspectives are central to exploring the benefits and drawbacks of the FWP (Pathak, Jena, & Kalra, 2013).

### **3.3. Research Methodology**

In this research, the in-depth interviews were thoughtfully structured with a series of nine open-ended questions categorized into four distinct levels:

- The Justice theory: fairness, payment, and equal access.
- Utilitarian approach: Productivity, Well-being, Work-life balance.
- Kantian duty ethics: Dignity or autonomy, Human rights.
- Additional interviewee point: Participants were encouraged to share any thoughts or aspects they believed should be addressed or emphasized in the study.

Each level comprises one to three questions designed to interconnect and comprehensively understand the participants' perspectives. The interview questions were meticulously derived from the literature review conducted for the research, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives. Throughout the interviews, participants elaborated on their responses, enabling the interviewers to ask supplementary questions to gain further clarity on specific aspects related to the research. This holistic approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the ethical dimensions of Flexible Working Practices, shedding light on various facets that influence the experiences and perceptions of the participants.



**Figure 3.1. Research Model**

Our research questions emerged from a thorough review of scholarly works in the realms of justice, utility, and duty. We used keywords like work-life balance, autonomy, and productivity to guide our exploration. This method provided the basis for our inquiry. We systematically examined existing literature to find relevant studies aligning with our research goals. This process helped us identify questions directly tied to our study and capable of shedding light on the interplay of work-life balance, autonomy, productivity, justice, utility, and duty. We also simplified and refined some questions for interviews. By drawing from existing research and employing a rigorous selection process, we formulated research questions that significantly contribute to our understanding of these crucial workplace dimensions.

### **3.4. Data Collection**

To collect data for the research, information is gathered from diverse sources. The Moroccan LinkedIn community serves as one resource, facilitating contact with women engaged in FWP, who are then interviewed. Additionally, social media platforms offer access to a broader pool of Moroccan women who are also interviewed. Personal contacts of Moroccan working women with successful careers also contribute to the data collection process. To ensure a genuine expression of feelings and experiences with FWP, over 100 Moroccan women are invited to participate in the research and positions. They are given the freedom to respond in their preferred language, predominantly in a Moroccan accent. In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 women from Morocco to obtain primary data.

Throughout the data collection process, the in-depth interviews ranged from 28 minutes to 1 hour. The length of each interview was contingent upon the availability of the participants, primarily based in Morocco. The interviews were conducted via Zoom meeting calls at mutually convenient times to facilitate smooth communication, ensuring optimal engagement and participation.

Notably, more than 85 percent of the interviews were conducted in Moroccan accents, allowing participants to express themselves comfortably and authentically. Subsequently, after each interview, the transcripts were meticulously prepared. The next crucial step involved translating the participants' emotions, sentiments, and ideas from Moroccan to English accurately and effectively. This meticulous process aimed to preserve the essence and depth of the participants' responses, accurately representing their experiences and perspectives within the research.

**Table 3.1. Interviewers' Information**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Industry and Job Position</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Type of FWP</b>
Participant 1	28	consulting / Business development executive	Married	Part-time/ Remote
Participant 2	26	Business/ Operation Manager	Married	Hybrid
Participant 3	26	IT / RPA. Engineer, product owner	Single	Hybrid
Participant 4	34	Agronomy / Project Manager	Married (1Kid)	Telework / Flex hours
Participant 5	28	Health sector /Psychologist	Married	Remote / On-demand
Participant 6	28	IT / Developer	Single	Teleworking: Flexible hours
Participant 7	27	Marketing Creative Agency / Influencer and Business Development Manager	Single	Remote / Flex hours
Participant 8	25	Media / Video Editor	Single	On-demand/ Remote
Participant 9	28	E-commerce / Marketing Manger	Married (1Kid)	Remote / Full Time
Participant 10	28	Fine arts / Graphic Designer	Married (2Kids)	On-demand/ Hybrid
Participant 11	25	Media / Project Manager	Married	Flextime and location
Participant 12	25	Technology / Content moderator	Single	Teleworking
Participant 13	24	Technology / Agency Management Advisor	Single	Hybrid
Participant 14	23	It / Software Project Manager	Single	Hybrid
Participant 15	25	Technology / Administrative and Financial Assistant	Single	One day Remote

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we delve into the heart of this thesis, where we present and critically analyze the outcomes of our extensive research, including the data analysis and coding of the data. The chapter meticulously examines the data collected through in-depth interviews with Moroccan women. It aims to unearth valuable insights and patterns on their experiences, perspectives, and attitudes toward flexible working practices (FWP) from an ethical standpoint.

By following a carefully devised interview guide, we probed various aspects of FWP, guided by the three ethical theories we selected: the Justice Theory, the Utilitarian Approach, and Kantian Duty Ethics. These distinct levels of inquiry explore crucial dimensions such as fairness, productivity, well-being, work-life balance, dignity, autonomy, and human rights, all from the unique perspective of Moroccan women. The amalgamation of these ethical perspectives enriches our understanding of implications and potential benefits for Moroccan women, their families, organizations, and society.

The data analysis and coding of the research findings were conducted using the Software "Maxqda 2022," a program designed to analyze qualitative data efficiently and comprehensively. It facilitated the organization of the data and provided valuable statistics, maps, and the ability to convert qualitative data to quantitative data, all in an organized and customizable manner. This software enabled us to gain maximum insights from the data and present the findings clearly and understandably.

Moreover, this chapter highlights the diversity of participants' viewpoints and experiences, adding depth and nuance to our analysis. As we navigate the rich tapestry of responses, we engage in thought-provoking discussions that contextualize the findings within Morocco's broader socio-cultural and organizational landscape. Our goal is to unearth meaningful correlations, contradictions, and implications that inform the development of future policies, practices, and interventions related to flexible working arrangements, with a specific focus on the needs and perspectives of Moroccan women.

In sum, the chapter "Findings: Analysis and Discussion" represents a pivotal stage in this thesis, where empirical data converges with ethical theories to unravel the multifaceted dimensions of FWP in Morocco from the unique perspective of Moroccan women. Through rigorous analysis and insightful discussions, we endeavor to provide a comprehensive view that contributes to advancing knowledge in this area and fosters a deeper understanding of the impact of flexible working practices on Moroccan women and society. The unique insights gained from this research, supported by the comprehensive analysis facilitated by "Maxqda 2022," can serve as a foundation for promoting more inclusive and ethical practices in flexible work, benefiting Moroccan women and organizations in the Moroccan context.

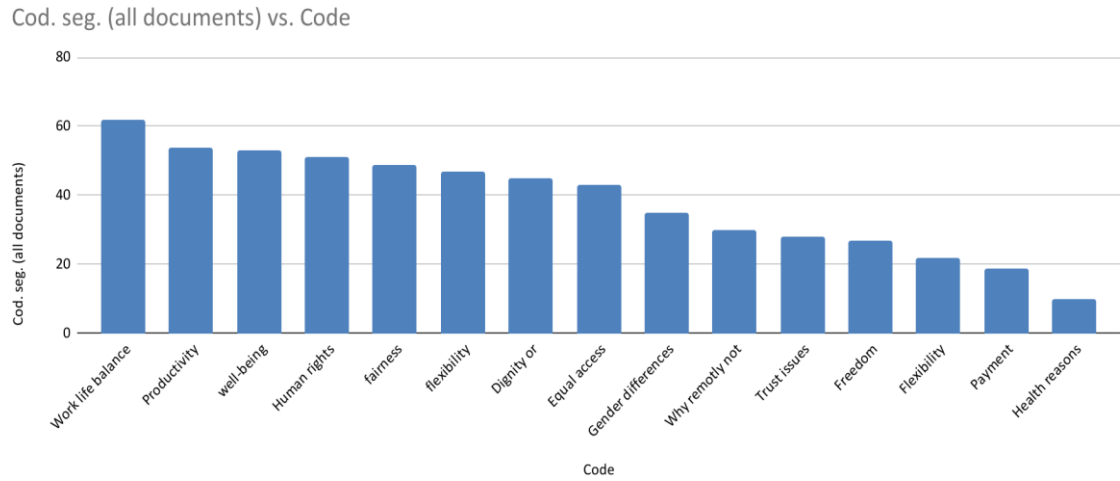
## **4.2. Data Coding**

We transcribed the interview answers from audio to written Word documents to code our data for analysis. Subsequently, each document was meticulously scrutinized word by word to identify relevant codes that could be applied to the research. The coding process involved selecting codes, which sometimes appeared repeatedly in the documents or were prioritized based on their significance, as emphasized by the interviewees in the transcripts.

## **4.3. Results of Codes**

Initially, to obtain a comprehensive overview of our interview analysis results, several recurring codes emerged across all the responses, often being highlighted as crucial aspects in various questions. Based on the conducted analysis, the following represents

the findings of these codes and their frequency across all the documents, indicating how frequently they were mentioned throughout the interview responses.



**Figure 4.1. Coded Segments of All Documents**

**Table 4.1. Coded Segments of All Documents**

Code	Cod. seg. (all documents)
Work-life balance	72
Productivity	57
well-being	57
Human rights	55
Flexibility	54
Fairness	53
Dignity or autonomy	47
Equal access	46
Flexibility challenges	37
Gender differences	35
Why remotely, not on-site	30
Freedom	29
Trust issues	26
Payment	24
Health reasons	11

The number of codes found is 15 codes. They are essential to define the most influential element in the question research: How do Moroccan women perceive and experience flexible working practices (FWP) from an ethical perspective?

From the data presented in the table above, we observe that work-life balance, productivity, well-being, and human rights are the codes with the highest frequencies, appearing in all interview responses with 72, 57, 57, and 55 mentions, respectively. Followed by flexibility, fairness, dignity and autonomy, equal access, gender differences, the preference for remote work over on-site, trust issues, freedom, and flexibility challenges mentioned more than 20 times during the interviews. These codes highlight the multitude of dimensions inherent in the research question, underscoring their essential role in providing a comprehensive answer.

The rest of the codes, especially those with fewer frequencies, like payment and health reasons, are essential element for a specific question, even if they are not discussed as much as most of the other codes. However, they are vital codes for specific questions as dimensions to define their answer.

#### **4.3.1. Code Quotes and Meaning**

The table includes the identified codes and quotes extracted from the interview responses. It should be noted that not all the text or phrases explicitly mention the code or its meaning, as there are numerous instances. Nevertheless, the selected quotes offer valuable insights into how these codes are relevant to our research question, enriching our understanding of their impact.

**Table 4.2. Quotes About Codes and Meaning**

Code	Quotes	Meaning
<b>Fairness</b>	<p><i>The current state of justice within Moroccan companies is a real concern. If we consider flexible arrangements as a form of excellence, it is unlikely that they are equally provided to everyone. (Participant.5)</i></p> <p><i>I do believe that flexible time in the company does give fairness to all employees and gives them more freedom to manage their time and do more of what they would like to do. (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>Yes, if all workers can have at least a day per week working from home. (Participant 14)</i></p>	<p>The code pertains to embodying principles of justice referring to the quality of being just, impartial, and equitable without discrimination or favoritism. This will be the reality if the company provides the same opportunity to all employees taking into consideration their position duties including social, economics, and legal systems.</p>
<b>Payment</b>	<p><i>I wouldn't say unfair treatment, because they were very clear from the get-go. They told me we need a part-timer. And if you agree to it, this is going to be your salary. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>when I transitioned from full-time to two days a week, my salary was cut in half despite performing the same job as before. While this was unfair, the flexibility offered by this arrangement allowed me to seek additional work with another company to supplement my income. (Participant 2)</i></p>	<p>The payment code involves the idea of compensating individuals for their work, with a strong emphasis on justice and impartiality. It envisions a system where employees receive compensation based on their contributions and responsibilities, ensuring no discrimination or favoritism exists. The code seeks to maintain equal pay for equal work. Additionally, it underscores the importance of paying employees based on their effort and actual output rather than merely the time they spend in the office.</p>
<b>Equal Access</b>	<p><i>My colleague faces significant challenges in requesting even a half-day off for personal matters or the possibility of working from home occasionally. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>I do not think that there is justice in the company rather there is class discrimination. In the sense that you must be in a higher position to benefit from FWP. (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>Flexibility is often used in contracts to entice specific employees with certain profiles to accept positions and work with the company. (Participant 5)</i></p>	<p>This code Guarantees that every employee is provided with the same opportunities and privileges to utilize FWP. It implies that regardless of an employee's position, job responsibilities, or personal situation, they should have unbiased and just access to options like telecommuting, flexible hours, job sharing, or other forms of flexible work arrangements. This safeguards against any form of discrimination based on factors such as gender, job level, ethnicity, age, or any other protected characteristic.</p>

#### 4.2. (cont.)

<p><b>Productivity</b></p>	<p><i>When you're not surrounded by people who work with you, in the same field every day, you see them hustling and working. You do lack That's motivation to work, and sometimes you just feel so bored. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>benefit of remote work is that I can align my work hours with my peak productivity times. (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>The flexibility nurtures inspiration, motivating me to pursue additional projects and contribute innovative ideas rather than waiting passively for tasks to come my way. (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>The flexibility had a positive impact considering my productivity at work. the one remote day I have. "It's like a rechargeable day for me." (Participant 14)</i></p>	<p>As we are addressing workplace flexibility, it is imperative to acknowledge the critical role that productivity plays in this context. While prioritizing employee well-being remains a primary focus, it is equally essential to address equitable considerations for both employees and organizations. Consequently, productivity emerges as a critical element in achieving a harmonious balance that mutually benefits all stakeholders. By giving due importance to productivity, organizations can effectively support employee welfare while concurrently contributing to the overall success and advancement of the enterprise.</p>
<p><b>Well-being</b></p>	<p><i>I would say as a woman there are days when we have period cramps. I prefer to stay at home better than go working on-site because, that can be less stressful than working on-site. (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>Long hours and intense pressure took a toll on my well-being. I wouldn't necessarily say it immediately had a positive impact on my well-being. Instead, it began to play a crucial role in my recovery from the damage caused by the excessive workload in the office. (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>I can allocate time for activities like going to the gym, engaging in sports, and maintaining a healthy diet. (Participant 10)</i></p>	<p>The purpose of this code is to assess the effects of the experience on employees' physical, emotional, and mental well-being, aiming to determine whether the impact is positive or negative. It involves a comprehensive evaluation of multiple factors, such as stress levels, commuting, physical conditions, health practices, the presence of a toxic environment, and job satisfaction, among others. Through this evaluation, the code seeks to understand the overall influence of the FWP experience on employees' health and welfare.</p>
<p><b>Work-Life Balance</b></p>	<p><i>This is my favorite. Honestly, it's very good especially for our generation now. And especially since I'm 24, I'm a woman, I do look for flexibility in my life in general. I think it does really give you a real work-life balance. (Participant 13)</i></p> <p><i>I believe that HR Managers should focus more on task delivery instead of working hours because I have seen many ghost employees who spend 8 hours in the office and work for less than an hour. So, I believe 1000% that flexibility in work hours helps people to fulfill themselves and give more to the company. (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>I think the office is what isolates you, and remote work actually, it gives you more opportunity to meet people, especially from other industries. (Participant 7)</i></p>	<p>The recurring emphasis on work-life balance in discussions about Flexible Working Practices (FWP) and Ethics underscores its essential role. The primary reason people seek FWP is to achieve and maintain a healthy work-life balance. The frequent mention of the work-life balance code (mentioned 72 times in the interviews) reaffirms its significance. This code serves as a critical indicator for assessing the ethical aspect of FWP, particularly in terms of its utility in promoting employee well-being and overall satisfaction.</p>

**Table 4.2. (cont.)**

<p><b>Dignity or Autonomy</b></p>	<p><i>It's a matter of choice, as initially, I tolerated such situations, which are related to one's experience. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>I never felt that my dignity was affected, but my independence and flexibility were something I had to work for and prove myself for years. (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>It felt like they wanted to keep employees enslaved to the office, and it was also a matter of preserving my dignity. (Participant 10)</i></p>	<p>The Dignity or Autonomy code aims to assess whether employees have encountered any negative experiences that may have affected their sense of autonomy and dignity while participating in such arrangements. Negative examples could include micromanagement, limited choices, rigidity, privacy invasion, stigmatization, or unfair treatment. Upholding the principle of duty necessitates creating an environment that respects employees' individuality and well-being while allowing them the freedom to exercise control over their work arrangements.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights</b></p>	<p><i>Yes, it upholds the obligation of respecting, actually not being flexible and treating people like slaves that is against the human rights of. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>If this were to happen in Morocco, it would be a hundred percent in line with human rights protection and could resolve many issues. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>Offering the option to work off-site respects individual freedom and choice. (Participant 5)</i></p>	<p>The primary objective of this code was to ascertain whether the participants perceived FWP as a protector of human rights. Furthermore, this exploration allowed for an examination of ethics from a duty perspective, insights into the broader relationship between FWP and respect for human rights, and provides an idea of their point of view on traditional Working practices.</p>
<p><b>Codes Discovered through the Interview Process</b></p>		
<p><b>Flexibility Challenges</b></p>	<p><i>When you're not surrounded by people who work with you in the same field every day, you see them hustling and working. You do lack That's motivation to work, and sometimes you just feel so bored. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>I found it challenging to adapt. I was unaccustomed to this level of freedom. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>You have to be your own boss and manage your tasks. For me, staying consistently productive every day was challenging. (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>He seemed to assume that since I was working from home, I had no other commitments, leading to an issue where I ended up working longer hours than initially agreed upon. (Participant 9)</i></p> <p><i>The challenge with flexible work lies in setting boundaries to safeguard your autonomy, which can be more demanding than in a conventional job. It requires a higher level of self-awareness and assertiveness to maintain a healthy work-life balance. (Participant 11)</i></p>	<p>This code highlights the negative side of FWP, as employees mentioned their acceptance of it, but also acknowledged that its effectiveness might be influenced by individual personalities or the novelty of the arrangement. Some participants indicated that they needed time to adapt or become accustomed to FWP, suggesting that the successful integration of flexible practices could be dependent on individual differences and personalities and the willingness to embrace such changes over time.</p>

**Table 4.2. (cont.)**

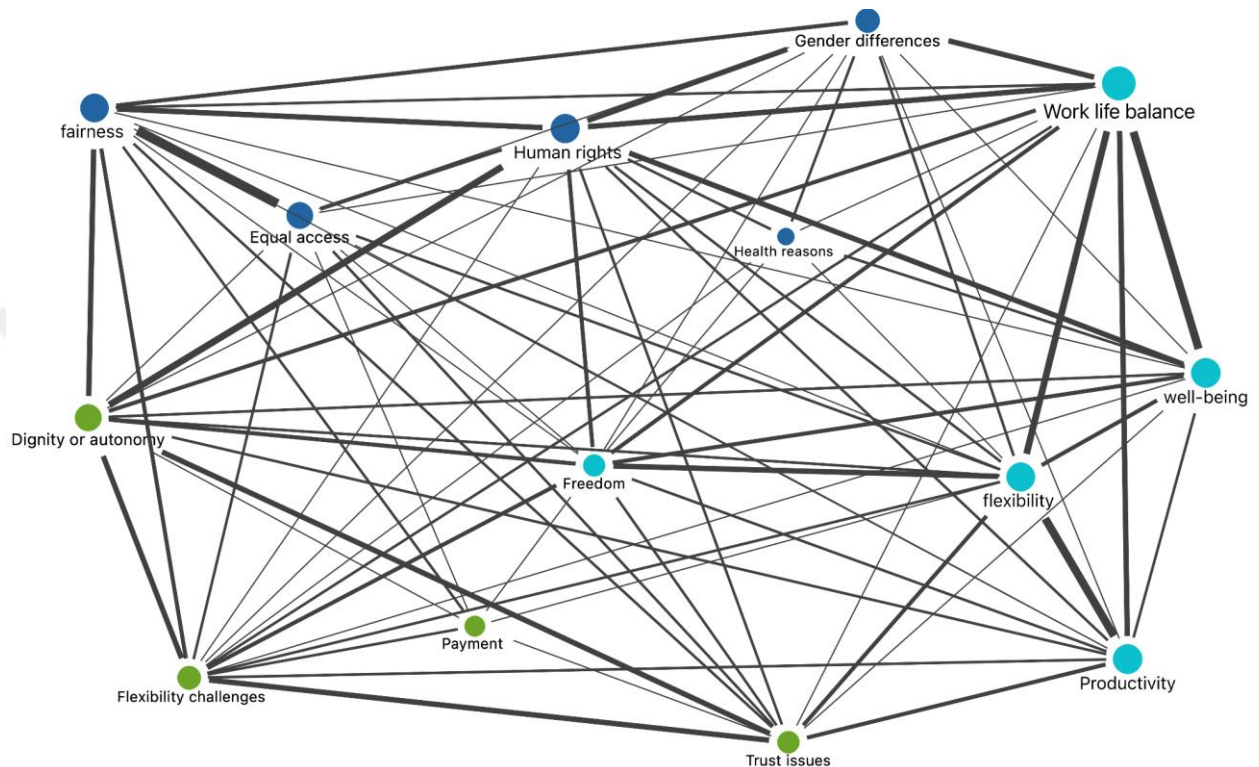
<p><b>Health Reasons</b></p>	<p><i>I had a colleague with me who had an accident last summer and she had some bruises on her face, too. It would be so uncomfortable to come with bruises to work. So, my manager decided to give her two months until the bruises were gone and she could be comfortable enough to come again and work on-site. (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>She was granted a hybrid work arrangement due to severe allergies to the city weather and a recent back injury. This flexibility allowed her to work from home and avoid the challenges associated with her health conditions. (Participant 4)</i></p>	<p>During the interviews, it was discovered that some managers might offer (FWP) to employees only in exceptional health cases, neglecting the possibility of providing flexibility even when the physical conditions do not warrant it. This observation indicates that there might be a lack of consistent and inclusive implementation of FWP, potentially leading to missed opportunities for enhancing work-life balance and employee well-being in situations where it could be beneficial beyond health-related circumstances.</p>
<p><b>Trust Issues</b></p>	<p><i>Primarily due to trust issues, Companies tend to believe that there should be close supervision to ensure employees are working efficiently. (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>When leaders, entrepreneurs, and managers provide the necessary support and trust, workers become motivated to invest more in their roles and develop their skills, benefiting the company in the long run. (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>It really makes you want to work more, because you feel like you get trust from the company and you feel responsible for it. (Participant 13)</i></p>	<p>The Trust Issue code emerged as the main reason for unequal access to FWP in Morocco. Most participants cited a lack of trust between employers and employees, while others pointed to the mentality of business owners and technological backwardness as contributing factors.</p>
<p><b>Freedom</b></p>	<p><i>I feel more liberated as I can choose my work hours and even opt to work from home based on my circumstances. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>To me, freedom holds immense significance, and the conventional five-day workweek feels like a form of bondage. (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>You wouldn't have the same flexibility and freedom as you do while you are a remote worker. (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>On days when I'm not feeling well mentally or physically, I have the freedom to choose where I work, which has been vital for maintaining my well-being. (Participant 11)</i></p> <p><i>It does give you the freedom to still take care of your house and also take care of your priorities as a woman who cares about her goals and her career. (Participant 13)</i></p>	<p>The Freedom Code focuses on the concept of empowering employees with greater freedom and autonomy in their work arrangements. It emphasizes the importance of providing employees with the flexibility to choose when and where they work, tailoring their schedules to suit personal needs and preferences. The code highlights the positive impact of FWP on employees' sense of control and work-life balance, leading to increased job satisfaction and overall well-being.</p>

**Table 4.2. (cont.)**

<p><b>Gender Differences</b></p>	<p><i>I am all for gender equality. But to be honest, to me, flexible working has to be a compulsory thing for women, rather than men. Because a woman has other responsibilities that nobody shares with her. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>If we want to attract more women to the workforce and create a society with more working and studying individuals for a better future, these facilities will significantly improve the situation. (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>I had to give up my studies due to the inability to cope with the demands of work and family simultaneously. (Participant 10)</i></p> <p><i>"So, in Morocco, you either should be the supper woman and do all the work, taking care of your family, the house, etc.... and you will be exhausted physically and mentally, or you should leave your job and take care of your family ". (Participant 11)</i></p>	<p>In all the interviews, the participants highlighted the significance of gender differences, both in physical aspects such as periods, sickness, or pregnancy, and from a societal perspective concerning women's responsibilities. The participants' viewpoints shed light on the importance of tailoring FWP to address gender-specific needs and challenges, aiming to create a more equitable and supportive work environment for women</p>
<p><b>Flexibility</b></p>	<p><i>So, when we're talking about flexibility, we're talking about an employer who sees an employee as a human who gives them that kind of flexibility as long as that employee delivers what they have to deliver. (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>Fortunately, I have the flexibility to work with another company and supplement my income with an additional salary. (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>In Morocco, flexible working arrangements are considered a privilege, often used in contracts to entice specific employees with certain profiles to accept positions and work with the company. (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>It's a win-win situation that promotes personal growth and a sense of fulfillment in my work. (Participant 8)</i></p>	<p>This code emerged from the insights gathered during our interviews, where participants shared their perspectives on work flexibility. It reflects their general perceptions of flexibility in their country, regardless of the personal impact of Flexible Working Practices (FWP) on their individual lives.</p>

### 4.3.2. Codes' Relationship

Subsequently, the code map displays relationships between codes that occur more than five times, aiming for a clearer presentation. This map highlights codes that have a correlation of at least five occurrences in all the interviews.



**Figure 4.2. Codes' Relationship Map**

Furthermore, as depicted in the code map above, all our codes exhibit connections with varying frequencies, with a ticker line indicating a stronger correlation between the related codes. Notably, fairness with equal access, flexibility with productivity, and work-life balance are visually the most interrelated, but we also observe robust connections between fairness and equal access. Additionally, the map highlights strong relationships among dignity and autonomy and human rights and trust issues. The map utilizes different colors to group codes based on their earlier definitions.

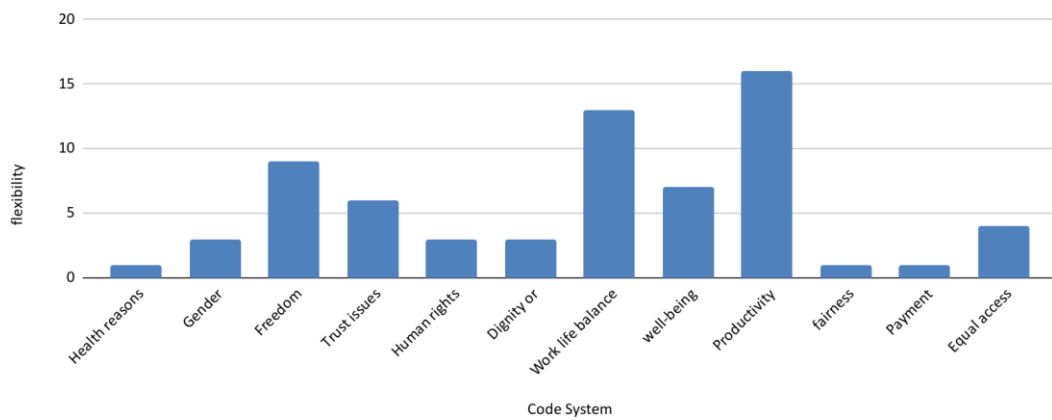
For better comprehension of the codes and their interrelationships, the tables provided offer a detailed explanation of each code's connection with all other codes in our

research. These tables include the frequencies of code mentions in the exact phrasing across all documents, quantifying of the relationships between existing codes.

**Table 4.3. Table of Codes Relationship**

Code System	Work-life balance	Well-being	Productivity	Fairness	Payment	Equal access	Human rights	Dignity or autonomy	Gender differences	Health reasons	Flexibility challenges	Trust issues	Flexibility	Freedom
Work-life balance	0	15	9	5	0	2	9	7	11	1	3	2	13	7
Well-being	15	0	5	1	0	0	9	3	2	4	2	1	7	7
Productivity	9	5	0	1	0	2	5	3	2	0	4	6	16	4
Fairness	5	1	1	0	5	18	11	9	6	0	7	4	1	2
Payment	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	1	0	0	5	2	1	1
Equal access	2	0	2	18	1	0	7	1	2	0	5	3	4	2
Human rights	9	9	5	11	0	7	0	12	9	3	1	3	3	7
Dignity or autonomy	7	3	3	9	1	1	12	0	1	0	11	9	3	6
Gender differences	11	2	2	6	0	2	9	1	0	4	1	0	3	1
Health reasons	1	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	2	0	1	1
Flexibility challenges	3	2	4	7	5	5	1	11	1	2	0	11	5	11
Trust issues	2	1	6	4	2	3	3	9	0	0	11	0	6	4
Flexibility	13	7	16	1	1	4	3	3	3	1	5	6	0	9
Freedom	7	7	4	2	1	2	7	6	1	1	11	4	9	0

flexibility vs. Code System



**Figure 4.3. Relationship of Flexibility with the Other Codes**

The chart depicts the relationship between the flexibility code and other codes, with the highest correlations found in productivity, work-life balance, and freedom. The frequencies represent how often these codes were mentioned in the exact phrasing.

*"With the flexibility in my current work arrangement, things have changed drastically. I now have the freedom to manage my schedule, allowing me to take breaks and prioritize my well-being. I can communicate and socialize more effectively, which has significantly improved my overall health and happiness. " (Participant 2)*

According to participants, flexibility at work leads to enhanced performance, a sense of freedom, improved well-being, and better work-life balance. This positive impact addresses various challenges faced by employees, particularly women, in both personal and career aspects. Moreover, from a human rights perspective, providing employees with the freedom to choose flexible arrangements empowers them and positively influences their self-esteem and productivity in both work and life domains.

This code emerged from insights gathered during interviews, where participants shared their viewpoints on work flexibility.

Flexibility challenges vs. Code System

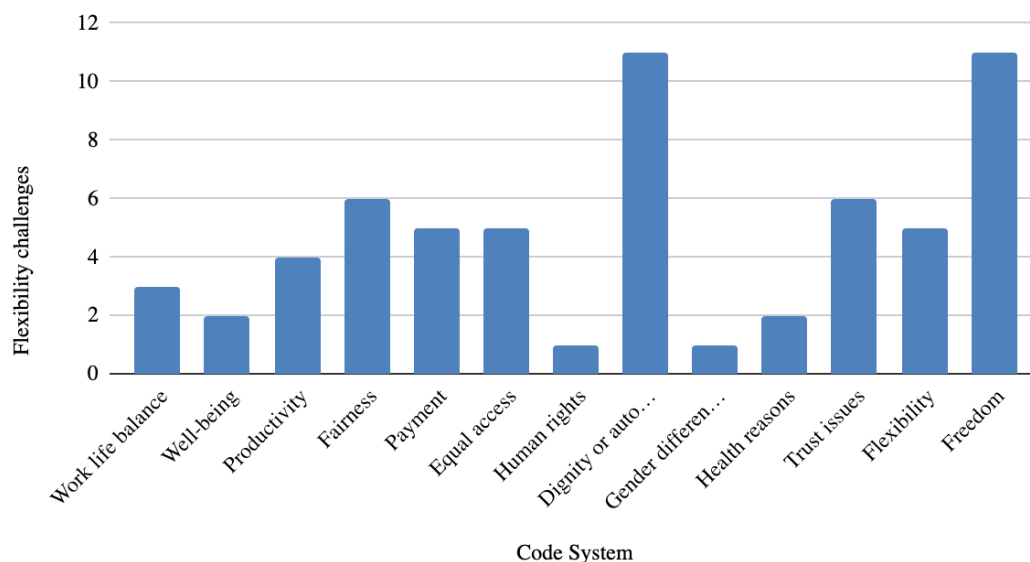


Figure 4.4. Relationship of Flexibility Challenges with the Other Codes

During the interviews, participants disclosed challenges they encountered while working flexibly. To gain a precise understanding of the primary difficulties they faced, we conducted a comparison of Flexible challenges with other codes. This analysis allowed us to determine whether these challenges were of a personal nature or if they were predominantly influenced by company unethical-related factors.

*"At the beginning, I found it challenging to adapt. I was unaccustomed to this level of freedom, and as a result, I allowed tasks to accumulate due to my own laziness. However, as time went on, I learned to embrace flexibility and developed better time management skills." (Participant 9)*

The strongest code relationship exists with freedom. Initially, interviewees were not accustomed to the level of freedom provided by Flexible Working Practices (FWP) and found it challenging to transition from traditional work settings and micromanagement. This adjustment had some impact on their productivity; however, the majority of participants mentioned that this challenge was temporary and gradually subsided.

*"The challenge with flexible work lies in setting boundaries to safeguard your autonomy, which can be more demanding than in a conventional job. It requires a higher level of self-awareness and assertiveness to maintain a healthy work-life balance." (Participant 11)*

Moreover, the codes of dignity and autonomy were also prominent. Participants shared that the hardest aspect of FWP was learning to set boundaries and say no to tasks or requests that encroached upon their personal time or compromised their dignity and autonomy. This difficulty was a significant concern for many interviewees in relation to FWP.

### **4.3.3. Code Grouping**

To enhance the comprehension and observation of the research findings, we reduced the number of individual codes by grouping them based on the concepts outlined in the literature review. Each group represents a specific theme, and the definition of each code reflects its context as declared by the interviewees during the interviews. This grouping approach allows for a more straightforward interpretation of the research and

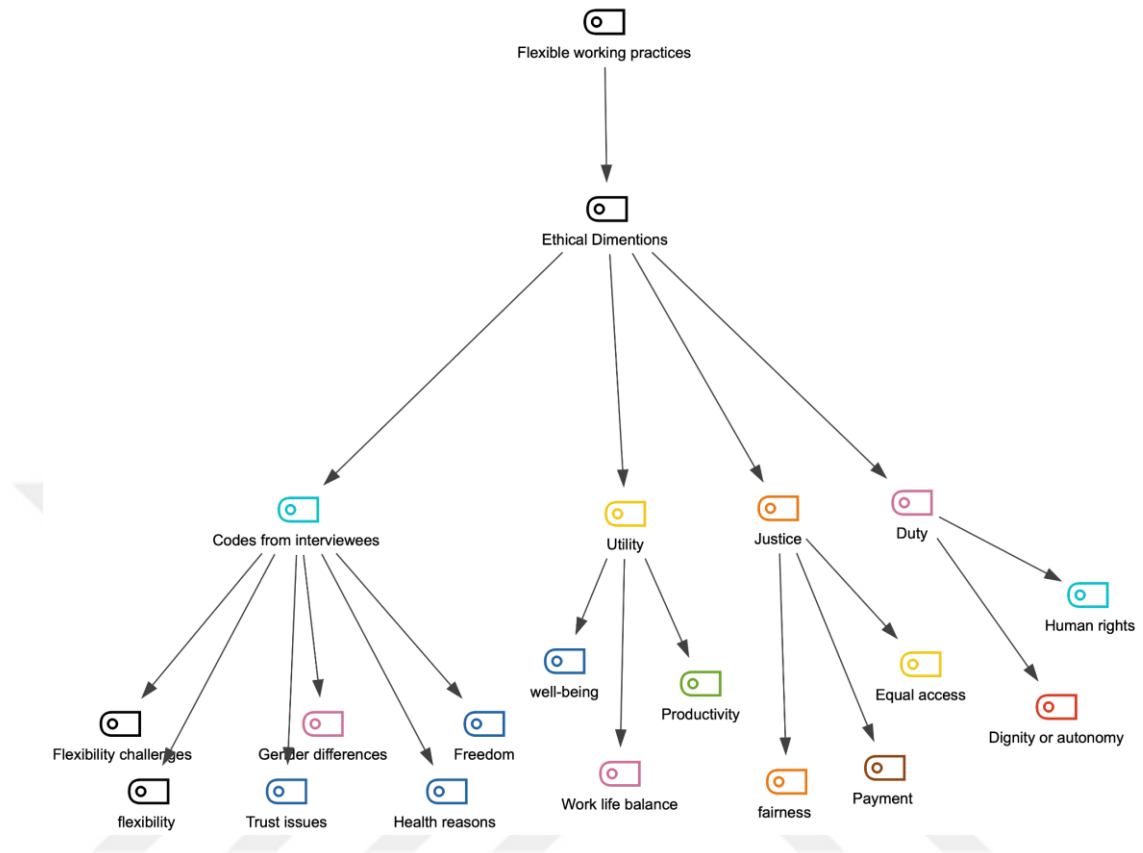
enables us to understand better the overall themes and patterns emerging from the interviews.

Initially, the primary codes at the center of our research are "Flexible working practices" and "Ethical dimensions," forming the fundamental focus of our investigation. Based on the literature review, we identified three main theoretical approaches:

- The Justice theory encompasses "Fairness," "Payment," and "Equal access."
- The Utilitarian approach includes "Productivity," "*Well-being*" and "Work-life balance."
- The Kantian duty ethics involve "Dignity or autonomy" and "Human rights."

Furthermore, as a result of our research, we recognized additional codes that hold significance and grouped them into a fourth category to provide coherence: "Flexibility" and "Flexibility challenges," "Trust issues," "Gender defenses," "Health reasons," and "Freedom."

## Hierarchical Code-Subcodes Model



**Figure 4.5. Hierarchical Code-Subcodes Model**

In the hierarchical code-subcode model, the relationship between the grouped codes reveals that "Flexible working practices" (FWP) are at the core of our research, linked to the ethical dimensions of the study. The codes grouped under "Ethical dimensions" significantly impact FWP, pertain to the ethical considerations and implications of implementing flexible work arrangements. These codes show how ethical principles, such as fairness, payment, equal access, productivity, well-being, work-life balance, dignity, autonomy, and human rights, influence and interact with FWP. By examining the relationship between these codes, we can better understand the ethical aspects and implications of flexible working practices.

### 4.4. Similarities and Differences in Interviews

This section, presents a table displaying the similarities and disparities in the interviewees' responses. The table allows us to gauge the extent to which participants

share common viewpoints on the questions and identify those who offer divergent perspectives. This analysis aids in confirming our research hypothesis that Flexible Working Practices are ethical.

**Table 4.4. Table of Similarities Matrix of Interviews**

Doc name	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15
P1	1.00	0.86	0.86	0.79	0.79	0.86	0.64	0.79	0.86	0.86	0.86	1.00	0.79	0.79	0.71
P2	0.86	1.00	0.71	0.79	0.93	0.86	0.79	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.86	0.86	0.93	0.93	0.86
P3	0.86	0.71	1.00	0.64	0.64	0.71	0.50	0.64	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.86	0.64	0.64	0.71
P4	0.79	0.79	0.64	1.00	0.86	0.93	0.86	0.86	0.93	0.79	0.93	0.79	0.86	0.86	0.79
P5	0.79	0.93	0.64	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.79	1.00	1.00	0.93
P6	0.86	0.86	0.71	0.93	0.93	1.00	0.79	0.93	1.00	0.86	1.00	0.86	0.93	0.93	0.86
P7	0.64	0.79	0.50	0.86	0.86	0.79	1.00	0.86	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.64	0.86	0.86	0.79
P8	0.79	0.93	0.64	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.79	1.00	1.00	0.93
P9	0.86	0.86	0.71	0.93	0.93	1.00	0.79	0.93	1.00	0.86	1.00	0.86	0.93	0.93	0.86
P10	0.86	1.00	0.71	0.79	0.93	0.86	0.79	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.86	0.86	0.93	0.93	0.86
P11	0.86	0.86	0.71	0.93	0.93	1.00	0.79	0.93	1.00	0.86	1.00	0.86	0.93	0.93	0.86
P12	1.00	0.86	0.86	0.79	0.79	0.86	0.64	0.79	0.86	0.86	0.86	1.00	0.79	0.79	0.71
P13	0.79	0.93	0.64	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.79	1.00	1.00	0.93
P14	0.79	0.93	0.64	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.86	1.00	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.79	1.00	1.00	0.93
P15	0.71	0.86	0.71	0.79	0.93	0.86	0.79	0.93	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.71	0.93	0.93	1.00

We must grasp the significance of the rows and columns in order to comprehend the table. Both the rows and columns correspond to the identities of the interviewees, facilitating a comparison between them. The table elucidates the interviewees' commonalities and statements, gauging an average of the referenced codes and variable values. This process involves quantifying the frequency of identical codes within the documents. The table reveals a noteworthy observation: an overwhelming majority of the documents exhibit a similarity exceeding 0.5, indicating that over half of the codes are shared across all documents. Variations emerge in a few instances, leading to the mention of distinct codes. As observed from the table, it is evident that the responses of all participants exhibit similarities, with Participant 3 showing slightly less frequency of similarity. However, this difference is not significantly large.

Notably, upon a comprehensive analysis of the entire interview, a distinct difference emerges. Participant 3 did not mention several codes that were identified in the

responses of other interviewees. The only exception to this pattern was the "gender differences" code.

#### 4.5. Results of Questions

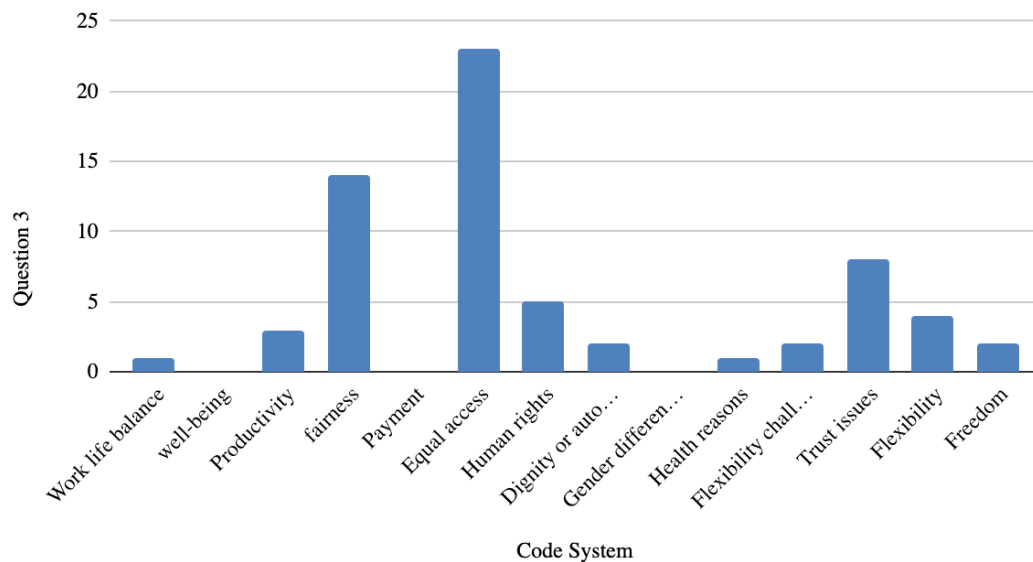
The following table illustrates the quantity and types of codes, and their corresponding frequencies for each question.

**Table 4.5. Frequencies of Codes in Questions**

Code System	Q8	Q7	Q6	Q5	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
Work-life balance	9	3	18	21	12	1	1	2
Well-being	9	1	5	29	10	0	0	1
Productivity	6	3	7	4	28	3	1	3
Fairness	7	4	0	0	2	14	7	18
Payment	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	3
Equal access	4	2	0	0	0	23	3	11
Human rights	24	8	2	4	2	5	0	5
Dignity or autonomy	8	23	3	1	2	2	2	3
Gender differences	11	5	4	1	5	0	0	3
Health reasons	1	0	1	4	1	1	0	3
Flexibility challenges	1	8	2	4	6	2	4	6
Trust issues	8	4	0	0	2	8	4	3
Flexibility	11	3	5	8	16	4	2	3
Freedom	2	5	3	6	3	2	1	3

**Question 3: Do you believe that the organization ensures equal access to these arrangements for all employees?**

Question 3 vs. Code System



**Figure 4.6. Frequencies of Codes in Question 3, Justice Dimension**

In the justice section, we can illustrate that the Q3 summary chart encapsulates the viewpoints shared by our interviewees. They all emphasized the importance of fairness in implementing Flexible Working Practices (FWP), advocating for equal accessibility to all employees. However, the responses to Q3 revealed a predominant sentiment that such equitable access is lacking, with the majority attributing this disparity to issues of trust, which participants raised as a hindrance to ensuring uniform availability.

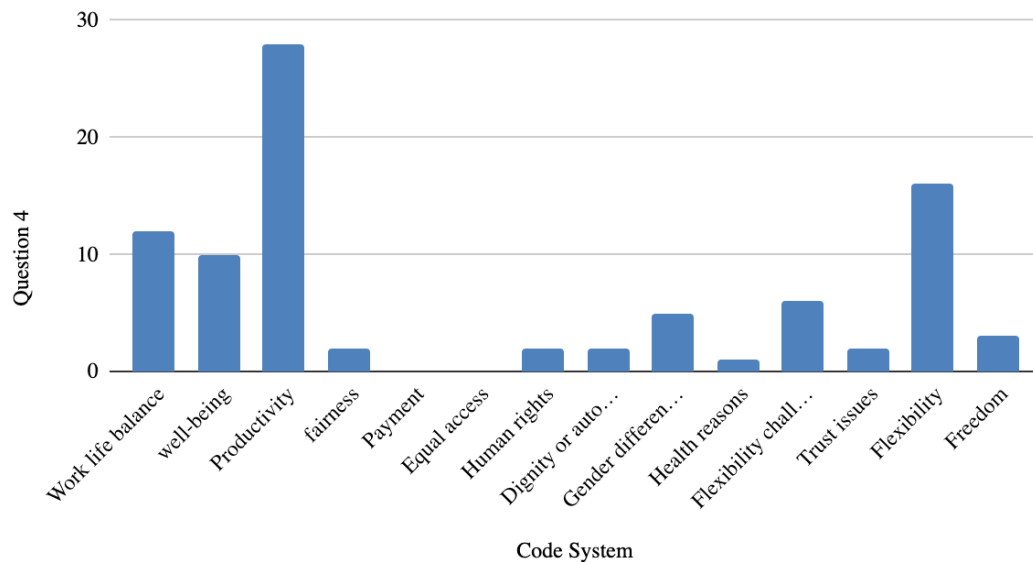
*" My colleague faces significant challenges in requesting even a half-day off for personal matters or the possibility of working from home occasionally. " (Participant 2)*

In relation to the payment question (Q2), a significant number of respondents expressed contentment and satisfaction with their salaries. They reported no instances of inequity arising from FWP implementation, underscoring a positive outlook on this aspect.

*"There is no difference between working at home or working fully on-site. So, the payment has relation to how many hours you work more than where you work." (Participant 3)*

**Question 4: In your opinion, how have flexible work practices impacted your productivity?**

Question 4 vs. Code System



**Figure 4.7. Frequencies of Codes in Question 4, Utility Dimension**

The fourth question serves as a concise representation of the outcomes observed within the second dimension, "utility."

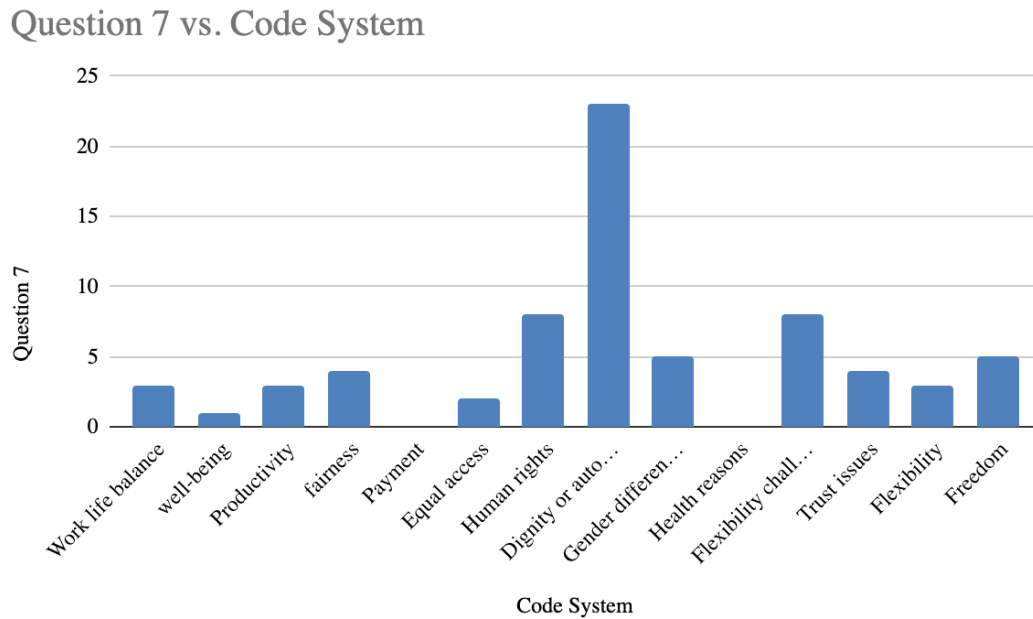
The responses underscore a robust and favorable correlation between enhanced productivity and the implementation of flexibility. This question highlighted the thematic code "flexibility," as numerous participants equated WORK FLEXIBILITY with heightened productivity.

*"I believe if the flexibility will be given to all employees in an equal way, this will increase the productivity of the employees in the company and the Justice." (Participant 4)*      *"As a woman, there are certain days when going to the office during my period can be challenging, especially with transportation involved." (Participant 11)*

Additionally, the exploration of gender differences emerged from this question and was echoed in Q5, where various participants discussed the pivotal role and responsibilities of women in Moroccan society, as well as the interplay of their career

trajectories and physical well-being. They emphasized the necessity for flexibility to amplify their productivity. Notably, a prevalent theme in this dimension was the idea that circumventing daily commutes saved time and energy, thereby positively impacting both productivity and overall well-being.

**Question 7: Have you ever experienced a situation where your dignity or autonomy was compromised while working flexibly?**



**Figure 4.8. Frequencies of Codes in Question 7, Duty Dimension I**

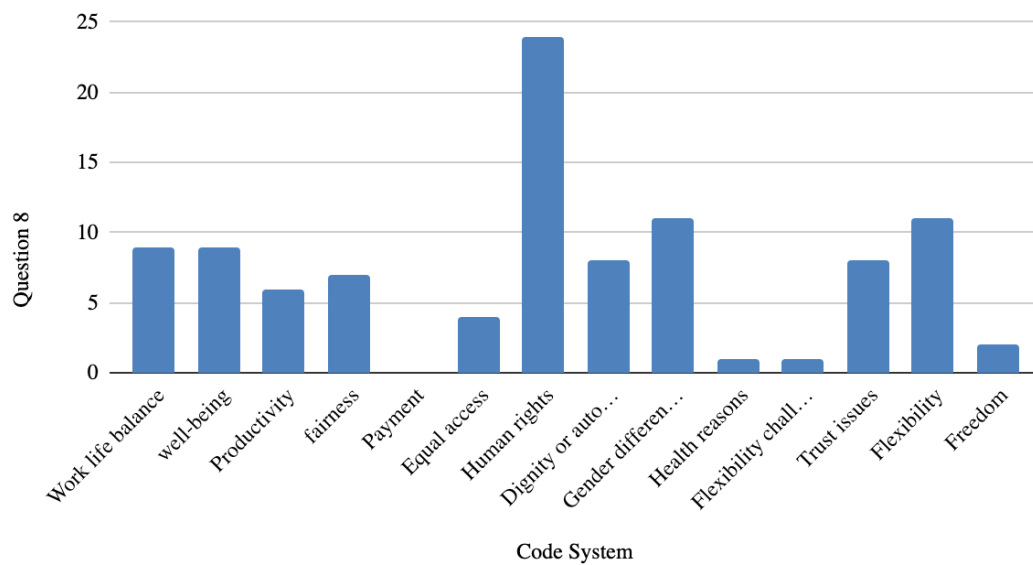
In this question focused on the "duty" dimension, we aimed to explore whether participants had encountered any instances of reduced autonomy or compromised dignity due to flexible work arrangements. While most of responses indicated a negative experience, a few participants acknowledged initial difficulties. This highlighted the emergence of the "challenges associated with flexibility" as these individuals expressed that mastering the art of preserving personal autonomy becomes a learning curve when navigating flexible work setups.

*"The challenge with flexible work lies in setting boundaries to safeguard your autonomy, which can be more demanding than a conventional job. It requires a higher level of self-awareness and assertiveness to maintain a healthy work-life balance." (Participant 11)*

Certainly, similar to any other new approach that individuals encounter, flexibility necessitates a phase of adaptation and the honing of skills as they gain experience.

**Question 8: From your perspective as an employee, how effectively do the organization's flexible time practices uphold the moral obligation of respecting human rights?**

Question 8 vs. Code System



**Figure 4.9. Frequencies of Codes in Question 8, Duty Dimension II**

The subsequent inquiry aimed to gauge whether participants perceived the Flexible working practices (FWP) as aligned with human rights principles and ethical considerations.

*" I think that the working from home option and flexible working hours align with the principles of human rights, promoting work-life balance and supporting women's ability to juggle professional and family life harmoniously." (Participant 6)*

Question 8 sought their perspective on how well the organization's flexible time practices honored the moral duty of upholding human rights. The responses were predominantly favorable and expressed strong support for the concept. Additionally, participants highlighted gender disparities, specifically focusing on the status of Moroccan women within the broader context of human rights.

## **4.6. Discussion**

Based on the findings and a comparison with the literature review presented in the first chapter, notable similarities emerge, as the majority of the findings validate the insights from the literature. This alignment is particularly evident in the context of work-life balance. Participants consistently highlight the positive influence of work flexibility on their work-life balance, irrespective of the specific Flexible Working Practices (FWP) they engage in.

### **4.6.1. Justice in Flexible Working Practices**

As we delve into the discussion of the results, an organized approach by theory is adopted to facilitate a deeper comprehension. Within the realm of the justice theory codes, interviews reveal a lack of instances where participants encountered unjust treatment concerning payment. Additionally, participants uniformly view FWP as equitable as long as they are extended to all employees according to their respective positions. However, a significant portion of respondents express concerns over the lack of equal access to these practices, particularly within the Moroccan context. It becomes evident that the concept of flexible working itself is not widely prevalent, with 85% of participants working in multinational companies and the remaining 15% in Moroccan firms. This insight provides valuable context regarding the labor market dynamics in Morocco and sheds light on the varying levels of flexibility adoption.

To delve deeper into the reasons underlying the limited adoption of flexibility in the Moroccan labor market, we probed our participants, consistently receiving a prevailing response captured by the "Trust issue" code. Participants voiced a shared sentiment that a lack of trust persists between employees and companies, manifesting as an apprehension that employees may not fulfill their responsibilities and meet tasks without direct physical supervision.

*" We still need years to reach a discussion of the availability of flexibility in the Moroccan labor market. Fortunately, with the quarantine, this culture was introduced a little bit, but we need more time to teach the companies how they should trust their employees. "* (Participant 4)

Furthermore, insights were gained into the technological dimension, revealing that many employees are hindered from working remotely due to stringent privacy systems implemented by companies. A requirement to use company-provided laptops onsite restricts the ability for remote work. However, it is noteworthy that these challenges are not insurmountable and could potentially be addressed to grant employees greater flexibility.

*" For some managers, especially those who have been working for many years, the idea of working from home might be unfamiliar, and they might struggle to fully comprehend and embrace the concept. " (Participant 9)*

This overarching concern regarding trust, coupled with technological limitations and certain entrenched managerial mindsets, sheds light on the intricacies of why flexibility has been slower to take root in the Moroccan labor market. This underscores the pressing need for fostering trust, adjusting technological infrastructures, and reshaping managerial perspectives to facilitate the broader acceptance and integration of flexible working practices.

#### **4.6.2. Utility of Flexible Working Practices**

For our participants, the utilitarian approach elements stood out as the most advantageous aspects of flexibility, primarily centered around Work-life balance and well-being. This emphasis was underscored by the positive influence on their overall productivity. This impact was attributed either to the improved Work-life balance they experienced or their ability to select a work environment that allowed them to avoid toxic interactions with colleagues or managers, thereby maintaining a professional atmosphere. Additionally, the flexibility to work from various locations helped them circumvent the time and physical exhaustion associated with commuting, enabling a more productive start to their day.

*" Moroccan women are very strong and good at multitasking, but society is used to women doing extra, being good at home, as a wife, at work, at life, and at the same time having activities and being social. I feel that society is not being fair to them. " (Participant 11)*

Within this utilitarian approach, a new code emerged, which, although also surfaced in the justice aspect, gained prominence in the utilitarian context – "Gender differences." This pertained to the participants' perspectives on women in general and Moroccan women in particular, considering their life responsibilities and biological changes. The notion of Flexible Working Practices as a necessity was underscored, especially during specific periods. Participants highlighted how flexibility significantly contributed to their well-being, especially during such times, and stressed the broader societal and familial benefits of this flexibility. Importantly, participants emphasized that Flexible Working Practices enabled women to pursue their career aspirations and personal goals without sacrificing one for the other. This support allowed them to succeed in both realms, promoting a harmonious and fulfilling life journey.

*" I think it's important to understand this: men are different than women. If we start from this point, many things will change because women can work hard, can work smart, and can do everything as men do. However, she has other responsibilities. " (Participant 8)*

Overall, the outcomes pertaining to this perspective were notably favorable. As evident from the quotations, participants expressed a strong desire for widespread access to Flexible Working Practices for all Moroccan women.

#### **4.6.3. Duty in Flexible Working Practices**

Within the duty-focused segment, we posed two distinct questions. The first inquiry delved into whether participants had encountered situations that affected their autonomy or dignity. The dominant response indicated an absence of such occurrences among the majority. However, those who did experience challenges primarily linked them to autonomy, particularly during the initial stages of having flexible work practices. This insight led to the identification of another code termed "Flexibility challenges," primarily revolving around issues related to freedom and its subsequent influence on productivity, particularly for individuals grappling with commitment-related concerns. From a duty-oriented perspective, participants underscored the significance of acquiring the skill to establish boundaries in order to preserve personal autonomy and time.

*"This experience can vary based on individual personalities. People who struggle with commitment might find it even more difficult." (Participant 5)*

*"The challenge with flexible work lies in setting boundaries to safeguard your autonomy, which can be more demanding than in a conventional job."  
(Participant 11)*

The second question sought participants' perspectives on how Flexible Working Practices align with the safeguarding of human rights. The participants exhibited enthusiasm for this line of inquiry, contemplating the potential of FWP adoption within Moroccan organizations. This reflection prompted discussions on how such an adoption could enhance human rights' moral stature. Consistently, participants concurred on a positive relationship between these two elements, further highlighting the difficulties inherent in the conventional 8-to-5 onsite work model. Additionally, participants emphasized the position of women's responsibilities alongside their job duties. Notably, the approval of FWP was perceived as a mechanism to ensure equal access and fairness among employees, thereby establishing a tangible connection between duty-bound considerations and the principles of justice.

*"I think that the WFH option and flexible working hours align with human rights principles, promoting work-life balance and supporting women's ability to juggle professional and family life harmoniously." (Participant 6)*

*"The concept of flexible work has significantly improved human rights compared to traditional work styles."  
(Participant 9)*

#### **4.6.4. Exploring the Appeal of Remote Work: Insights from Participant Preferences**

One of the prominent findings from our thesis explores the reasons behind participants' preference for remote work over on-site work. This preference emerged from a range of factors, notably focusing on physical and mental well-being. Participants shared vivid recollections of stressful experiences in traditional full-time office environments, describing it as feeling imprisoned and confined throughout the day. One participant (Participant 2) mentioned feeling trapped and stressed, reminiscent of the prison-like atmosphere in an office.

Several participants (Participant 7) emphasized the negative impact of toxic colleagues on their overall work experience, leading to emotional exhaustion and the blurring of boundaries between personal and work-related issues.

Interestingly, participants recognized the benefits of flexible working practices (FWP) not only for employees but also for managers. (Participant 8) highlighted that FWP could allow managers to consider hiring two part-time workers instead of one full-time employee, harnessing the collective expertise of multiple minds and contributing to a more dynamic company culture.

The appeal of remote work, participants noted, lies in the sense of liberation, autonomy, and comfort it offers. By eliminating the need for daily commutes and the associated stress of traffic congestion, FWP spares individuals from these hassles. Moreover, it provides a shield against encountering toxic colleagues or facing hurtful comments, further reducing stress and enhancing well-being (Participant 9).

In contrast to the challenges posed by Flexible Working Practices (FWP), the participants' positive perspectives underline the personal advantages of flexibility. Their views are shaped by their unique circumstances, showcasing the diverse ways in which FWP complements individual needs and contributes to a healthier work-life balance. Comparing FWP to traditional work practices, the participants' preference for flexibility is rooted in its ability to adapt schedules to personal requirements and alleviate the strains associated with conventional office environments.

#### **4.7. Summary**

Our research revealed a diverse range of findings. Initially, we identified 15 distinct codes from the 15 interview documents featuring women from diverse industries in Morocco, providing multiple perspectives on our research topic.

We thoroughly explained each code, defining its significance and exploring its relevance to our study. Additionally, we assessed the frequency of each code in the documents, highlighting its importance in shaping our findings and understanding the

interconnections between different codes, which indicates the consistency and alignment of our results.

Ultimately, our research suggests that Work-life balance, productivity, fairness, and human rights emerged as the principal codes and defining characteristics that underpin our exploration of the ethical dimensions of Flexible Working Practices. These codes offer valuable insights into the central themes and implications of our study, addressing the fundamental question of whether Flexible Working Practices can be considered ethical.

Code Co-occurrence Model (Code Intersection)

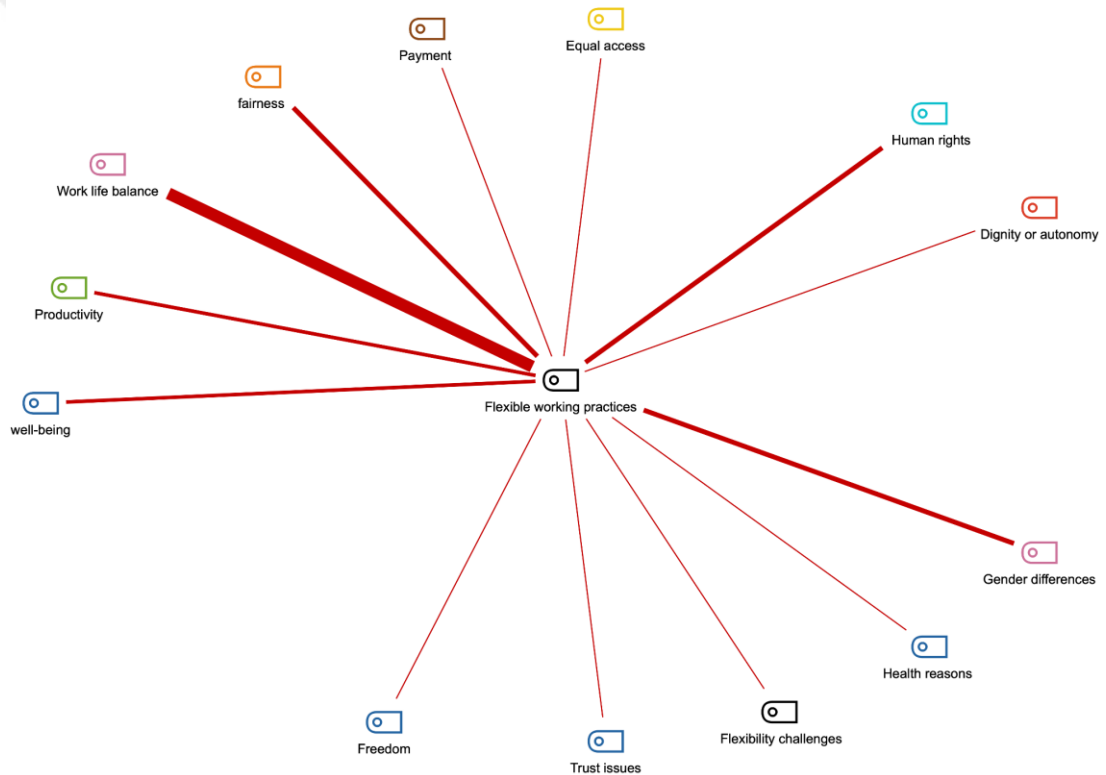


Figure 4.10. Code Co-occurrence Model

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The primary objective of this study is to assess the ethical validity of Flexible Working Practices (FWP) within the context of the Moroccan labor market by evaluating various factors across distinct ethical dimensions, namely Justice, Utility, and Duty.

Following the comprehensive interviews conducted with Moroccan women who incorporate flexibility in their work routines and subsequent analysis of their individual encounters, perspectives on work flexibility, and insights into the Moroccan labor market, we synthesize the outcomes from various angles. These include justice, work-life balance (WLB), well-being, equal access, human rights, productivity, and numerous other facets. The culmination of this research is encapsulated in the following stages, enhancing the comprehension of the research process.

Through in-depth interviews with Moroccan women who have embraced flexibility in their work, we gleaned a wealth of insights illuminating FWP's multifaceted dimensions. The perspectives shared by participants shed light on the transformative potential of FWP, particularly concerning work-life balance, well-being, and the promotion of human rights. Our findings underscore the positive correlation between FWP and these ethical dimensions, revealing how flexibility can empower individuals to achieve a harmonious equilibrium between their professional and personal spheres.

Moreover, the emergence of codes such as "Gender differences" and "Flexibility challenges" underscores the need for a holistic understanding of FWP's impact on autonomy, dignity, and trust within the Moroccan labor market. Recognizing challenges, especially when initially embracing FWP, underscores the necessity for implementing improved trust-building strategies and shifting managerial perspectives.

The intricate interplay between ethical considerations and FWP unveils a landscape where fostering trust, adapting technological infrastructure, and aligning managerial

perspectives become essential. As we contemplate the broader implications of our findings, it becomes evident that promoting flexibility in the workplace holds immense promise not only for individual well-being and productivity but also for advancing a more inclusive, equitable, and ethically sound professional environment.

It is worth noting that a significant majority of the participants in our study were affiliated with multinational companies, at the same time, only a limited number were associated with Moroccan-based organizations that offer flexibility. This observed distribution underscores a noteworthy distinction in flexible work adoption between these two categories of employers. Multinational corporations appear more inclined to provide flexible work arrangements, while the prevalence of such practices among Moroccan companies remains comparatively low. This contrast highlights an intriguing dimension, indicating potential variations in organizational cultures, policies, and attitudes toward flexibility. The prominence of multinational companies in our study is an insightful backdrop against which Moroccan companies' limited adoption of flexible work practices can be examined. This aspect of our findings calls for a closer examination of the factors that may contribute to the divergent adoption rates, including global workplace trends, cultural influences, and awareness of the benefits associated with flexible work arrangements. Such insights can guide future efforts to promote ethical and equitable flexibility practices within the Moroccan labor market.

Henceforth, several avenues of exploration can enrich the discourse surrounding Flexible Working Practices (FWP) and their ethical implications within the Moroccan labor market. An imperative area for future research lies in developing comprehensive managerial training programs. These programs should equip managers with the skills to effectively address the challenges associated with flexible work practices, including communication strategies, conflict resolution techniques, and the establishment of clear expectations. Furthermore, investigating technology integration to enhance the seamless adoption of flexible work arrangements is crucial. This could involve the creation of user-friendly platforms that facilitate remote collaboration, as well as tools that promote accountability while respecting the boundaries crucial to maintaining autonomy. Another direction worth exploring is the nuanced interplay between gender, culture, and FWP. In-depth studies could delve into the cultural dynamics influencing

the successful integration of flexible work, mainly focusing on gender-specific experiences and challenges.

Moreover, assessing the economic and social impact of widespread flexible work adoption is essential to comprehending its potential benefits for individuals and organizations. This could entail analyzing employee retention rates, job satisfaction, and the overall productivity landscape. Lastly, encouraging the development of supportive policies, both at the organizational and governmental levels, can provide a strong foundation for ethical and equitable FWP implementation. These policies should balance employees' autonomy and organizational needs, ultimately fostering an environment where flexibility and ethics coexist harmoniously.

Furthermore, delving into the long-term societal implications of our study's findings uncovers a landscape where the adoption of flexible work practices can extend beyond organizational boundaries to shape the very fabric of society. The potential for such practices to facilitate a more harmonious integration of work and personal life underscores their capacity to effect substantial changes in societal norms. As individuals experience increased control over their work arrangements, a gradual shift towards a more balanced lifestyle becomes conceivable. This shift can resonate beyond the workplace, leading to a ripple effect that encourages a broader recognition of the importance of individual well-being and life satisfaction. By fostering flexibility and accommodating diverse needs, society may evolve toward a more inclusive, equitable, and ethically mindful work environment. This, in turn, could contribute to dismantling traditional gender norms, as the acceptance and implementation of flexible work practices may empower women to engage more actively in the labor force, driving toward a more balanced representation and increased opportunities for all. Ultimately, the long-term societal implications of our research emphasize the potential for flexible work practices to not only benefit individuals and organizations but to catalyze a positive transformation that resonates across cultural, economic, and gender dimensions.

The insights derived from this study carry noteworthy policy implications that could profoundly influence both multinational corporations and indigenous Moroccan businesses. The ramifications of these findings extend to developing policies that can

reshape workplace practices and norms. Delving into policy implications, it becomes evident that advocating for guidelines or regulations encouraging the integration of flexible work practices aligns with the emerging trends of modern employment and resonates ethically. By articulating the potential benefits of such policies, which encompass enhanced work-life balance, increased job satisfaction, and improved well-being, this research contributes to the discourse on fostering a more progressive professional environment. Drawing attention to the economic and social advantages of adopting flexible work practices can serve as a compelling basis for garnering support from governmental bodies and industry associations. These entities could play an instrumental role in championing the implementation of policies that promote ethical flexibility while fortifying the resilience and adaptability of the Moroccan labor market.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the discourse on FWP's ethical dimensions by shedding light on its potential to uphold justice, enhance utility, and fulfill duties within the Moroccan labor market. We hope this research catalyzes further exploration, dialogue, and action to foster a workplace culture that embraces flexibility while honoring ethical principles.

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