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Is your Work from Home Job satisfying?
Lesson Learned from Work from Homeduring COVID-19 Outbreak in Indonesia

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Abstract

Starting at the end of 2019, Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading worldwide rapidly and become a pandemic. In a short span, a novel coronavirus has captured global consciousness by significantly affecting the day-to-day life of humans. When the outbreak become progressing one of the many changes is the request to work from home. Most of private sectors have shifted from officed based to work from home (WFH). Working remotely has been favoured by various countries in the world and has become a common way of performing work activities. When COVID-19 cases started to increase, many private sectors in Indonesia implemented either full WFH or alternate office-based and WFH method. This is the first time a full scale WFH is implemented in Indonesia. This study aims to see satisfaction level of employee when WFH and their self-rated of their job effectiveness. A mixed method study was conducted with survey in Bogor, Jakarta and Tangerang in March 2020. The result of the study showed that the satisfaction level of respondent was 4.6 from scale 1 to 6. More than half of the respondents also rated that WFH was effective. This study contributes to WFH literature. This study also contribute WFH practice.

Introduction
Starting at the end of 2019, Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading worldwide rapidly and become a pandemic, This largescale pandemic outbreak is not only affecting human's health, it is also affecting other aspects of human life (Huang *et al.*, 2020). It is affecting the day-to-day life significantly.

The recommendation for countries with widespread transmission is to do mobility restriction, limit social interaction and prohibit any crowd gathering. People have to be encouraged to stay home and if possible, work from home (Fisher and Wilder-Smith, 2020).   In a short span, a novel coronavirus (has captured global consciousness by significantly affecting the day-to-day life of humans (Peeri *et al.*, 2020). When the outbreak become progressing one of the many changes is the request to work from home. Most of private sectors have shifted from officed based to work from home (WFH). .

WFH is actually not a new thing. With the advancement of technology, globally number of companies implementing WFH has increased dramatically (Kröll and Nüesch, 2019; van der Lippe and Lippényi, 2020). Working remotely has been favoured by various countries in the world and has become a common way of performing work activities (Gutierrez-Diez, Aguilar and Howlet, 2018).

A report from IDC consultant study claims that by 2015, 37.2% of people in the world will work remotely(Gutierrez-Diez, Aguilar and Howlet, 2018). Other studies confirms that there is an increasing proportion of remote work in many countries such as Japan, Australia, USA and Canada   (International Labour Organization, 2011; OECD, 2012; Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017) in (Klindžić and Marić, 2019).

Starting mid of February 2020, COVID-19 cases started to increase in Indonesia. Many private sectors in Indonesia have implemented either full WFH or alternate office-based and WFH method. This is the first time a full scale WFH is implemented in Indonesia. During normal condition, some organization were reluctant to implement WFH because of its the effectiveness. . This study aims to see satisfaction level of employee when WFH and their self-rated of their job effectiveness when WFH is implemented with less preparation.

Literature Review
Work From Home (WFH)
WFH is actually not new. With the advancement of technology, globally number of companies implementing WFH has increased dramatically (Kröll and Nüesch, 2019; van der Lippe and Lippényi, 2020). Working remotely has been favoured by various countries in the world and has become a common way of performing work activities(Gutierrez-Diez, Aguilar and Howlet, 2018). Previous studies also confirm that there is an increasing proportion of remote work in many countries such as Japan, Australia, USA and Canada   (International Labour Organization, 2011; OECD, 2012; Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017) in (Klindžić and Marić, 2019).

WFH is one part of flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements are a "*non-standard or alternative work arrangements are options that allow work to be accomplished outside of the traditional boundaries of a standard organization of work in terms of different dimensions: amount, distribution of working time and place of work*". That includes "*flexible working hours, part-time work, job sharing, shift, and weekend work, overtime, annual hours, flexi-time, temporary work, fixed-term contracts, subcontracting, teleworking, paid parental leave, flexible leave arrangements, choice of rosters and shifts, variable year employment, annual hours contracts, compressed working weeks and WFH*"(Klindžić and Marić, 2019). WHF enables employees to work from a location outside their office(Kröll and Nüesch, 2019).

WFH is also part of remote work or teleworking. Teleworking is defined as work outside the premises of employers with the support of technology. It allows employee to perform work outside the office, either at home or elsewhere(MacRae and Sawatzky, 2020).   In this study, the focus will be work from home. Due to mobility restriction, the employee is only able to perform their task at home.

Organizations implement flexible work arrangement with aim to improve efficiency. Flexible work arrangement can help organization to attract talents and motivate employees with job satisfaction. It also is reported to increase employee productivity is increased from 35% to 40% (ILO report in 2013 in (Gutierrez-Diez, Aguilar and Howlet, 2018). Improvement of performance is reported by Vega,Anderson, and Kaplan, 2014; Allen et al., 2015in (van der Lippe and Lippényi, 2020), Bloom, Liang, Roberts and Ying (2015) in (Kröll and Nüesch, 2019) and (Klindžić and Marić, 2019). Organization with flexible work arrangement is known to have better employee retention and decrease of absenteeism (Klindžić and Marić, 2019).

Remote working helps organization save money from office space, electricity and equipment. Remote working helps environments because with less back and forth transportation, it leave a smaller footprint to the environment (MacRae and Sawatzky, 2020).

The benefits for employee include work/life balance. Because they have more spare time due to less back and forth transport, they can use the time to spend more time with family. It also reduces the employee stress level (Klindžić and Marić, 2019).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an attitudinal variable which determines various consequences such as absenteeism, retention, loyalty and job performance(Mihalcea, 2013). Job satisfaction is defined as happiness that people have in performing their job(Hackman and Oldham, 1975). It is the positive or negative attitude of person towards his job (Schultz and Schultz, 1994). Job satisfaction is the individual's judgment about different aspects of the work that he is performing(Judge *et al.*, 2000).

Job satisfaction has many known determinants. Factors such as intrinsic motivation(Hayati and Caniago, 2012), work-environment, work condition, job security(Kalkavan and Katrinli, 2014) and manager trust(Callaway, 2007; Thiruchelvi and Supriya, 2009; Braun *et al.*, 2013; GÜÇEr and DemİRdaĞ, 2014).

One of the important and relevant consequences of job satisfaction is job performance. Platis, Reklitis, & Zimeras (2015), Hayati & Caniago (2012), Singh (2016) and Gul, Usman, Liu, Rehman, & Jebran (2018) in their studies have proven that there is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and job performance.

Methodology

This study was a mixed method study. To understand what is the job satisfaction level and the perception WFH which has been implemented with minimum preparation, a survey was conducted in March 2020. Questionnaire was used as instrument. To rate satisfaction level respondents need to self-rating 4 statements modified from(Melnik, Petrella and Richez-battesti, 2013; Platis, Reklitis and Zimeras, 2015)on WFHwhich include"Satisfaction with working hour", "Satisfaction with work family balance", "Satisfaction with work condition" and "Overall satisfaction" a 6-point Likert scale.

The survey was conducted at employees in Bogor, Jakarta and Tangerang Indonesia as respondents. Respondents were employees who have to WFH or alternate work due to COVID-19 outbreak in Indonesia. The survey was design to find out about employee satisfaction level, what they like and dislike about e-learning and their self-rating of effectiveness of the program.

Result

From 139 questionnaires collected, all were eligible to be further analysed. From total respondents, 72,7% was male and 26,6% was female (Figure1). Forty-three per cent was between 35-50 years old. Forty per cent below 35 and the remaining was above 50. Forty-eight per cent has work experience more than 10 years. Seventy-eight per cent has bachelor degree (S1) and 17% has master degree (S2).
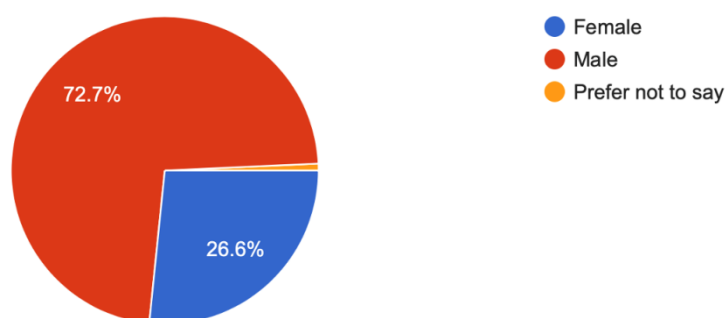

Figure 1. Gender of Respondent

Forty-one per cent was married and has children under 15 years old. Twenty-four per cent was single and twenty-two was married and has children above 15 years old. Remaining was married with no children at home (Figure 2). Thirty-seven per cent of them had to travel on average 1 to 2 hour for work. Twenty

eight per cent took 30min to one hour for work.   Sixteen per cent needed to travel more than 2 hours (Figure 3).
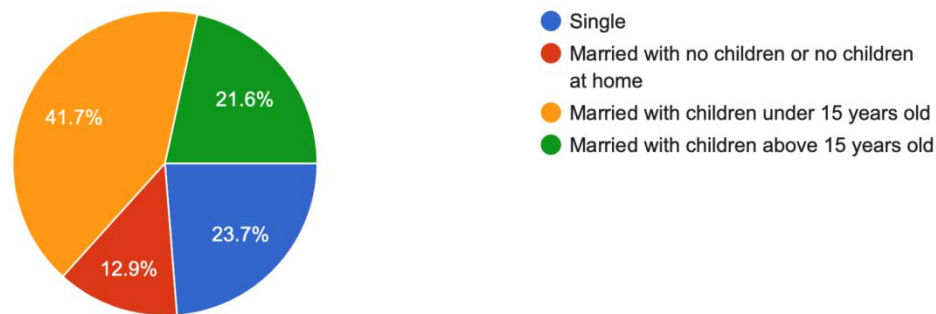

Figure 2. Marital status

Thirty-four per cent hold a manager position. Forty-three per cent was staff. Thirty-two per cent was from HR, Finance and Legal. Twenty one per cent from sales and marketing. There was 11% from manufacturing. Respondent from IT was 9%.
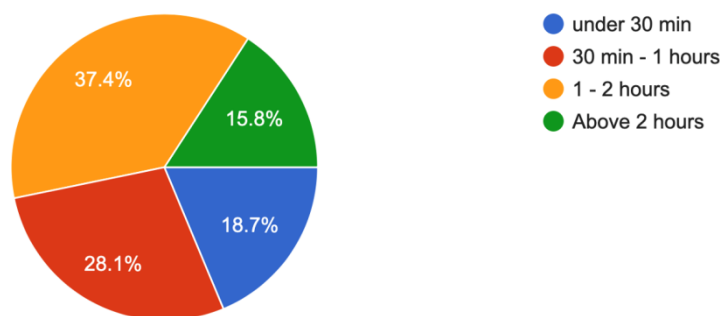

Figure 3. Travel Time to Work

When were asked to self-rate about 4 statements of job satisfaction which include "Satisfaction with working hour", "Satisfaction with work family balance", "Satisfaction with work condition" and "Overall satisfaction", the mean value of job satisfaction from scale 1 to 6 was 4,652 with Standard Deviation of 1,151. It means that all respondents agreed that they were quite satisfied with their WFH Job.

When were further asked what they like about WFH, 26% of respondent said because of its flexibility. They can manage their own schedule. They did not have to routine work preparation and they can wear unformal clothes. The second thing that respondents like about WFH is work/life balance. Since they did not have to travel, they had more spare time for their family. Majority of respondents need to travel more than 30 min and almost 50% spends more than hour traveling to work, that's why the 3rd rank of think that they like wan 'Less travel/No Traffic Jam". They also mentioned about more productive and less stress or more relax (Figure 4 and Table 2).
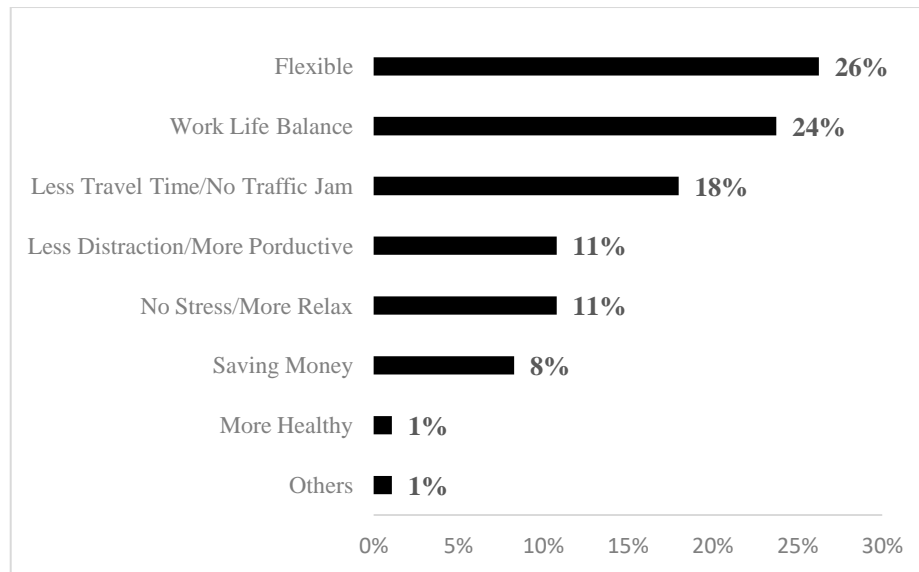
Figure 4. What Respondents like about WFH

Table 2. Respondent Comment on What They Like about WFH

Flexible time, more time with family, no need to spend time to traveling to work
Save time traveling back and forth, work while handling household matters, avoid prolonged meetings
Can be plenty of time for children and families, more time for worship, focus on office work
There is no trip to the distant office, can arrange time for worship on time, can manage your own time without working hours
Work more effectively without any worries, you can do homework, work more relaxed
Determine working hours and work rhythm by ourselves, more relax, more productive because they are not being chased
When hanging out with more families, can take care of the baby first (eating, bathing, breast milk), not being on the streets of Jakarta which is jammed
1. Practically implemented when the situation is not possible to work out of the house, especially in a pandemic or there is a threat of a precarious situation to the safety of self and the community. I personally feel there are certain jobs that allow work to be done through the WFH without the need to leave home. 3 when WFH closeness and family time are getting closer and there are many things that can be done with family when WFH.

When were asked what they dislike about WFH, 30% of respondent said it is lack of team communication, interaction and socialization. Twenty-four per cent mentioned the overdependence of internet was also thing they did not like. The complains about internet mostly about the unstable of connection. Family distraction and feeling bored were also other things that they did not like about WFH
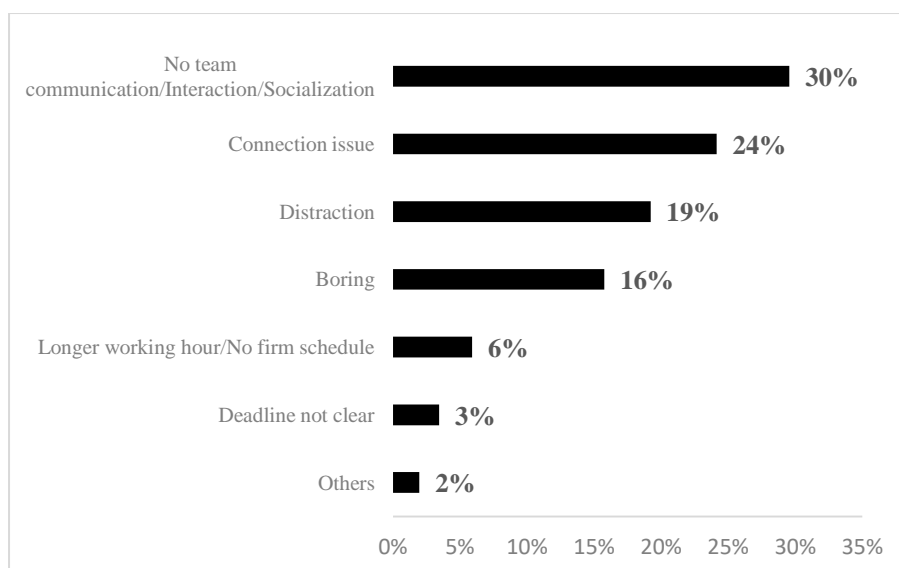
Figure 5. What Respondents dislike about WFH

Their self-rating of job effectiveness, majority (54%) of respondents thought that WFH was effective. However, 24% claimed that they doubt about its effectiveness and 22% said that it was not effective. The reasons they gave why it was effective were current technology was capable to support WFH; they were given clear objective; they considered themselves discipline and committed and their role in admin. The reasons why some thought it was not effective were it was not suitable for field work; lack of direction, coordination and monitoring. The ones who doubt it have reasons it should not be for all type of job; it was not for long term and it was only effective for emergency case like COVID-19 outbreak.

Discussion

Working remotely has been favoured by various countries in the world and has become a common way of performing work activities. A report from IDC consultant study claims that by 2015,thirty-seven point two per cent of people in the world will work remotely(Gutierrez-Diez, Aguilar and Howlet, 2018). Other studies confirms that there is an increasing proportion of remote work in many countries such as Japan, Australia, USA and Canada   (International Labour Organization, 2011; OECD, 2012; Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017) in (Klindžić and Marić, 2019).

WFH provides benefits for both organization and employee. For organization, it is important that WFH is effective which at the end will lead to organization performance. For employee WFH will provide more job satisfaction and which will lead to better retention and commitment.

This study confirms previous studies that WFH increases job satisfaction(Baker, Avery and Crawford, 2007; Kröll and Nüesch, 2019; MacRae and Sawatzky, 2020). WFH is preferred because it offers flexibility. Employee feels that they can work at time at their convenience. It is also better work atmosphere because it is less formal, more relax and less stress. Employee also has more spare time. The travel time to work in Jakarta is stressful. Most people need to travel almost 1 hour one way. With WFH, employee does not need to prepare to go to work and travel to work. The additional spare time can be spent with family.

Self-rating of job effectiveness shows that majority of the employees think that WFH is effective. Some who think that it is not effective raised lack of coordination and interaction and suitability of the job as their main reason also the stability of internet connection. Studies on e-learning also reveals that one of the obstacle of remote work is the interaction. Indonesia is one of the highest sociability score with 0,79. That means on average Indonesian spends time every week with friends from social circle(Lussier, 2016).

Indonesian often meet with friends, colleagues and other community member. At the same time, many employee in Indonesia is accustomed to be directed. Hierarchy system is still strong. Decision made are generally after listening the opinion of the leader. Employee feels the need to get constant guidance and want immediate feedback from their superior.

With high sociability characteristic, WFH, especially during COVID-19 pandemic with mobility restriction, is becoming less enjoyable. The needs to interact with colleagues and friends are not met. At the same time, not being able to discuss with superior, ask their opinion and decision and get immediate feedback are also reducing the value of WFH.

The problem of connectivity is also main concerned in this study. Based on the insight of this study, it is proven that WFH gives employee job satisfaction. It's more flexible, less time consuming, providing work/life balance and less stressful. In order to make it more effective issues such as connectivity, responsiveness and interactivity should be improved. One of the options also alternate working. It can help employee to interact and socialize.

Conclusion

This largescale pandemic outbreak is not only affecting human's health, it is also affecting other aspects of human life . It is affecting the day-to-day life significantly. Countries with widespread transmission is recommended to do mobility restriction, limit social interaction and prohibit any crowd gathering. People have to be encouraged to stay home and if possible, work from home

WFH is actually not new. Working remotely has been favoured by various countries in the world and has become a common way of performing work activities. WFH provides benefits from both organization and employee, and also for environment.The insight from this study that WFH provides employees job satisfaction. WFH provides employee flexibility, less time consuming, work/life balance and less stressful. However, this study also shows that employee who WFH faces connection problem. Distraction and lack of interaction and responsiveness are also the problem with WFH.

The limitation of this study is the lack of deep interview to find more about employees concerns about WFH. Further study to see the relationship among intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction and job performance should be done. Multistage study on job satisfaction and job performance can also be considered as future research. The comparative of full WFH and alternate working on job satisfaction and job performance can one thing to be explored.

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