



Adjustment in the Workplace: The Impact of WFH on Working Mothers in Indonesia

Mutiara Varent C. Kirana^(✉), Jeni Wulandari, and Fenny Saptiani

Business Administration Department, Lampung University, Bandar Lampung, Lampung, Indonesia

mutiaravarent99@gmail.com, jeni.wulandari@fisip.unila.ac.id, fenotsap@gmail.com

Abstract. Work from Home (WFH) has formed a new work culture in Indonesia since the Covid-19 pandemic. Positive and negative impacts are also felt during WFH. Especially for working mothers who are faced with domestic affairs and work in the same space and time. A study on 385 respondents of working mothers in Indonesia showed the effect of WFH on Work-Life-Balance (WLB). Flexibility at work time and place is the main factor that gets a positive assessment of working mothers. However, cultural views on the main role of women in the household can weaken the effectiveness of WFH implementation. The difficulty of dividing time between family and work makes more than half of respondents disagree if WFH continues to be implemented even though the pandemic is over. Further research is needed to analyse other factors that influence WLB during WFH.

Keywords: Work from home · work-life balance · working mother · covid-19

1 Introduction

Working from Home (WFH) is not a new thing. Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, several companies had implemented WFH policies as a form of giving freedom to work, but still prioritizing the productivity of the work. WFH is a work arrangement for workers to fulfil the essential responsibilities of their job while on the job at home, using information and communication technology (ICT) [1]. It has been considered as alternative way of organizing work by offering the possibility to work anywhere and anytime [2].

Today, most employers offer this option to their employees. WFH is a modern work approach made possible through the internet and mobility anywhere, regardless of the physical location of the office, individual work can be done anywhere. Huws further defines work that is partly home-based, and partly in this office as multi-site remote work [2].

Based on the results of the research by [2], the suitability of the workplace at home was found to be the most important WFH factor and the impact on different work outcomes. Productivity was reported to be higher due to less time communicating with co-workers. In addition, the home is a suitable place to work and can make it possible to take care of family members during WFH.

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Crosbie & Moore [3] also strengthen positive support for WFH in the results of their research which found that WFH is one of the initiatives offered to improve work-life balance (WLB). The view that work-life balance is drawn from the various life roles of individuals stems from the initial recognition that non-work demands such as family or personal life can carry over into the work day, and adversely affect individual health and performance at work [4].

WFH's support for WLB has also been carried out by many other researchers [5–8]. In general, the results of the study suggests that WFH can provide a major advantage in terms of WLB. However, Hill [6] stated that although WFH has a positive effect on productivity and flexibility, WFH does not always have a positive effect on WLB.

WFH can lead to space and time disputes between family and work. Work and home are different cultural spaces. These differences can occur because of disputes about work and home that are centred, and built around different times, involving different groups of people, different norms, behaviours, and practices [9].

In addition, Song & Gao's [10] research suggests that working at home has a higher likelihood of experiencing unpleasant feelings than working at work. WFH can also increase stress because WFH generally results in longer working hours even at night and so on until weekends, it can negatively affect the welfare of workers undergoing WFH. WFH can also increase disputes that can lead to conflict between work and family, and cause negative reactions from partners [11].

Another interesting research result is the criticism in a study conducted by [12], that labelling in this WLB term implies gender neutrality. Considerable research has established that women remain disproportionately responsible for caring for the family, apart from performing their office work duties [13, 14].

This statement is supported by the results of research by [15], which confirms the phenomenon of WFH against WLB, that a woman in the case of WFH can feel more pressure to maintain a highly structured work atmosphere at home, to be more productive and balance her career. Studies have shown that women experience more work and family-related stress, compared to men. This situation occurs because women still hold the main responsibility in taking care of household tasks [16].

This condition is also felt by working mothers who undergo WFH in Indonesia. When mothers undergo WFH, children become more demanding, so mothers find it difficult to complete their work, and this has an impact on the emotional stability they face. In addition, impacts such as the stress felt. They have to share roles at home also causes working mothers to become less focused because they are often distracted by their children's activities during the day, so the mother has to continue working until the evening [17].

The results of another study conducted by Orami (a community-based parenting discussion platform for mothers) stated that WFH had mixed feelings for mothers, ranging from feeling bored, tired, or anxious. However, some mothers feel more mindful. The majority of mothers who work during this WFH period are not as easy as people think. But at least the mother's relationship with the family becomes stronger with quality time at home [18].

Based on the results of these studies and empirical phenomena in Indonesia, WFH can have positive and negative consequences for working mothers. It is known that until

now, there has been no research that examines the impact of WFH on WLB, especially for working mothers in Indonesia, because the WFH phenomenon in Indonesia itself has only occurred globally in 2020. The research that has been conducted on WLB in working mothers shows that the meaning of family is the most important thing in life, a means, a place, and a motivator, so that they are more enthusiastic about working [19], but the results of this study do not relate it to the implementation of WFH. Thus, this study can be a reference that can provide an overview of the effect of WFH on WLB on working mothers in Indonesia. The hypotheses proposed based on the support of previous research is:

Ha: There is a significant effect of WFH on WLB among working mothers in Indonesia.

2 Methods

This research is quantitative research, by surveying 385 respondents working mothers in Indonesia who carry out WFH. The number of samples is determined by the Cochran formula on an unknown population [20]. The conceptual definition of the WFH variable refers to the definition of [21], which is a way of working or providing services that are carried out remotely online using computers and telematics technology. Three WFH indicators were developed from the research results of, which includes telework intensity, telework work time, and telework place.

The items described in the questionnaire on the telework intensity indicator include the duration of working time during WFH that is appropriate, less, or more than normal working hours (7–8 h/day). In the telework working time indicator, the item refers to the implementation of working hours when running WFH, whether it is the same as when working offline at the office, or flexible with conditions. Meanwhile, the place indicator includes the choice of working while carrying out WFH, whether it is more often from home, working in another place that has adequate facilities to work online, or continuing to complete work at the office location even though the work is done online.

While the WLB variable, the conceptual definition refers to [22] who describe WLB as about finding the right balance between work and personal life, and about feeling comfortable with a commitment between work and family. The WLB indicator was adopted from the research results of [23], which has been tested in several studies measuring WLB [24, 25]. Indicators include the extent to which work can interfere with an individual's personal life (Work interference with personal life/WIPL), the extent to which an individual's personal life interferes with his/her work life (Personal life interference with work/PLIW), and the extent to which a person's work/personal life can improve individual performance (Work/personal life enhancement/WPLE).

In the WIPL indicator, the items describe the disruption of personal life due to work, either loss of personal activities that should be routinely carried out, neglect of personal needs, delaying personal interests, or even feeling that they have to struggle to complete work and non-work matters, including the feeling that work makes them difficult. to lead a private life. While on the PLIW indicator, the items include fatigue to work effectively, difficulty working due to personal matters, neglected work due to personal life, personal life draining energy to work, and feeling happy with the amount of time for activities

other than work. The WPLE indicator, reveals support for work, such as the feeling that work gives you the energy to carry out personal activities, and work gives you a better mood. Vice versa, personal life gives the energy to work and makes a better mood when working.

Data were collected using a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Cronbach's Alpha methods. The questionnaire was distributed online via a google form. The data analysis includes several stages, including descriptive analysis which also includes data on age, number of family members, reasons for working, length of time undergoing WFH, number of days of WFH implementation in a week, achievement of performance targets during WFH, and experience when running WFH. Descriptive analysis of variable items was carried out using the mean and looking at the scale of respondents' answers based on the interpretation of the interval values compiled from the Likert scale, namely 1–1.7 (very low), 1.8–2.5 (low), 2.6– 3.3 (moderately high), 3.4–4.1 (high), and 4.2–5 (very high). The next step is an inferential analysis which is preceded by a classical assumption test, then simple regression analysis, hypothesis testing, and coefficient of determination.

3 Findings and Discussion

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptively, the characteristics of respondents based on geographical distribution are spread over 17 provinces, with the most respondents coming from Lampung province (43.89%), then West Java province (12.46%), South Sumatra province (8.05%), DKI province Jakarta (7.53%), East Java province (6.23%), and the rest are scattered in Aceh and the southern part of Sumatra, Banten, Bali, NTT, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Gorontalo, North Maluku and West Papua.

By age, most of the respondents (64%) are working mothers in the age range of 31 to 50 years. Respondents are spread across several occupational categories, with the largest percentage (29%) being private employees, civil servants (27.8%), teachers (19.2%), BUMN employees (10.9%), and honorary salaries (4.67%), and other occupations (8.3%). The largest percentage (32%) are working mothers with 3 family members, namely a husband and two children. As many as 46% of respondents feel they have to work to help their husbands in the family economy, 22% feel the need for self-actualization, and the rest are due to responsibilities (18%), and increase relationships with other people (14%).

In the implementation of WFH, not all respondents underwent the same time, 15% of respondents underwent WFH for 5 months, 14% for 12 months, and the rest, with a not-so-distant percentage (13%) underwent WFH in the range of 6 to 8 months. In that period, 30% of respondents underwent WFH for 5 days a week, 20% underwent WFH for 7 days, 15% for 6 days, the rest were less than 5 days, some even only 1 day a week (4%).

When it comes to performance, most of the respondents (64%) feel that the work target has been achieved even though it is carried out with WFH. 11% of respondents feel

they can work beyond the set performance targets. However, there were 25% of respondents felt they could not meet the performance targets during the WFH implementation. This is also related to the experience felt by respondents when running WFH, the largest percentage (32%) was the difficulty in dividing time between family and work, there were even respondents who felt that their work had been neglected (5%). On the other hand, respondents feel that their attention to children is fulfilled (31%), save on transportation costs (22%), and feel more productive (7%). Based on these perceived conditions and experiences, there are two perspectives with not too far a percentage difference, 58% of respondents disagree if WFH continues to be implemented even though the pandemic is declared over, and 42% of respondents agree if WFH continues to be implemented.

Meanwhile, descriptively, the results of the respondents' assessment of the WFH variable showed a mean value of 3.75 or included in the high category. The above-average rating is shown in the place and time indicator, namely in the statement of the frequency of doing work from home, or in any place that has adequate facilities to work online during WFH. On the time indicator, the assessment in the high category is indicated by a statement of more flexible working hours, according to normal working hours when working in the office, with a duration of 7 to 8 h per day. Thus, the implementation of WFH for working mothers in Indonesia is mostly running and well implemented.

The same thing is also found in the WLB variable. Descriptively, respondents gave an average rating of 3.85 or included in the high category. The highest rating is found in the WPLE indicator, especially in statements that indicate that respondents feel that their personal life makes their mood better when working. Respondents felt that during WFH there was a balance between completing work and running a personal life so respondents felt that work gave them the energy to carry out personal activities, personal life gave the energy to work, and vice versa, work could create a better mood. However, respondents also gave above-average scores on items in the WIPL and PLIW indicators which indicate the amount of effort that must be made to be able to complete work affairs and activities outside of work, so that respondents feel tired to work effectively. Respondents also feel happy with the amount of time they have to do activities other than work while running WFH, meaning that WFH provides flexible opportunities for respondents to enjoy their time not just take care of work.

3.2 Classic Assumption Test

3.2.1 Normality Test

Based on the normal p-plot regression of standardized residuals in Fig. 1, it is known that the data meet the assumption of normality, because the distribution of data points is seen to spread around the diagonal line and follows the direction of the line.

3.2.2 Heteroscedasticity Test

Based on the scatterplots in Fig. 2, it can be seen that the points spread randomly, both above and below the number 0 on the Y axis. It can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

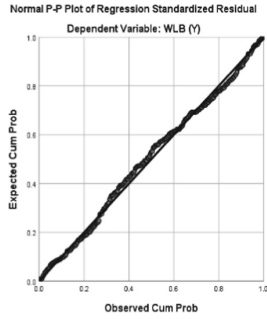


Fig. 1. Normality test results

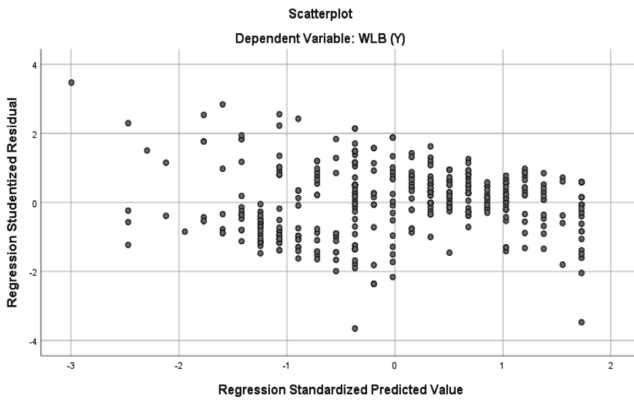


Fig. 2. Heteroscedasticity test results

Table 1. Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients^a			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	WFH (X)	1.000	1.000

3.2.3 Multicollinearity Test

The results of the multicollinearity test in Table 1 show that the independent variable has a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) < 10, and a tolerance value > 0.10. So, it can be concluded that in this study there is no multicollinearity or there is no correlation in the independent variables so that it does not interfere with the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

3.3 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Based on the results of the analysis in Table 2, the regression equation can be arranged as follows:

$$\hat{y} = 22.171 + 1.187X + \epsilon.$$

The regression equation in this study has a constant value of 22,171, which means that if the independent variable WFH (X) has a value of 0, then the value of the dependent variable, namely WLB (Y) is 22,171. The value of the simple linear regression coefficient for the WFH variable (X) is positive at 1.187, meaning that every time there is an increase in the value of 1 an increase in the WFH variable (X) then the WLB variable (Y) will also increase by 1.187.

3.4 Hypothesis Test (t-Test)

The results of the t-test in Table 3 show a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, H_a is accepted, which means that WFH has a significant effect on WLB in working mothers in Indonesia.

3.5 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Based on the data in Table 4, the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.355. This figure shows the contribution of the WFH variable to the WLB of 0.355 or 35.5%. Thus, 35.5% of the variation in WLB among working mothers in Indonesia is influenced by the independent variables in this study, while the remaining 64.5% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. It is known that the value of R is equal to 0.596. If interpreted based on the table of r values, the results of this study indicate a fairly strong relationship.

Table 2. Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients^a			
Model		<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>	
		<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
1	(Constant)	22.171	2.507
	WFH (X)	1.187	0.082

Table 3. Test Results

Coefficients^a				
Model		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
		<i>Beta</i>		
1	(Constant)		8.843	.000
	WFH (X)	0.596	14.507	.000

Table 4. Value of Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Model Summary ^b					
<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>	<i>Durbin-Watson</i>
1	0.596 ^a	0.355	0.353	9.159	1.208

a. Predictors: (Constant), WFH (X)

b. Dependent Variable: WLB (Y)

3.6 Discussion

Working mothers take on various roles in their lives, so they struggle harder to maintain an effective and financially independent career, as well as carry out their roles as wives and parents [26]. Women generally work to help increase family income as family workers [27]. This is also in line with what was stated by [28], that the husband's income affects the wife's decision to work, in this case, to earn additional income. But on the other hand, mothers with higher education levels tend to work, not only to earn additional income for the family but also as a means of self-actualization.

From a cultural perspective, although women help in earning additional income, in many families, the main responsibility for children as well as household work and other forms of "family work" is still borne by women as mothers [29]. Thus, a woman feels more pressure to maintain a structured work atmosphere at home, so that she can be productive to balance household and career tasks. Meanwhile, for men, WFH is felt to provide more benefits to being able to carry out family tasks, such as being involved in child care. This condition makes WFH not provide the same benefits for women compared to men in one household who undergo multiple careers [30].

This view is also supported by the results of a descriptive analysis that shows the polarization of views on discourse if WFH is still implemented even though the pandemic is over. On the one hand, respondents provide support because of the fulfilment of attention to children, feel more productive, and save on transportation costs, but on the other hand, respondents find it difficult to allocate time for family and work and feel that work is neglected.

However, respondents gave high ratings, both on the WFH and WLB aspects. The results of the descriptive analysis showed that most of the respondents were able to meet the work targets that had been set during the WFH, and were even able to exceed the work targets. This shows that WFH can be implemented well. This is also shown in the WLB aspect. Although respondents feel tired to work effectively and a lot of effort must be made to complete work and activities outside of work, respondents feel that work can provide energy for personal activities, as well as personal life, provides energy for work. Thus, respondents feel they have a balance in working and carrying out their activities.

This condition is supported by the results of hypothesis testing which shows a positive and significant effect of WFH on WLB. These findings are in line with a study conducted by [3] that WFH is one of the initiatives offered to improve work-life balance for employees, it is based on WFH factors that are considered to be able to affect

work-life balance conditions. WFH also makes it easier to coordinate work and personal life.

The aspect that is highly rated by respondents in the WFH variable lies in the time and location indicators. Flexibility and the opportunity to work at home (close to family) are the main supporting factors in the implementation of WFH. In line with a study conducted by that the suitability of the workplace at home was found to be the most important WFH factor because the home is an ideal place for employees to work and allows them to work while caring for family members.

The results of research by [31] also strengthen the support between time and location factors when carrying out WFH. WFH's way of working that frees work from location and time constraints with the support of information technology has many advantages. For individuals, WFH can give workers the freedom to manage their working time, and WFH can also give workers flexibility in terms of establishing social contacts outside of work so that it can provide a sense of achievement and identity value.

This condition can also be seen from the WLB aspect. Although almost all respondents gave high ratings, both on indicators of the extent to which work can interfere with an individual's personal life (WIPL), the extent to which an individual's life interferes with his/her work life (PLIW), as well as the extent to which a person's work/personal life can improve individual performance (WPLE). However, the WPLE indicator received a very high rating than the other two indicators, especially concerning feeling more energized and in a better mood at work, and vice versa, working provided energy and a better mood in carrying out personal activities during WFH.

According to [33], if all items, especially the indicator (WPLE) are positive and have a higher value, this means that there is a higher level of perceived work-life balance when working. The results of the same study were also shown by [34], who also found that the strongest load of items used to measure WLB, was in the WPLE indicator. This relationship is also shown from the R-value of 0.596, so it can be concluded that there is a fairly strong correlation or relationship between WFH and WLB. However, the contribution given by the WFH variable to WLB based on the coefficient of determination is relatively low, at 35.5%. That is, there are 64.5% of other factors that affect WLB outside the study conducted.

This provides support for the development of further research to analyse other factors that influence WLB. Several studies such on job stress and job satisfaction have shown a lot of influence on WLB [35]. This is also implied in the study results, which show that various sources of support, both family and organizational, can help individuals experience work-life balance, and thereby develop a sense of psychological availability and positive energy at work [36].

4 Conclusion

The application of WFH has a positive and negative impact on working mothers. Positively, WFH makes working mothers have good quality and quantity of meetings with family members, providing positive energy and complementary moods, both at work and when carrying out personal activities. Even though to fulfil performance and at the same time take care of the family, mothers often feel tired and feel they have to fight hard to achieve work and family balance while undergoing WFH.

This is in line with the study conducted by [37] that working from home often creates conflicts in the balance of family life because it can lead to conflicts of interest regarding which one should take precedence between work or personal and family life. In line with this, Kirsty-Lee & Uys [38] also revealed that doing work and family tasks simultaneously, makes women face conflict and stress in managing the boundaries between different life roles.

These conditions in the long term can cause increasingly clear pressure. The emergence of feelings of loneliness and boredom, increased stress and feelings of guilt, feelings of loss of identity, and fatigue from having to take on certain domestic or professional roles, including space and time disputes can be a problem in carrying out WFH.

Based on these conditions, the practical implications of this study indicate the need for clear boundaries in determining when to work and manage the household. The ability to manage time and place priorities is very much needed. Another social approach also needs to be taken, by creating groups and staying connected with colleagues or work teams so they don't feel isolated and lonely and can support each other in completing work assignments [39]. By focusing on what can be done to reduce stress, we can enjoy the added benefits of working from home situations, towards achieving the ideal work-life balance.

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