WORK-LIFE BALANCE DUAL CAREER COUPLE DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The Covid 19 pandemic led many companies and agencies to adopt work from home (WFH) policy for their workers. Workers feel safe at home with their family at all times, especially in uncertain situations. But on the other hand, the busyness increases because you have to do office and household work at the same time. This can led to conflict, whether work matters interfere with personal life, or vice versa. Maintaining a work-life balance (WLB) is a challenge for workers who work from home. Previous research has discussed a lot about work-life balance, this study tries to analyze the work-life balance during the Covid 19 pandemic. The purpose of this study was to determine how the work-life balance of dual career couple while working from home, and to determine is there a difference in WLB between male and female workers. Data were collected through a questionnaire given to 100 respondents with the criteria of being a worker with a partner who also did WFH in Indonesia. Data analysis was carried out by descriptive analysis and different test. The result of the study found that there were differences in WLB between male and female workers.

JEL : M12, M19

Keywords: work-life balance, Covid 19 pandemic, female workers, male workers.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid 19 pandemic that occurred in almost all part of the world limited the normal activities of people. To reduce risk, both government and private offices have implemented a work from home (WFH) policy. Working from home is not new in the world of work (Mungkasa, 2020), but this concept is usually enforced under normal conditions and not because pandemic. Working from home is an option where work is done from home using adequate communication and information technology.

According to Mungkasa (2020) working from home provides the following benefits: a balance between work and family life; reduce travel time to work and fuel saving; can control the work schedule and work atmosphere; can choose to work when the mood is good; encourage employee morale; reduce laziness and absence; reduce worker turnover; and strengthen the company’s image as a family-friendly workplace. But working from home during a pandemic has shown no such benefit. All family members who do all work from home actually pose challenges in the responsibility of managing the family (Bhumika, 2020).

In normal conditions, work-life balance is a benefit of working from home, during a pandemic it become a challenge to balance it. During work from home, coordination between work and family demands is challenging task for every worker. The presence of all family members at home during working hours; parents with office jobs, and children who attend school; from home and have to be assisted by their parents add to the burden on workers.
Indonesian culture tends to think of domestic affairs as the responsibility of the mother (Wahid & Lancia, 2018). This makes female workers who have dual roles as a housewife tend to carry a heavier burden than men. When working from home a mother is faced with household and work matters at the same time and place. Apart from doing office work, mothers must be accompanying their children to online school and prepare for other household needs. Unlike normal conditions, during working hours the majority of family members are at work or school, so that their needs can be fulfilled in their places of activity. Female workers are also in the office on a normal office schedule, which minimizes disturbance from home.

There are several previous studies regarding work-life balance (Sundaresan, 2014; Dawra, 2019; Deshmukh, 2020). This study analyzes the work-life balance experienced by workers who are dual career partners; husband and wife who both work outside the home. The purpose of this study was to determine how the work-life balance of multiple career partners while working from home, and to determine the differences in the work-life balance between male and female workers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-life balance is major problem for dual career couple. Work-life balance is defined as workers’ perception that role conflicts related to domains of personal and work life can be minimized. Work-life balance juga is also defined as time spent doing work compared to time spent with family and doing things you love (Meenakshi, 2013).

Work-life balance has four dimensions (Fisher, Bulger, & Smith, 2009), namely work interference with personal life, the extent to which work interference with an individual’s personal life; personal life interference with work, the extent to which the individual’s personal life interference with work life; personal life enhancement of work, the extent to which a person’s personal life can improve individual performance in their work; and work enhancement of personal life, the extent to which work can improve an individual’s personal life.

According Hudson (2005), work life balance includes several factors: a. Time balance, is the amount of time given to work and roles outside of work. The time needed to carry out tasks in the organization and its role in the individual’s life, for example an employee, in addition to work, also needs time for recreation, hanging out with friends also providing time for family. b. Involvement balance, concerning psychological level involvement or commitment to work and outside of work. A balance that involves individuals in individuals such as stress levels and individual involvement in work and in their personal life. c. Statisfaction balance, the level of satisfaction both on and off the job. Perceived satisfaction, the individual has comfort in being involved in his work and the individual’s life.

Previous research has been carried out to develop the dynamics of WLB. The segmentation theory states that work and family life are independent entities, so there is no relationship between them (Edwards & Rothband, 2000). Enrichment theory suggests that experience in work roles helps improve the quality-of-life roles and vice versa. According (Morris & Madsen, 2007) this theory suggests experiences, abilities, skills, values or satisfaction and moods improve the quality of other areas. Facilitation theory explains that opportunities, skills, and experiences make it easy for someone to take part in one area of life to produce good experiences and resources that are useful in other areas of life. (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Frone, 2003). This is called work-life facilitation which is two-way in nature because it involves facilitating families to work and vice versa (Rincy & Panchanatham, 2013).
Spillover theory states that expertise in one role influences expertise in other roles. This theory reveals the degree of the relationship between work and family, both vertically and horizontally and positive or negative (Morris & Madsen, 2007), negative family experiences are associated with negative work experiences and vice versa, satisfaction and achievement in one area can bring satisfaction and achievement in another and vice versa (Xu, 2009). Young & Kleiner (1992) suggest that what happens at home influences workplace events. skills, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors formed in family roles are transferred to their roles at work and vice versa (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985).

According to segmentation theory, employees can hold back work-related thoughts, actions and feelings when at home and vice versa when at work, thus enabling employees to maintain a smooth line in relation to family and work. It makes employees more freely organize their lives. However, the segmentation theory is considered to have the weakest empirical support so that it is often considered only as a theoretical potential (Bulger, Matthews, & Hoffman, 2007).

Male and female workers handle work-life balance in different ways (Williams & Boushey, 2012). They found that mothers were 79% less likely to be hired and are typically held to a higher standard of punctuality and performance than women without children. This does not apply to male workers who also act as fathers (Cuddy, fiske, & Glick, 2004). Previous studies suggested ,that female workers have more difficulties in managerial position (Connell, 2005; Tomlinson & Durbin, 2010; Reskin & Bielby, 2005). Regardless of their employment status, women are still in principle responsible for household chores and many of them consequently continue to face challenges in the work-life balance.

Irrespective of gender, workers generally desire to work in organizations that sustain work-life balance (Fapohunda, 2014). Men tend to achieve high job satisfaction and performance in the workplace because they can establish a clear boundary between work and family matters, and prioritize work for reasons of the family. Women place both work and family as important and try to get things done together.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a survey research. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents with the criteria of multiple career partners who have children and are doing WFH. The questions on the questionnaire were adapted from (Deshmukh, 2020), which consists of: I work long hours due to job demands; Even though I work at home, I don't have much time to socialize with my family; I don't have much time to relax with my partner; I work at home past my normal working hours; Relaxing and forgetting about work problems is a difficult thing for me to do; I am worried that work stress can interfere with my immune system; Even though both my partner and I were at home, my partner and I were disturbed by work pressure and long working hours; I am less involved in solving problems at home because I am too tired from work and do not interact enough with family members; I find it difficult to find time to pursue my hobbies at home; I want to reduce my work hours and workload, but I have no control over this situation. The instrument test was done by testing the validity dan reliability. Data were analyzed using independent T-test. Independent T-test is carried out by making a comparison between two mean values with a standard error difference from the mean of the two sample.
4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Construct validity is validated using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). According to Sit, et al. (2009) a loading of 0.5 and above is considered adequate. All items achieving the factor loadings greater than 0.5 in the constructs of need for achievement, locus of control, risk taking, perseverance, independent, creative, and knowledgeable.

A cronbach alpha test was conducted on all seven factors to test the reliability of all of the item variables. This was to determine the internal consistency of the scale used. All the factors we found to have alpha coefficient values of greater than 0.6, which is an acceptable level of reliability (Hair, et al., 2006).

The assumption of independent t test is that the data must be normally distributed. Based on Shapiro Wilk output, the significance value of woman group and man group were greater than 0.05. it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Table 1. T-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Levene’s Test</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I work long hours due to job demands.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.510</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.278</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even though I work at home, I don’t have much time to socialize with my family.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.483</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.355</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have much time to relax with my partner.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.630</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.152</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work at home past my normal working hours.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.541</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.156</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing and forgetting about work problems is a</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4.575</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.186</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
difficult thing for me to do.

| I am worried that work stress can interfere with my immune system. | Female | 4.537 | 0.20 | Equal variance assumed | .000 | 1.35106 |
| Male | 3.186 | 4 |

Even though both my partner and I were at home, my partner and I were disturbed by work pressure and long working hours.

| Even though both my partner and I were at home, my partner and I were disturbed by work pressure and long working hours. | Female | 4.545 | 0.49 | Equal variance assumed | .000 | 1.37634 |
| Male | 3.169 | 5 |

I am less involved in solving problems at home because I am too tired from work and do not interact enough with family members.

| I am less involved in solving problems at home because I am too tired from work and do not interact enough with family members. | Female | 4.463 | 0.22 | Equal variance assumed | .000 | 1.13640 |
| Male | 3.346 | 9 |

I find it difficult to find time to pursue my hobbies at home.

| I find it difficult to find time to pursue my hobbies at home. | Female | 4.586 | 0.21 | Equal variance assumed | .000 | 1.38746 |
| Male | 3.285 | 4 |

I want to reduce my work hours and workload, but I have no control over this situation.

| I want to reduce my work hours and workload, but I have no control over this situation. | Female | 4.512 | 0.06 | Equal variance assumed | .000 | 1.23203 |
| Male | 3.328 | 1 |

Table 1 shows statistical variable and independent T-test from SPSS software. Mean value explain that WLB of female workers are higher than male workers. From Leven’s test conclude all variables that have the same varian have to used equal variance assumption. Based on the output of the independent t-test, all variables obtained sig.(2-tailed) values < 0.05. It is concluded that there are differences toward WLB between female workers and male workers.

5. CONCLUSION

The t-test results concluded that there were differences in WLB between male and female workers. WLB of female workers are higher than male workers. a culture that tends to consider men as the main breadwinner of the family, while women who are responsible for the
smooth running of the family life cause male and female workers to have different priorities for work and family (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Men tend to prioritize work, while women tend to prioritize family. This causes a tendency for men to sacrifice more family matters for work, while women are the opposite (Haworth & Lewis, 2005; Jennings & McDougald, 2007). In South Korea there has been an increase in the number of unmarried women due to conditions that are often unfavorable for women workers related to WLB, even many married women workers are hesitant to have children (Kang & Wang, 2018).

WLB is very important to pay attention to in implementing WFH. To achieve an effective WFH, employer management should pay attention to the factors that influence WLB, so as to minimize the factors that have a negative effect on WLB. The recommendation for further research is to include variables that can influence WLB in the study.

REFERENCES


