

## Gender Gap: Family Support, Perceived Work Productivity and Job Satisfaction on Working from Home

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to test whether family support has a positive effect on job satisfaction. In addition, to find out whether there was a gender gap in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction between men and women both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic and whether perceived work productivity and job satisfaction did not experience any difference both before the COVID-19 pandemic and after the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. A quantitative approach was used to distribute questionnaires using a purposive sampling technique to 62 employees working from home in West Sumatera in 2021. Simple regression MANOVA was conducted to analyze the data. The result of the study found that family support and job satisfaction have a positive and significant effect. Another finding is that there was no gender gap in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction between men and women before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, there was no difference between job satisfaction and perceived work productivity, both before the Covid-19 pandemic and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research implied that it assists companies and managers in making decisions and considering the sustainability of working-from-home programs for their employees and workers. In addition, companies and agencies are also asked to create an effective working-from-home model for women and men. Furthermore, it gives trust to families to continue supporting each other to create a healthy psychological environment when facing the COVID-19 pandemic. This study tries to see whether there are gender differences between men and women in terms of perceived work productivity and job satisfaction when working from home. The results of the different tests show this is different. This is also the case with the difference between conditions before and during Covid-19. It shows that there is no difference in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction between men and women.

**Keywords:** Family Support, Gender Gap, Job Satisfaction, Perceived Work Productivity, Working from Home

### I. INTRODUCTION

In 2020, all countries were shocked by the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19), a global pandemic. COVID-19 has significantly impacted human life and has changed many essential aspects of life, such as the economy, health, and security [1]. The global increase in COVID-19 reached 4.1 million new cases as of January 2021. Meanwhile, the total number of COVID-19 patient cases at the end of January 2021 reached 98.2 million, with a total death patient of 2.1 million globally [2]. Indonesia is one of the countries that has also been affected by this pandemic. Until the end of January 2021, the total number of cases of COVID-19 patients in Indonesia was 1.02 million, and the total number of death patient was 28,855 [3].

To break the chain of the spread of COVID-19, the Indonesian government has adopted a policy to enforce working from home (WFH). WFH is a work arrangement framework in which workers carry out their responsibilities while staying at home, assisted by technology [4]. WFH conducted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic uniquely refers to home teleworking as a temporary alternative work arrangement. Implementing WFH requires shared responsibility and commitment by employers and workers to ensure business and job continuity. WFH can help restore family function through time spent by working parents with children, improve the quality of relationships within the home, and improve other roles of family presence [5]. It also impacts work-life balance when work interferes with family responsibilities, when overwork affects social life networks and work-life balance.

Implementing WFH in Indonesia is different from the work culture that many organizations carry out. However, WFH is implemented to stop and prevent the spread of COVID-19 which continues to grow. WFH still needs to be fully understood by its employees, and employees feel that many dilemmas occur, such as the mindset that home is a place to rest while the office is a place to work. This dilemma sometimes creates conflict within the family even though WFH presents flexibility of place and time [6]. However, WFH also has drawbacks, such as decreasing performance when working as a team and a supervisory system is not maximized [7]. Despite these shortcomings, the study results also show that WFH provides flexibility. Moreover, the flexibility for employees to carry out their work without being directly supervised by a supervisor or manager [8].

Currently, WFH provides many benefits to organizations. However, implementing WFH itself comes with risks. One of the risks is a sense of distrust between the employer and the job recipient. Meanwhile, the trust factor is the key that must be agreed upon by all parties in the implementation of WFH [1]. The implementation of WFH in Indonesia is based on something other than the WFH culture and methods that are already very good, but this is done to reduce the COVID-19 attack, so decision-making managers must implement WFH to maintain employee productivity. For some employees whose access to their homes and offices are far away, WFH is ideal for maintaining productivity because, with WFH, there is a significant reduction in transportation costs and time. After all, the average distance from home to the informant's office is three hours.

Implementing WFH does not limit gender. Men and women have the same opportunity to carry out WFH during this COVID-19 pandemic. Quoted from Lokhande, a Co-CEO of the company Kinetic India, said that implementing WFH affects personal life. Lokhande believes that most of his employees are mothers who work multitasking – doing household chores, taking care of children, managing studies, cooking, cleaning, mopping, and all that stuff. On the first day of WFH, all family members gathered and said that we were at home together we would help each other and work together [9]. However, the continuous implementation of WFH will make us who initially worked together again do our work.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic requires employees to participate in WFH. However, a gender gap is estimated to exist due to increased domestic work and childcare [9]. Many countries have gone into lockdown to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic [10], [11]. This means that everyone working in non-essential jobs is instructed to stay home at all times, leaving only a tiny percentage of employees in essential services (e.g. food, health care, delivery) to go to work. Most or all schools close, and children's learning is transferred to the Internet. The company implements a work-from-home policy for all employees whose work can be completed remotely. Therefore, given the closure of schools and childcare facilities during the lockdown, parents of working professionals working from home must also take care of their children during working hours. Previous study [1], [5] has not tried to compare job satisfaction and productivity of male and female employees when working from home. So, this research tries to fill the gap to provide an overview of productivity and job satisfaction between men and women when doing their work from home.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### A. *Impact of Family Support on Job Satisfaction*

There needs to be more research on the relationship between family support and job satisfaction [12]. Family support sustains work stress from negative work-related outcomes such as burnout and promotes positive affect and well-being [13]. Family support has been shown to alleviate work demands and challenges [14], [15]. This support can come from the work domain (e.g., organizational or supervisory support), such as family-friendly policies and practices, supervisors providing support for family-related needs (e.g. flexible work arrangements and busy work weeks), and extensions of organizational benefits to family members [16], [17], [18]. Other forms come from the family (i.e. family support), such as listening to a partner's experiences at work or doing household chores [19]. Employees with family support can better focus on job demands, increasing their job satisfaction [15]. The direct relationship between family support and job satisfaction has empirical support (e.g. [20]). For example, in a meta-analysis of [21] that examined sources of social support, stressors, engagement, and job-related and family-related satisfaction, family support was significantly and positively related to work. With the existing literature, Hypothesis 1 was found, namely:

**H1:** Family support has a positive effect on job satisfaction for workers who work from home.

### B. *Impact of WFH, the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Gender Gap*

Large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) or other terms are lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic, making the boundaries between working from work or home unclear. The effectiveness of the PSBB (lockdown) will be felt if there are rules regarding the necessity to work from home [22]. During the lockdown, people must always stay at home (working from home), except those working in essential industries (e.g. health care, food, public transportation, and utilities) who can work on site. While employees whose jobs can not be done from home (e.g. factory workers, retail workers) do not work, the employees whose work can be done from home (for example, most professionals) must continue to work from home. Because working from home allows work to seep into home life, it blurs the line between work and family. Therefore, it increases work-family interference [9], [23].

Based on gender role theory [24], [25], there will be work-family interference caused by the implementation of WFH, which can harm women in heterosexual families with multiple careers (dual-family careers). As a result, this will create a gender gap in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction. Gender role theory argues that women are more likely to see the role of family members as central to their identity than men [24], [25]. Even as more women enter the workforce, society still expects them to fulfill women's roles in their families [26], [27]. As Stephanie Coontz, historian of family studies, points out, people have been socialized for hundreds of years to

expect women to take on most family responsibilities without even talking about them. COVID-19 makes this fact even more accurate [28]. Indeed, research has revealed that in times of crisis, women take on most of the family work even when both partners work full-time [29], [30].

Working from home creates more significant demands for family members due to proximity and accessibility [31]. This means that if the employee is at home all day, other people in the house will demand more time, attention, and affection. Also, working from home and eating at home will create extra jobs for grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning. Men have begun to contribute more to housework over the last few decades [32], [33]. Men could take on all the additional housework created by working from home. However, based on gender role theory, this is unlikely to happen.

On the other hand, the increase in homework may be – divided equally between women and men [34]. However, even in this situation, given that most women have shouldered most of the housework and childcare, the additional time and energy spent on housework may be very detrimental to women. More specifically, although women can handle an extra hour or two of housework each day than men at the expense of their free time and without affecting work, an extra hour or two of housework on top of that may exceed the critical threshold and end up interfering with women's work [9]. However, because men spend less time on housework, an extra hour or two of housework may not harm their work [9]. Consistent with this argument, when work-family disruption is high, women are more probable to experience lower work productivity and job satisfaction than men [35], [36], [37]. Based on the literature, Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3 were stated, namely:

**H2:** There is a gender gap in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction between men and women before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**H3:** Perceived work productivity and job satisfaction do not experience any difference, both before the Covid-19 pandemic and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

### III. METHOD

#### A. Research Design

This study uses a management science approach focused on HR and strategic management. This type of research is explanatory. This study will determine the clarity of the relationship of a variable (testing the hypothesis) through data collection in the field. The research method used is a survey method, namely explanatory survey and descriptive survey, where this study takes samples from the population using a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The investigation type is a causal type that aims to explain the relationship between variables. At the same time, the time horizon is cross-sectional, reflecting a picture of a situation at a specific time. The unit of analysis is an individual who works from home.

#### B. Population and Sample

The population in this study is individuals who are working from home. The sampling technique in this study is nonprobability sampling which is needed when researchers need to know how many populations there are [38]. The sample selection method used in this study was purposive sampling [39]. To produce strong statistical test results, the rule of thumb [39] says that a sample of 30 and 100 is a sample size that fits most studies. The data used in this study is primary data. Questionnaires were distributed directly to respondents within approximately one month. The questionnaire was distributed in 2021, to 62 employees who are working from home and have a spouse who also working from home too. To answer the problem, quantitative analysis methods were used to test and determine the effect of each variable with regression analysis and MANOVA.

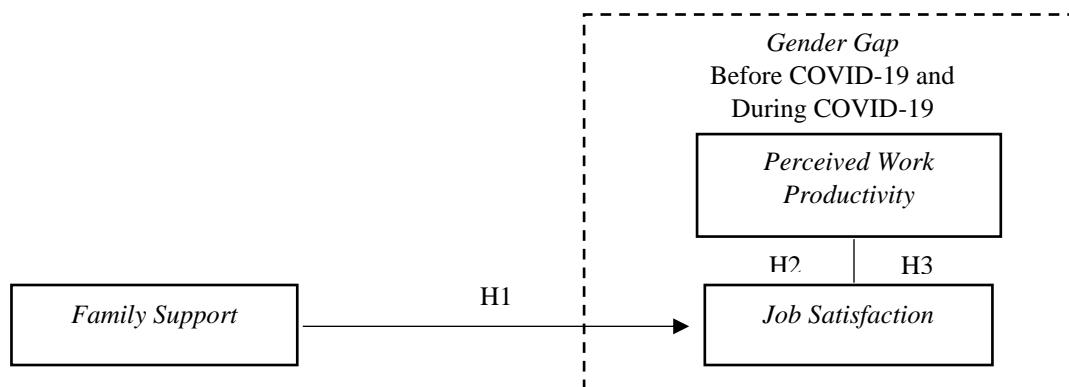


FIGURE 1. Research Model

C. *Research Variables and Variable Measurement*

Table 1 describes the research variables and the measurement items of the research variables. To assess whether the variables used are reliable and valid, the variables that have composite reliability values (Table I) and to see the validity are used CFA (Table II).

Table II shows the estimated loading value for each indicator. Table II shows that all measurement items have an estimated loading value above 0.5. The AVE value for each variable is above 0.5, so it can be concluded that the variables used are valid (convergent). Table II also shows discriminant validity where the square root of AVE is higher than the latent variable. Hence, it can be concluded that the variable is valid (discriminant).

TABEL I. OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

Variables/ Dimensions	Indicator	Scale	Source	Composite Reliability
<b>Family Support</b>	1. I can discuss it with my friends or family when something goes wrong at work. 2. My friends/family care about how I feel about my job. 3. My friends/family help me feel better after a hard day at work. My friends/family are interested and proud when something good happens at work	Likert scale 1-5	[12]	0.95
<b>Perceived Work Productivity</b>	1. Before the Covid 19 pandemic, I often tried new ways to improve my productivity. 2. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, most of the time, I produced high-quality work. 3. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, most of the time, I worked efficiently 4. During the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. "Right now, most of the time I try new ways to improve productivity	Likert scale 1-5	[9]	0.92
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	1. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I felt my job was meaningful 2. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, I liked doing the things I did at work 3. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, I felt a sense of pride in doing my job 4. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, my job was enjoyable 5. During the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. "Right now, I feel my job is meaningful.")	Likert scale 1-5	[9]	0.93

TABLE II. VALIDITY TEST RESULTS

Variables/ Dimensions and Indicators		Estimated Loading		
		FS	JS	PWC
<b>Family Support</b>	FS1	0.886		
	FS2	0.920		
	FS3	0.827		
	FS4	0.920		
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	JS1b		0.929	
	JS1d		0.843	
	JS2b		0.916	
	JS3b		0.942	
<b>Perceived Work Productivity</b>	PWC1b			0.864
	PWC1d			0.860
	PWC2b			0.886
	PWC3b			0.857
<b>AVE</b>		0.790	0.824	0.751
<b>The square root of AVE</b>		0.888	0.907	0.866

Note = factor loading > 0.5.

TABLE III. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Respondent Profile	Amount	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Man	22	35.4
Woman	40	64.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Respondent Age</b>		
<25 years old	1	1.6
26-30 years old	32	51.6
31-35 years old	13	20.9
>35 years old	16	25.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Not married yet	9	14.5
Marry	53	85.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Current Job</b>		
Lecturer	50	80.6
Public Government Employee	12	19.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Last Education Level</b>		
Senior High School	1	1.6
Bachelor's degree (S1)	9	14.5
Masters (S2)	49	79
Doctorate (S3)	3	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

TABLE IV. HYPOTHESIS 1 TESTING

Variable	Dependent Variable Job Satisfaction	
	Model 1	
	Coef	SE
Family Support	0.354**	0.141
F	2,021	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.24	

Notes: N=62; unstandardized regression coefficients are reported; \*\* $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed test).

TABLE V. HYPOTHESIS 2 TESTING

Variables	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Gender				
PWC before Covid-19	1	0.247	0.447	0.506
PWC during Covid-19	1	0.206	0.283	0.597
Gender				
JS before Covid-19	1	0.347	0.685	0.411
JS during Covid-19	1	0.662	0.898	0.347

Notes: Phase indicated before versus during the Covid-19 pandemic for perceived work productivity (PWC) and job satisfaction (JS) of men and women

TABLE VI. HYPOTHESIS 3 TESTING

Variables	Levene's Test for Equity of Variances		
	F	Sig	df
PWC before Covid-19	0.321	0.573	60
PWC during Covid-19	0.063	0.802	60
JS before Covid-19	0.231	0.632	60
JS during Covid-19	0.113	0.738	60

Notes: Phase indicated before versus during the Covid-19 pandemic for perceived work productivity (PWC) and job satisfaction (JS)

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics of respondents in this study include gender, year of birth (age), marital status, and last education. More details of the percentage of individual respondent profiles are shown in Table III. It presents the characteristics of the respondents. Based on gender, women (64.6%) are more likely to work from home than men (35.4%). Based on age, respondents in this study were dominated by adults aged 26-30 years, as many as 32 people or 51.6%. Married respondents dominate as many as 53 people (85.5%) compared to unmarried respondents. Based on current jobs, the respondents in this study were dominated by lecturers (80.6%). In this study, the educational background of the respondents started from the high school level to the doctoral level (S3). Most of the respondents' educational background is a bachelor's degree (S2) that dominates the number of respondent (76%).

### B. Hypothesis Testing

The data obtained were processed using regression analysis (Hypothesis 1) and MANOVA (Hypothesis 2 and 3) to test the hypothesis. The results of Hypothesis 1 testing are shown in Table 4. Hypothesis 1 states that family support has a positive effect on job satisfaction. Model 1 in Table IV shows that family support has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. (coeff 0.354; p value < 0.05). These results indicate that Hypothesis 1 is supported.

The results of hypothesis 2 testing can be seen in Table V. Hypothesis 2 shows a gender gap in perceived work productivity and job satisfaction between men and women before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Table V shows that gender for perceived work productivity and job satisfaction is not significant (p-value > 0.05). Such results indicate that Hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Table VI shows the results of testing Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 reads that perceived work productivity and job satisfaction do not experience differences, either before the Covid-19 pandemic or after the Covid-19 pandemic. In Table 6, Levene's Test for Equity of Variances results show no difference between perceived work productivity before the Covid-19 pandemic and during the Covid-19 pandemic (p-value > 0.5). Table 6 also shows no difference between job satisfaction before and during the Covid-19 pandemic (p-value > 0.5). Thus, it can be concluded that Hypothesis 3 is accepted.

### C. Discussion

The analysis of the hypotheses proposed in this study presents several discussions. First, family support positively and significantly affects job satisfaction for workers working from home. The direct relationship between family support and job satisfaction has empirical support (e.g. [20]). Other forms come from the family (i.e. family support), such as listening to a partner's experiences at work or doing household chores [19]. Employees with family support can better focus on job demands, increasing their job satisfaction [15]. The two analysis results also show that there is no gender gap between job satisfaction and perceived work productivity, either before the pandemic outbreak or during the pandemic outbreak. The results of this analysis are different from what has been done by previous studies (i.e. [35], [36], [37]). Based on gender role theory, because of the increase in homework, it is possible – to divide equally between women and men [34]. The third discussion is that perceived work productivity and job satisfaction were not different before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The effectiveness of the PSBB (lockdown) will be felt if there are rules regarding the necessity to work from home [22]. During the lockdown, people must always stay home (working from home), except those working in essential industries (e.g. health care, food, public transportation, and utilities) who can work on-site. While employees whose jobs cannot be done from home (i.e. factory workers, retail worker) does not work, the employee whose work can be done from home (for example, most professionals) are required to continue to work from home. Their productivity and job satisfaction remain the same as the ones they had performed before the Covid-19 pandemic.

## V. CONCLUSION

The implication of the results of this research is to assist companies and managers in making decisions and considering the sustainability of the working-from-home program for employees and their workers. In addition, companies and agencies are also asked to create an effective working-from-home model for women and men. Furthermore, they are giving trust to families to continue supporting each other to create a healthy psychological environment when facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, scientists add references in management science in general and strategic management, human resources, and gender in particular. This study has a limitation in terms of a small number of samples so the results cannot be generalized. Suggestions for future research is to increase the number of samples and try to compare employee productivity and job satisfaction after the Covid-19 pandemic.

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