

Work-Life Balance, Learning Agility and Their Impact on Work Stress of Employees who Work From Home

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ABSTRACT

Work stress is one of the factors that can lower immunity. The WFH (work from home) policy is made so that the working community can avoid Covid-19, but it becomes counter-productive if employees who undergo WFH experience stress and their immunity decreases. This research was conducted using correlational quantitative methods to examine the impact of work-life balance and learning agility on the work stress of employees who have to work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research subjects/respondents were company employees in the Jakarta area who underwent WFH during the Covid-19 pandemic as many as 57 respondents using incidental sampling. Data analysis using SEM-PLS and obtained the results: (1) There is a significant direct impact of work-life balance on the work stress of employees who undergo WFH; (2) There is a significant direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH.

Keywords: *Work Stress, Work-Life Balance, Learning Agility, Work From Home, Covid-19*

INTRODUCTION

Change is a condition that is certain to occur and will forever be carried out by the organization to maintain its existence (Tampubolon, 2020). Some changes are planned and some are unplanned (Wibowo, 2012). The Covid-19 pandemic is a condition of change that is certainly unplanned. The spread of the Corona virus, which threatens life safety globally, has put tremendous pressure on the community including business activities.

The condition of the Covid-19 pandemic that has hit the world, including Indonesia, has changed many things including changes in the way people carry out their daily activities. The Indonesian government has also implemented a policy of limiting community activities as an effort to prevent the wider spread of Covid-19. Of course, this policy is also applied to the activities of the business world, by limiting the number of employees who come to work. Based on this policy, each company implements an online work system or commonly referred to as WFH (Work From Home) for some of its employees.

The Guardian (2021), the National Center for Social Research in the UK (UK) found that employees who undergo WFH tend to experience increased stress, which results in deteriorating mental health. This also happened in other countries such as Indonesia as Kusmana (2022) found a high level of stress on extension workers from the Ministry of Religion in Bandung, and this stress level negatively affected the work productivity of respondents. Utami (2021) found a phenomenon of work

stress among employees in the DKI Jakarta area while undergoing WFH during the Covid-19 pandemic. As many as 17% of respondents experienced moderate work stress, 10.4% experienced severe work stress, and 5,7% experienced very severe work stress. Pfeifer et al. (2021) researched mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic and found that stress has an important relevance in the development of this mental disorder.

Nakata (2012) found that work stress has a measurable impact on immune parameters. The WFH policy was made so that the working community can avoid Covid-19, but it becomes counter productive if employees who undergo WFH actually experience stress and their body immunity decreases.

For employees who undergo WFH, in the end, their house functions as a place of work. This allows for a disturbance in the balance between work and personal life (work-life balance). The existence of an imbalance between personal and work life (low work-life balance) will result in the emergence of ongoing stress (Ross and Vasantha, 2014).

Various changes related to the way of working require employees to be able to adjust quickly. Those who are agile in this adjustment will help companies to remain productive during the pandemic. Agility in adapting and learning to cope with new situations and conditions is known as learning agility. Learning agility is a concept that includes critical abilities in overcoming unplanned change (Lee and Song, 2020).

This study focused on work stress as a problem as well as work-life balance and learning agility as factors that are thought to reduce work stress levels for employees who run WFH. The problem formulations proposed in this study are as follows: (1) Is there a significant direct impact of work-life balance on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH?; (2) Is there a significant direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH?

It is hoped that with research on work stress and the factors that can influence it, especially those that are predicted to help reduce work stress, individual workers and company management can have a broader understanding of work stress experienced by employees who undergo WFH. With an understanding of work stress as well as understanding its relation to work-life balance and learning agility, better strategies can be made in preventing and handling work stress in employees. This understanding can be used in other crisis conditions other than pandemic that will allow employees to undergo WFH.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is defined as the balance of time a person spends at work compared to the time spent in his personal life (Yanner, et al. 2020). Clark (Adiningtyas and Mardhatillah, 2016) defines it as a balanced life in which individuals are able to carry out their responsibilities at work, home and in the community with minimal role conflict.

Kowalski (2022) argues that work-life balance is a feeling of balance between the demands of a career and other things in one's life. He also said that work-life balance is shown by a healthy ratio between time spent working and time spent doing activities outside of work because work is a means to live, not the goal of life itself.

Fisher, Bulger and Smith (Adiningtyas and Mardhatillah, 2016) describe 4 dimensions of work-life balance as follows:

- a. WIPL (Work Interference with Personal Life), this dimension reflects the extent to which an individual's work can interfere with his personal life.
- b. PLIW (Personal Life Interference with Work), this dimension reflects the extent to which an individual's personal life can interfere with his work.
- c. WEPL (Work Enhancement with Personal Life), this dimension reflects the extent to which work can improve the quality of an individual's personal life.
- d. PLEW (Personal Life Enhancement with Work), this dimension reflects the extent to which a person's personal life can improve individual performance in the world of work.

2. Learning Agility

Burke and Hoff (2017) state that learning agility is the ability to deal with new experiences flexibly and quickly by trying new behaviors, getting feedback on these efforts, and immediately making adjustments so that new

learning occurs. According to Swisher (2012) learning agility is the willingness and ability to learn from experience and then apply the learning outcomes to demonstrate successful performance in newly encountered conditions. Gravett and Caldwell (2016) add that someone who has learning agility usually has a curiosity about the world, has a high tolerance for ambiguity, is skilled in dealing with others, has vision and is innovative.

Burke and Hoff (2017) explain that there are several dimensions of learning agility, which are as follows:

- a. Flexibility, which is open to new ideas and able to propose new solutions.
- b. Speed, which is acting on ideas quickly, discarding ideas that don't work and accelerating other possibilities. This allows the individual to spin and grow faster.
- c. Experimenting, trying new behaviors to determine what is effective.
- d. Performance risk taking, looking for new activities that provide opportunities/challenges.
- e. Interpersonal risk taking, discussing differences with others in a way that leads to learning and change. Able to admit mistakes and seek help when they make mistakes. Being open to admitting one's faults encourages others on the team to take risks without fear of repercussions if things don't go well.

- f. Collaborating, finding ways to work with others that generate unique opportunities for learning. Able to work with different work styles, demonstrate empathy and low ego, do whatever it takes to successfully achieve results for the organization.
- g. Information gathering, how individuals use various methods to stay current in their field of expertise.
- h. Feedback seeking, asking for feedback from others about ideas and overall performance.
- i. Reflecting, slowing down to evaluate one's own performance to be more effective. Once feedback is received, individuals should be able to reflect on the feedback, both positive and negative, act on it, and adjust behavior.

3. Work Stress

Work stress is a condition where there is tension that creates physical and psychological imbalances which then affect the emotions, thought processes, and conditions of an employee (King, in Rahardi 2022). Beehr and Newman (Asih et al., 2018) define job stress as a condition that arises from human interaction with work and is characterized by humans as changes that force them to deviate from their normal functions.

Symptoms of work stress according to Robbins and Timothy (Asih et al., 2018) include the following:

- a. Physiological Symptoms
The occurrence of changes in metabolism,

increased heart function, respiratory rate and blood pressure, headaches, and can cause a heart attack.

b. Psychological Symptoms

There is tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom, and procrastination.

c. Behavioral Symptoms

These include decreased productivity, absenteeism, and employee turnover, changes in eating habits, increased smoking or alcohol consumption, rapid and restless speech, and sleep disturbances. sleep disorders.

According to Cooper (Asih et al., 2018), the factors that cause work stress (stressors) include:

a. Working conditions

Quantitative and qualitative excessive workload, decisions made by a person, physical hazards, work schedule.

b. Role stress

Unclear roles, bias in differentiating gender and gender role stereotypes; sexual harassment

c. Interpersonal factors

Poor work outcomes and social support, political competition, social jealousy, anger, and management's lack of attention to employees.

d. Career development

Promotions that are lower than their abilities, promotions that are higher than their abilities, job security, excessive ambition that results in frustration.

e. Organizational structure

Rigid and hostile

structures, political battles, unequal supervision and training, non-involvement in decision-making.

f. Home work view

Mixing work problems with personal problems, lack of support from spouse, marital conflict, stress from having two jobs

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is an associative quantitative research with survey method. The variables studied were work stress as an endogenous variable (Y) and work-life balance (X1) and learning agility (X2) as an exogenous variable. The following are the hypotheses and research models proposed.

Hypothesis 1 (H1)

There is a significant direct impact of work-life balance on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH.

Hypothesis 2 (H2)

There is a significant direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH.

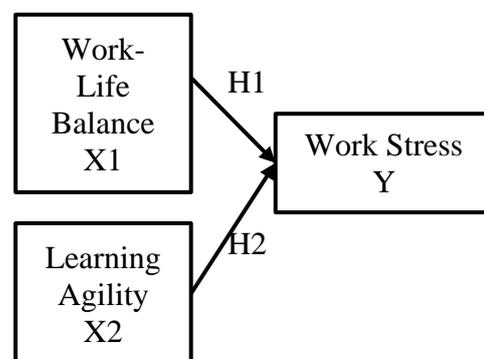


Figure 1. Research Model Framework

Source: data processed by researchers (2022).

The research subjects (respondents) were company employees in the Jakarta area who underwent WFH during the Covid-19 pandemic. Sampling was done by incidental sampling technique.

The research data was obtained by using an instrument/measuring instrument in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire and arranged based on the indicators of each research variable.

Table 1. Instrument's Construct Validity

Instrument	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Validity
Work-life Balance	0,518	Valid
Learning Agility	0,581	Valid
Work Stress	0,756	Valid

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

Table 2. Instrument's Reliability

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Reliability
Work-life Balance	0,917	0,926	Very reliable
Learning Agility	0,909	0,914	Very reliable
Work Stress	0,891	0,894	Very reliable

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The number of respondents in this study was 57 people with the following description: Male (33%),

female (67%); unmarried (58%), married but have no children (7%), married and have children (35%); 20-29 years old (65%), 30-39 years old (23%), 40-49 years old (12%).

Table 3. Frequency based on respondent characteristics

No.	Characterics	Information	Number of people
1	Gender	Male	19
		Female	38
2	Marrital Status	Unmarried	33
		Married but have no children	4
		Married and have children	20
3	Age	20-29 years old	37
		30-39 years old	13
		40-49 years old	7

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

The following is a diagram of a partial least squares analysis with revised measuring instrument by

removing items with outer loading < 0,6.

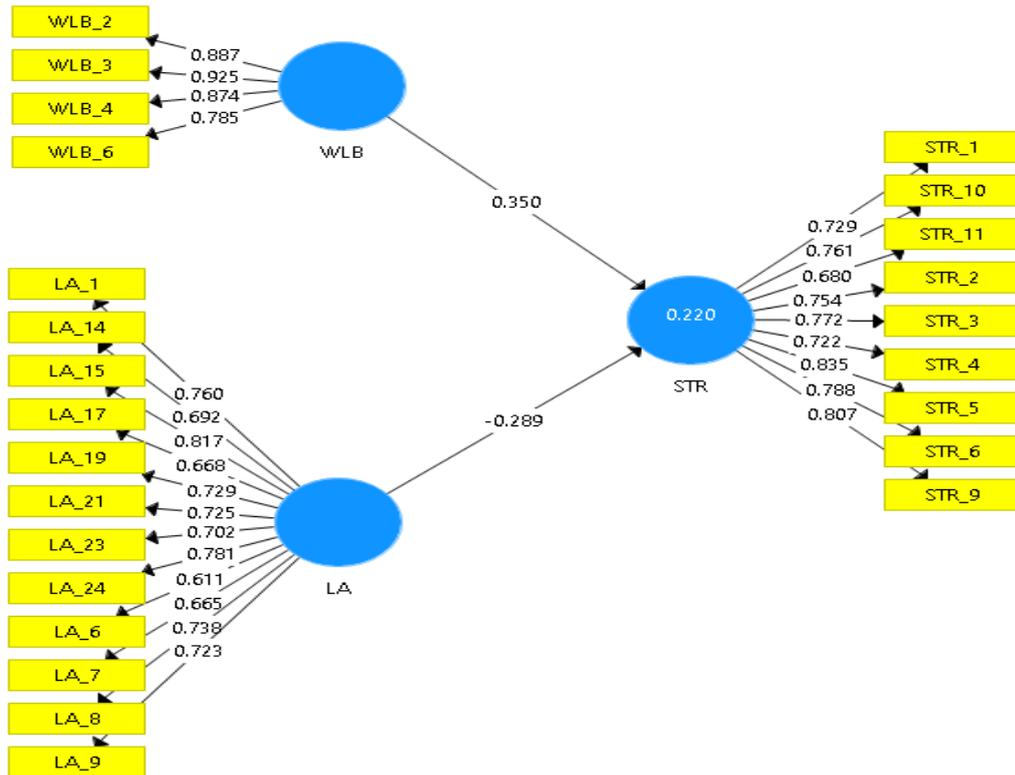


Figure 2. Partial Least Square Analysis Diagram

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

Multicollinearity test

Multicollinearity shows the existence of intercorrelation or strong correlation between indicators. If the result of Variance Inflating Factor (VIF) < 5, it can be said that there is no multicollinearity problem so that hypothesis testing can be carried out. Here is a table showing VIF from indicators of work-life balance, learning agility and work stress.

Table 4. Value of Variance Inflating Factor (VIF)

	Work Stress
Work-life Balance	1,005
Learning Agility	1,005

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

From the table above, it is known that $VIF < 1,005$ thus there is no multicollinearity problem so that hypothesis testing can be carried out.

Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis testing is done by looking at the significance of the impact of work-life balance (X1) on work stress (Y) and the impact of learning agility (X2) on work stress (Y). To assess the significance of the standard effect between variables, a bootstrapping procedure was performed with a significance level (p-values) of 0,05. The calculation results can be seen in the following table:

Table 5. Results of Bootstrapping Direct Effect Analysis

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 → Y	0,350	0,340	0,146	2,405	0,017
X2 → Y	-0,289	-0,356	0,134	2,159	0,031

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

Based on the results of the bootstrapping analysis above where the P Values of the direct effect of Work-life Balance on Work Stress are 0,017 ($< 0,05$), it can be said that H1 is accepted. In other words, there is a significant direct impact of work-life balance on work stress of employees undergoing WFH. However, the results of data analysis show that work-life balance also has a positive impact against work stress. Based on the condition of the respondents in this study, if the work-life balance increases, work stress will actually increase.

Also obtained P Values from the direct effect of Learning Agility on Job Stress of 0,031 ($< 0,05$) which means H2 is accepted. Thus it can be said that there is a significant direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH. From the table the results of the bootstrapping analysis show that learning agility has a negative impact on work stress. This shows that if learning agility increases, work stress will decrease.

Next is the calculation of the coefficient of determination (R^2) of work-life balance and learning agility on work stress. From the table, it can be seen that R^2 is 0,220, which means that 22% of work stress is influenced by work-life balance and learning agility, while 78% of work stress is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

Table 6. R^2

R^2	Adjusted R^2
0,220	0,191

Source: data processed by researchers (2022)

Next is the F Square analysis (effect size) used to show the magnitude of the influence between variables.

Table 7. F^2

	Work Stress	Effect
Work-life balance	0,157	Moderate
Learning agility	0,107	Low

Sumber : data processed by researchers (2022)

From the table above, it can be concluded that work-life balance has a moderate impact (by 0,157) on work stress, while learning agility has a small impact (by 0,107).

DISCUSSION

Impact of Work-Life Balance on Work Stress

Based on the results of data analysis, P Values from the direct effect of Work-life Balance on Work Stress are 0,017 ($< 0,05$), so it can be said that H1 is accepted. Thus, it can be stated that there is a significant direct impact of work-life balance on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH. However, the results of data analysis show that work-life balance also has a positive impact on work stress. Based on the condition of the respondents in this study, if the work-life balance

increases, work stress will actually increase. This condition is not in line with the findings of Ross and Vasantha (2014) which show a negative relationship between work-life balance and work stress.

The impact of work-life balance, which has a positive impact on work stress, could be caused by the majority of respondents being unmarried employees, as many as 58% of respondents. Singh and Sharma's (2020) research conducted on lecturers in India found that those who were married had a better work-life balance than those who were married. Married workers have more complex dimensions of life as well as in their perception of work-life balance. This result could also be due to other factors that increase work stress in respondents so that even though work-life balance increases, work stress also increases due to other factors that trigger work stress in employees undergoing WFH.

Impact of Learning Agility on Work Stress

P Values from the direct effect of Learning Agility on Work Stress of 0,031 ($< 0,05$) which means H2 is accepted or it can be said that there is a significant direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH. From the table the results of the bootstrapping analysis show that learning agility has a negative impact on work stress. This shows that if learning agility increases, work stress will decrease.

These findings are in line with the results of Braun et al. (2017) who found that individual agility in overcoming uncertain conditions (learning agility) can prepare

employees to be more successful by adapting to change more quickly and managing stress more effectively, in other words learning agility has a negative impact on stress

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study obtained the results: (1) there is a significant and positive direct impact of work-life balance on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH; (2) there is a significant and negative direct impact of learning agility on the work stress of employees undergoing WFH.

The results of this study can be a consideration for WFH implementation policies to pay attention to the mental health conditions of workers by helping to maintain the stress level experienced by employees who undergo WFH. Company management can organize programs or facilitate employees by encouraging employees to have better learning agility so that work stress experienced during WFH can be reduced.

Employees also need to strive to improve their learning agility, namely by always having the willingness and ability to learn quickly from experience and then apply the learning outcomes to demonstrate successful performance in new conditions. This is necessary so that when conditions of rapid change such as a crisis period do not make employees experience excessive work stress.

This research is still experiencing obstacles in its implementation, especially in distributing questionnaires due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation which

limits the activities and interactions that can be built by researchers. It would be more helpful if research in times of crisis, especially in the presence of restrictions on community mobility, was carried out in collaboration with related parties such as the manpower office and company management so that the number of respondents could be overcome.

A situation like the Covid-19 pandemic crisis is certainly not expected to happen

However, research on things that can be done to minimize the negative impact of a crisis situation is something that still needs to be done so that the wider community and business people in particular are better prepared to face the crisis

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