

Relationship between Marital Status and Mental Workload with Work Stress for Work From Home Workers

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the work culture in Indonesia has changed. Many companies are implementing the Work From Home (WFH) system. This can cause a dilemma for the workforce due to the assumption that home is a place to rest, not to work. The benefits can be felt since the implementation of Work From Home (WFH). However, there are also negative impacts can be felt by the workforce due to disturbances outside of work. Conflicts between families are also common. The purpose of this study is to determine the strong relationship between marital status and mental workload with work stress in Work From Home (WFH) workers. **Methods:** This study is a survey research and used a cross-sectional study. The sample in this study is total population of workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, which is 20 people. The variables used in this study were marital status, mental workload, and work stress. The data in this study were obtained by filling out questionnaires about individual characteristic (marital status), mental workload, and work stress. **Results:** Most of the workers have not married status (60%), high mental workload (55%), and medium work stress (55%). The correlation coefficient value between marital status and work stress is 0.373. Meanwhile, between mental workload and work stress it is 0.667. **Conclusion:** In Work From Home workers, there is a weak relationship between marital status and work stress. Besides that, there is a strong relationship between mental workload and work stress.

Keywords: marital status, mental workload, pandemic, work from home, work stress

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of December 2019, a mysterious pneumonia case was reported in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. At first, it was known that the patient being treated with this case was temporarily diagnosed with the term Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). However, this case was increasing rapidly until early January 2020 and had spread to various countries due to direct human-to-human transmission. At the end of January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) established a global emergency status for this case (Handayani *et al.*, 2020). On February 11, 2020, WHO again announced that it had found a name for this case,

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2).

In Indonesia itself, the first case of COVID-19 was reported on March 2, 2020. This was allegedly transmitted from foreigners who visited Indonesia. Due to the increasing number of cases worldwide, on March 12, 2020, WHO determined that the presence of COVID-19 was categorized as a pandemic outbreak. In addition, since the emergence of the coronavirus in Indonesia, the number of confirmed cases has increased rapidly. Thus, it encouraged the government to set a policy of implementing self-quarantine for 14 days in an effort to support the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia. However, until the end of March 2020, there were 1,528 confirmed cases and 136 deaths with a mortality rate of 8.9 (Susilo *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, the implementation of self-quarantine continues until the specified time.

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Various policies have been carried out by the government as an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia, including implementing the Large-Scale Social Restrictions / PSBB stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2020. However, these efforts have not reduced cases in Indonesia. Finally, on June 8, 2020, the government established a new normal system as a transition mechanism to encourage the return of economic and social activities in the midst of a pandemic.

With the implementation of the new normal system, various sectors have experienced many impacts, one of which is the office sector. This new normal adaptation requires several companies to implement a new work culture known as Work From Home (WFH). Working from home is certainly not a new phenomenon in the world. For some foreign countries, this culture has been carried out in several types of work of their citizens. However, in Indonesia itself, this culture is still a new thing and is rarely applied to the majority companies.

In Indonesia, the WFH culture is carried out only to reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially in office clusters. This certainly creates a dilemma for workers who apply it. People's mindset is that home is a place to rest and work is generally done in the office (Mustajab *et al.*, 2020). This dilemmatic condition allows for an adverse impact on work.

Based on data from the DKI Jakarta Manpower and Transmigration Service as of May 26, 2020, it shows that there are 4,057 companies with a total workforce of 1,068,589 people who apply the Work From Home culture. More and more companies are implementing this new culture along with the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Indonesia. So that, the workforce is required to be able to adapt the new work culture in order to continue to do their jobs well. However, there are several negative impacts that may occur in the implementation of this WFH culture.

The work environment is less ergonomic because it does not have an adequate workstation like in an office. Feelings of boredom often occur due to the absence of direct interaction with coworkers. The demands of the tasks given often increase and even exceed the capacity of the workforce (Muslim, 2020). According to the concept of ergonomics balance presented by Manuaba (2000), it is explained that if there is an excessive workload, it will cause poor work performance. One of the effects that may occur is work stress.

According to Trisminingsih (2019), mental workload has a considerable impact on worker performance. Working under pressure in a short time to achieve a certain target is one of the sources of stress that occurs in the workplace. In the WFH phenomenon, there are various additional disturbances that may occur in the workforce (Mustajab *et al.*, 2020), such as unstable signal conditions, dividing tasks between homework and office work, taking care of children, and others. Suci (2017) shows that mental workload has a strong relationship with work stress with 80% of workers experiencing work stress in the high category due to an excessive mental workload.

According to Wulanyani (2013), mental workload is the degree of process capacity that is issued during carrying out tasks. The process involves perception, interpretation, and motivation conveyed by the sensory organs. Mental workload is often associated with the level of task difficulty. A state of understress occurs when the demands of task are lower than the ability of the workforce. Meanwhile, overstress occurs when the task demands are higher than the ability of the workforce (Diniari, 2019).

Mental workload can occur because there are four factors that play an important role (Wulanyani, 2013). First, the workforce is required to maintain a high level of vigilance over a sufficiently long period of time. Second, the workforce is required to make responsible decisions with good quality results. Third, usually doing a job that is monotonous or repetitive. Fourth, the work done does not cause interaction with other workers.

Measurement of mental workload is carried out using two approaches, namely the objective approach and the subjective approach. In an objective approach, measurements can be made by means of eye blink rate, flicker rate, and measurement of salivary acid levels. while the subjective approach can be done using the Subjective-Workload Assessment Technique (SWAT) method, National Aeronautics & Space Administration – NASA (NASA Task Load Index – TLX), Rating Scale Mental Effort (RSME), and so on.

This research was conducted on workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta. The Group of Digital BolaSport is one of the work units in the Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Company. This work unit plays an important role in the field of mass media and sports entertainment communication. creating a sports entertainment news portal that is presented in an attractive manner,

starting from the lifestyles of stars and the sports community, to the latest information about the world of national and international sports.

Within the Group of Digital BolaSport work unit, there are various divisions, such as the multimedia division, the editorial division, the social media division, and the business division. In general, the job description carried out by the workforce is to create a news portal that contains various articles on sports news, both nationally and internationally. In addition, it also creates snippets of content in several social media, such as Instagram and Twitter.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, starting at the end of March 2020, the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta has implemented a Work From Home culture for all to fit the workforce. Of course there have been some changes in carrying out the work since the treatment of this work culture. As a result of the pandemic, live news coverage is also very rare so it is usually done virtually. Reporting from the results of the preliminary study conducted, there is a phenomenon of increasing task demands that are outside the capacity of the workforce and overtime often occurs in doing work.

This is in line with research conducted by Rahdiana *et al.* (2021) on marketing workers. It was said that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decrease in the number of requests but they were still required to meet sales targets every month. This has an impact on the level of mental workload of workers, which is 58% of workers have a very high mental workload.

Research by Pandiangan *et al.* (2019) also shows that Human Resource (HR) and General Affair (GA) workers have a workload value of 81.67, which means they have a high value. This can happen because in the type of HR and GA work, workers do repetitive work with considerable time pressure and responsibility.

In addition, research conducted by Parlinda *et al.* (2020) on female journalists showed that excessive mental workload can be a factor causing stress. It can be seen that workers cannot manage work demands properly, causing stress. This happens because they tend not to get enough time to rest and they are faced with unrealistic time pressures. Difficulty meeting and contacting resource persons is one of the main factors causing this.

Another research said that demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, and income have a major contribution to the incidence of work stress (Sharma and Jain, 2020). This is

presumably because it is almost impossible for workers to separate their personal life from their professional life.

Based on the results of several studies as well as the result of preliminary study that the researchers conducted on the workers Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, the purpose of this study is to analyze the strong relationship between marital status and mental workload with work stress of Work From Home workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta.

METHODS

This research was conducted using survey because the data were obtained using an online questionnaire. Meanwhile, based on the time of data collection, the research design used cross-sectional study, where the research variables were measured at the same time in a certain period of time.

This research is aimed at workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta. Data collection was carried out from May to June 2021. The population in this study was all workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, which is 20 people. So that, the sample in this study used the total population. The variables used in this study were marital status, mental workload, and work stress.

Primary data collection is done by using a questionnaire in the form of an online Google Form. Primary data taken directly from the research respondents' questionnaire included marital status, level of mental workload as measured by the NASA-TLX measurement method which adopted in Tarwaka (2015) and work stress as measured by the HSE questionnaire which was also adopted in Tarwaka (2015). In addition, interviews were also conducted with several workers. Interviews were conducted virtually either by phone or chat. The purpose and objective of the interview process is to provide a more in-depth picture of the data obtained from filling out the questionnaire.

The data obtained will be presented by descriptive analysis, which is a table of frequency distribution of each variable being researched and also in analytic analysis, which tests the strong relationship between marital status and mental workload with work stress. This analytical analysis used the Cramer's method for nominal data and the Spearman method for ordinal data. This research has gone through an ethical test process with No. 050/HRECC.FODM/II/2021.

This study uses the entire population, so that it only provides a strong relationship between marital status and mental workload with work stress on Work From Home workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta.

RESULT

Marital Status

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta who become research respondents were unmarried, with a percentage of 60% or as many as 12 people.

Mental Workload

In Table 2, the mental workload variable is divided into three groups, which are low, medium, and high. The results obtained related to the mental workload of the workforce at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta are that the majority of the workforce have a high mental workload, as many as 11 respondents (55%).

Table 1. Distribution of Marital Status at Group of Digital Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Workers in 2021

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Marital Status	Married	8	40
	Not Married	12	60
Total		20	100

Table 2. Distribution of Mental Workload at Group of Digital Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Workers in 2021

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mental Workload	Medium	9	45
	High	11	55
Total		20	100

Table 4. Relationship of Marital Status and Work Stress at Group of Digital Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Workers in 2021

Marital Status	Work Stress						Total		Cramer's Correlation Coefficient
	Low		Medium		High		N	%	
	n	%	n	%	n	%			
Married	3	37.5	3	36.5	2	25	8	100	0.373
Not Married	1	8.3	8	66.7	3	25	12	100	

Meanwhile, the rest have a medium mental workload with a percentage of 45%.

Work Stress

In Table 3, work stress variable is divided into four groups, which are low, medium, high, and very high. The result shows that the majority of workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta have a medium level of work stress, which is 55%. In addition, as many as 25% of the total research respondents have a high work stress level, and the rest have a low work stress level with a percentage of 20%.

Relationship of Marital Status and Work Stress

Table 4 shows that workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta who experience low work stress tend to be owned by those who have married, which is 37.5%. However, medium work stress tends to be owned by those who have not married status, with a percentage of 66.7%. In addition, the correlation coefficient value shows that the results of a strong test of the relationship between marital status and work stress produce a Cramer's correlation coefficient of 0.373. This means that the two variables have a strong relationship in a weak category.

Relationship of Mental Workload and Work Stress

Table 5 shows that workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta who

Table 3. Distribution of Work Stress at Group of Digital Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Workers in 2021

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Work Stress	Low	4	20
	Medium	11	55
	High	5	25
Total		20	100

have a medium mental workload tend to experience work stress in the low and medium categories, with a percentage of 44.4% and 55.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, those who have a high mental workload tend to experience work stress in the medium and high categories, with a percentage of 54.4% and 45.5%, respectively. In addition, the correlation coefficient value shows that the result of the strong relationship between mental workload and work stress produce a Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.667. This means that the two variables have a strong relationship in a strong category.

DISCUSSION

Marital Status

Marriage is the beginning of the life cycle that forms the basis for the formation of a family (Oktarina *et al.*, 2018). Marital status in this study was determined from the information listed on the citizenship identity card or known as the National Identity Card (KTP).

Solazzo *et al.* (2020) reported that someone who is married has a smaller chance of experiencing health problems both physically and mentally. This is in line with Olatunji and Mokuolu (2014) who said that a married worker finds it easier to deal with problems that trigger stress because of the support from a partner. In addition, Bjørnnes *et al.* (2018) also show that marital status has a significant relationship with the incidence of depression in individuals who suffer from heart health problems, wherein these two variables affect the level of hope for each patient.

Mental Workload

Mental workload measurement is conceptually fundamental to exploring human interactions with technologies devices (Longo, 2016). In this study, the respondents are a group of workers who work in this field of digital mass media, where there are the

journalists. Research from Pramanik and Prakoso (2018) shows that the journalists easily experience excessive mental workload if there are demands for time and tasks beyond their previous capacity. This can affect their health decline.

Work Stress

The impact of work stress is thought to occur due to the influence of task difficulties (Mandrick *et al.*, 2016). In the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, it was found that several workers experienced significant changes in their job descriptions. From the results of interview conducted on several workers when asked about the change in the job description and then matching it with the results of the work stress measurement, it shows that workers who have low work stress are those who do not experience changes in their job descriptions. Meanwhile, workers who have high work stress are those who experience changes in their job descriptions.

Relationship of Marital Status and Work Stress

Since the implementation of the Work From Home culture, many workers claim to feel more comfortable at work (Xiao *et al.*, 2021). They said that by doing working from home, they are not supervised directly by their supervisor, so that they can do work without having to maintain attitudes and behavior, such as when working from the office (Mustajab *et al.*, 2020).

Also Mustajab *et al.* (2020) showed that all workers said that they had more quality time since the implementation of WFH. They spend more time with their families without having to leave their jobs. Although, sometimes they have to divide the focus between interacting with family and also focus on work. However, this does not reduce the quality time with family during Work From Home.

Apart from the positive impacts experienced during WFH, there are also negative impacts. There is still a gray line between work and family. The

Table 5. Relationship of Mental Workload and Work Stress at Group of Digital Kompas Gramedia Jakarta Workers in 2021

Mental Workload	Work Stress						Total	Cramer's Correlation Coefficient
	Low		Medium		High			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Medium	4	44.4	5	55.6	0	0	9	100
High	0	0	6	54.5	5	45.5	11	100

workforce may be disturbed by the presence of children or family members when doing work at home (Vyas and Butakhieo, 2020). Especially for workers who are married, sometimes they find it difficult to divide between home work and office work at the same time (Mustajab *et al.*, 2020). Those who already have children tend to choose to sacrifice their sleeping hours and work at night or at certain times, where there are quiet hours so they can concentrate on work and avoid distractions (Xiao *et al.*, 2021).

The results of interviews conducted on female workers who are married and have children at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta found that they have difficulty in dividing household tasks with their partner, such as taking care of children, cooking, and other housework. This happened because the husband was not used to doing housework and the household assistant who used to do it had to be temporarily dismissed as an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

However, based on the results of research conducted on workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, it shows that the majority of workers who have a high mental workload are those who are not married. This can be explained, based on the results of interview with several unmarried workers that they tend to feel disturbed and unable to concentrate due to the presence of other family members in doing work. This is because the majority of unmarried workers interviewed still live with their parents or relatives.

For married workers, fewer have a high mental workload and more have a medium mental workload. This is in line with the results of interviews conducted with married workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta. They said that, since getting married, the majority have their own house where only the immediate family inhabit the house. So, the disturbances occur quite rarely. Especially for those who can divide their roles well with their partner. This division of tasks tend to create a more comfortable and harmonious atmosphere at home, because it is full of cooperation.

The value of the correlation coefficient shows that these two variables have a weak relationship. This is in line with research (Lucero, 2017) which shows that there is no significant relationship between work stress and marital status. The incidence of work stress cannot be related to marital status alone, but many other factors may

have a direct relationship. In addition, Benti (2018) also said that marital status did not significantly contribute to the incidence of work stress, because there is no significant difference with the level of work stress between married and unmarried workers.

The results from research by Alenezi, Aboshaiqah and Baker (2018) said that unmarried workers are supposed to have a work stress more than married workers. It conveyed that unmarried workers tend to be given more tasks because they have fewer family responsibilities. In addition, when viewed in terms of age, unmarried workers tend to have a young age. It is known from the results of interview with unmarried workers that they have an age range between 20 to 30 years. It is described in research (Sari and Listiyandini, 2015) that young adults (21 to 40 years) require the role of resilience in facing challenges, where this role is influenced by the presence of friends and partners. So that married workers tend to have an advantage because the role of resilience is obtained entirely from the spouse.

However, Emmanuel and Collins (2016) said that married workers are more likely to have high levels of work stress compared to unmarried or divorced workers. There is work-family conflict that may cause stress. Sharma and Jain (2020) also said that workers who have a high stress level are mostly experienced by those who are married.

So, from the description above, it can be concluded that marital status is not the main determinant in the incidence of work stress. Each individual, both married and unmarried, has a different tolerance in responding to a condition or problem that is likely to cause stress.

Relationship of Mental Workload and Work Stress

During the current pandemic, there is a phenomenon of social confinement or isolation. An increase in feeling of loneliness may be the result of this phenomenon. Galanti *et al.* (2021) said that an increase in loneliness has a correlation with a decrease in workers satisfaction and performance, which can also increase the incidence of stress.

Based on the results of interviews conducted with several workers, it can be seen that, since the implementation of the Work From Home culture, there have been various changes in doing work. Several workers who work as reporters said that, before the pandemic, news coverage and interview processes were carried out directly by going into

the field. However, during the pandemic, these kind of activities must be done by online method, either virtual by Zoom or only by phone.

Other than that, one of the workers who works as a videographer and photographer said that there has been a significant change in job description. Before pandemic, they had to do news coverage directly with the final result in the form of photos and video coverage. However, during the pandemic period, they only do virtual news coverage documentation by Zoom. Meanwhile, some of the tasks given are beyond from their capacities, such as making news articles, which should be carried out by reporter and assistant editor.

For workers who work as secretary, assistant editor, multimedia, and social media, it is said that there are no significant changes in job description during the pandemic compared with the period before the pandemic. So in this type of work, they tend to have a medium mental workload.

However, one of the workers who works as multimedia said that since the implementation of the Work From Home culture, overtime often occurs in some work. This can happen because of the demands of the task are given suddenly with a very short deadline. This can be one of the factors that causes an increase in mental workload since the implementation of Work From Home. But Mungkasa (2020) said that only 10% of workers have work outside of the normal schedule or experience overtime working hours.

Aczel *et al.* (2021) said that workers experienced more difficulties during the implementation of the work from home system during the pandemic. They have difficulty in determining when work should be completed. This can also be one of the factors that cause overtime at work. Besides the company must reduce the incidence of overtime, the workers also need to develop a control strategy over the boundaries of life and work, such as self-discipline, self-motivation, and time management.

When a strong test of relationship between mental workload and work stress is carried out, the correlation coefficient values are found in a strong category. The result also shows that workers who have a medium mental workload tend to experience low work stress. Meanwhile, workers who have a high mental workload tend to experience high work stress as well. This is in line with the positive value stated in the result of the strong relationship between these two variables, where the higher the mental workload, the higher the incidence of work stress.

This is in line with research by Tahrirah (2019) which shows that there is a relationship between mental workload and work stress, where the higher mental workload, the higher work stress level too. Galanti *et al.* (2021) stated that the factor of job demands or workload is one aspect that can cause a worker to experience stress. In line with Martini and Sitiari (2018) it also shows that work stress and workload have a close relationship that will ultimately determine workers' performance. The higher the level of work stress, the lower the performance produced by workers.

In interviews conducted with workers at the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta, it also showed that many workers experienced a loss of focus in having work or relaxing with their families. This dilemmatic condition can be a source of workload, especially the mental workload increases during the implementation of working from home during the pandemic. From the results of the description above, it can be said that mental workload is one of the factors that have a strong relationship with incidence of work stress in workers with Work From Home conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Workers in the Group of Digital BolaSport Kompas Gramedia Jakarta have been performing the Work From Home (culture since March 2020). The majority of the workers have unmarried status. For the level of mental workload, the majority are in the high category and work stress in a medium category. As for the strong relationship between marital status and work stress, it is in the weak category, while the strong relationship between mental workload and work stress is in the strong category.

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