The Effects of Work From Home and Job Characteristics on Performance in a Indonesia Regional Government Agency : A Mediating Role of Motivation

by Tetra Hidayati

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ABSTRACT: The Covid-19 pandemic that occurred in Indonesia made the Government of the Republic of Indonesia through the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform establish a policy that Civil Servants can carry out official duties by working from their homes / residences as an effort to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the effect of working from home and job characteristics on the performance of civil servants through motivation as a mediator. The relationship between variables in this study was analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Square method. Data in this study were obtained through a questionnaire filled out by 45 Civil Servants in the Research and Development Regional Agency of East Kalimantan Province who carry out work from home. The results of this study indicate that working from home and job characteristics have a positive and significant direct effect on motivation and performance. In addition, the results also show that working from home and job characteristics do not have an indirect effect on performance through motivation as a mediator.

The work from home system for Civil Servants is implemented because of a necessity due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the future it is necessary to establish a national employment regulation related to the work from home system for Civil Servants so that with this regulation the work from home system can be applied sustainably for certain job characteristics.

KEY WORD: Work From Home, Job Characteristics, Motivation, Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the confirmation of the first case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) in Indonesia on March 2, 2020 and the determination of Covid-19 as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 (Tosepu et al., 2020), The Government of the Republic of Indonesia has issued various policies in the context of preventing and overcoming the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia. One of these policies is the letter of The Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform number 19 of 2020 concerning Adjustments to the Work System of the State Civil Apparatus in efforts to prevent Covid-19 in Government Agencies where State Civil Apparatus can carry out official duties by working from home.

The concept of work from home has developed to date with various names since it was first introduced in 1973 by Jack Nilles with the term telecommuting, including homeworking, flexy work, flexibility work, telework, remote working, virtual work, etc. (Crosbie & Moore, 2004; Meil & Kirov, 2017; Mungkasa, 2020). In Indonesia, especially for local governments such as the Provincial Government of East Kalimantan, the concept of working from home is still new and has not been implemented until the global Covid-19 pandemic. In its application, one of the weaknesses of the work from home system is the loss of motivation to do work. The loss of work motivation is caused by the atmosphere at home that is very different from the office atmosphere and can cause laziness because there is no direct supervision from the boss so that the work target is late from the predetermined time limit. (Dewayani, 2020).

Although there are problems experienced in implementing the work from home system, several previous studies have shown that the work from home system has a positive effect on employee performance. (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Golden & Gajendran, 2019; Onyemaechi, Chinyere, & Emmanuel, 2018; Peros Khan, Mohammed, & Mohamed Harith, 2018). In implementing the work from home system, job characteristics also need to be considered in determining whether a person's performance will be effective, especially in terms of job autonomy and job complexity. (O'neill, Hambley, Greidanus, Macdonnell, & Kline, 2009). Job characteristics themselves have a relationship with the motivation and performance of workers in an organization according to the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) theory found by Hackman and Oldman. (1975), where the characteristics of the job will affect the results of a person's work which include job satisfaction, attendance and work motivation.

From the problems that occur in implementing the work from home system, especially for employees of the East Kalimantan Provincial Government, it is necessary to carry out further research on the effect of the working from home system on employee motivation and performance considering this system is implemented suddenly and without careful preparation due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, research conducted in measuring the effect of the working from home system on motivation and performance has been mostly conducted abroad and the majority have been conducted in the private sector. In particular, there are no studies or empirical studies that measure the mediating effect of motivation on the effect of working from home and job characteristics on employee performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work From Home and Motivation

The results of research conducted by Nicholson & Baruch (1997) shows that in terms of individual quality perceived by employees, self-motivation is the most needed thing in doing work from home above other factors such as the ability to work alone, persistence, and the ability to organize themselves. This is also because the characteristics of working from home require self-motivated people who want to participate in the program and who have good time management and organizational skills. (Turban & Wang, 1995). The implementation of work from home arrangements will also make employees feel indebted to the organization so that it results in employees feeling obliged to increase their work motivation. (Caillier, 2012). In addition, the research results also show that workers who work from home frequently (4 or 5 days per week) have higher motivation to perform public services than workers who do not work from home. (Caillier, 2015).

Hypothesis 1: Work from home has a positive and significant effect on motivation.

Job Characteristics and Motivation

According to the Motivating Potential Score (MPS) theory found by Hackman and Oldham (1976), Job characteristics have the potential to encourage internal work motivation from workers if the job has at least a high score on one of the three job dimensions that leads to the meaningfulness experienced (skill variation, task clarity, task importance), the job has high autonomy, and the job has high feedback. This theory is supported by research conducted by Singh et al (2016) shows that a comparison of high levels of motivation in one employee and another can be related to the high dimensions of job characteristics, namely feedback, skill variety, task identity and task significance. Research conducted by Zhao et al (2016) shows that the dimensions of job characteristics can affect work motivation when linked with Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Task identity, task significance and job autonomy in Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory are hygiene factors related to reducing job stress while feedback is a motivator related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Job characteristics have a positive and significant effect on motivation.

Motivation and Performance

The concept of motivation as an excuse or stimulus that causes someone to want to do something is considered to be closely related to employee performance at work. Olusadum & Anulika (2018) in their study revealed that motivation has a positive influence on employee performance in an organization and also helps in reducing inefficiencies in an organization. For the government sector in Indonesia, several studies conducted to measure the relationship between motivation and performance show that motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance in government agencies. (Irvan & Heryanto, 2019; Sutanja, 2019; Yudistira & Susanti, 2018).

Hypothesis 3: Motivation has a positive and significant effect on performance.

Work From Home, Motivation and Performance

Working from home has a positive influence on performance, especially in terms of autonomy, work and family balance and job stress (Peros Khan et al., 2018). Working from home also has beneficial consequences on individual performance. This can be seen from an increase in job satisfaction, an increase in the assessment of supervisors and an increase in performance records (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). In addition, there are studies that indicate that working from home has a positive effect on performance, although not significantly (Martin & MacDonnell, 2012; Onyemaechi et al., 2018). Survey conducted by Mayor et al. (2008) on Federal Government employees in the United States who do remote work showed that 60% of employees stated that their performance improved as a result of flexible arrangements due to working from home.

Ahmed *et al*. (2014) revealed that the majority of employees feel motivated when working from home and this has had an effect on improving the job competence and skills of employees. In addition, the role of motivation, such as the need for autonomy and need for achievement, also has a positive effect on the performance of employees who work from home. (O'neill et al., 2009). Another research conductyed by Onyemeachi *et al* (2018) recommend to organizational management that practices working from home to always consider the personal motivation and home environment of the employees where they work because this has the capacity to affect the quality of employee work.

Hypothesis 4: Work from home has a positive and significant effect directly on performance and indirectly through motivation as a mediator.

**Job Characteristics, Motivation and Performance**

Research conducted by Mendoza, Nasution & Matondang (2018) shows that there is a significant influence of important things on a successful job because the work will greatly determine the quality of employee work, starting from detailed planning, then carried out to describe the details of the specifically. Another study conducted by Johari & Yahya (2016) shows that the dimensions of skill variation have a direct and significant effect on performance. Several studies have shown that job characteristics have a positive and significant effect on performance either directly or through motivation as a mediator. (Evelyne, Muathe, & Kilika, 2018; Grobelna, 2019; Ramdhani & Sridadi, 2019).

In accordance with the concept of the Job Charasteristics Model (JCM), the core dimensions of job characteristics can affect employee job outcomes which include job satisfaction, attendance levels and work motivation. (Hackman & Greg, 1975). Another research conducted by Grobelna (2019) revealed that job characteristics, especially task significance, have a significant effect on performance through the influence of motivation. The results of these studies are also in line with research conducted by Ramdhani dan Sridadi (2019) that job characteristics have a positive and significant effect on employee performance through work motivation. Another study conducted on the private sector in Kenya shows that skill variety, task identity, autonomy and feedback affect employee performance, whereas task significance does not significantly affect employee performance. The results also show the effect of partial mediation by motivation on performance as an independent variable (Evelyne et al., 2018).

Hypothesis 5: Job characteristics has a positive and significant effect directly on performance and indirectly through motivation as a mediator.

Based on the formulation of hypotheses, the research model proposed by the authors is as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
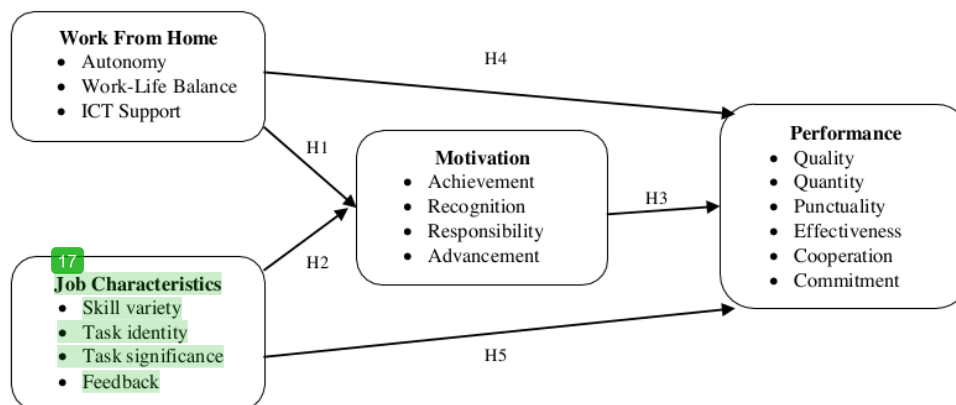
Source: Result of author's analysis, 2021

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data in this study were obtained through a questionnaire filled out by 45 Civil Servants in the Research and Development Regional Agency of East Kalimantan Province who carry out work from home. The responses

wer sought using Likert's five-point scale. The relationship between variables in this study was analysed using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling method (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM is more suitable for identification of fewer problems, can use a much smaller and much larger sample, and is easier to construct formative and reflective constructs (Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014).

IV.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Data Analysis
The first-stage model evaluation focuses on the measurement model. Examination of the PLS-SEM estimation for the measurement model allows the researcher to evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011) in particular, multivariate measurement involves using multiple variables to measure a concept indirectly. Evaluation of the measurement model includes tests of internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity as shown in Table 1. Hair et al (2014) explain that to measure reliability of a construct, two methods can be used, namely Cronbach's alpha or composite reliability. However, the use of Cronbach's alpha tends to provide a lower estimated value so that PLS-SEM is recommended to use composite reliability. Indicator reliability on PLS-SEM is measured from the outer loading value which shows the correlation between the indicator and its construct. Convergent validity in constructs can be measured using AVE. Discriminant validity can be measured from cross loading or the loading value of other constructs is a comparison to the value of the outer loading indicator associated with a construct where the required loading indicator value must be more than the cross loading value.

Table 1: Evaluation of Measurement Model

Variables and Indicators	Loadings	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cross Loading
Work From Home				
• Autonomy	0.765			
• Work-Life Balance	0.684	0.795	0.564	Yes
• IT Support	0.800			
Job Characteristics				
• Skill variety	0.520			
• Task identity	0.882	0.810	0.524	Yes
• Task significance	0.732			
• Feedback	0.713			
Motivation				
• Achievement	0.826			
• Recognition	0.764	0.848	0.583	Yes
• Responsibility	0.785			
• Advancement	0.671			
Performance				
• Quality	0.727			
• Quantity	0.781			
• Punctuality	0.750	0.883	0.558	Yes
• Effectiveness	0.712			
• Cooperation	0.760			
• Commitment	0.752			

Source: Calculated using SmartPLS, 2021

Hypothesis Test
After ensuring that the measurement model of the constructs reliable and valid, then hypothesis testing is carried out. Hypothesis testing in this study is carried out on a structural model or inner model which shows a direct or indirect relationship between exogenous and endogenous latent variables. Hypothesis testing is based on the significance value of the path coefficient after resampling or bootstrapping 5,000 times (Hair et al., 2014). The statistical test used is the t test with a confidence level of 95% or a significance level of 5%. The hypothesis is accepted if the t value is more than the t-table value for the two-tailed test, namely 1,96. The results of boostraping procedur as shown in Table 2.

Based on Table 2, the results of hypothesis testing can be interpreted as follows:
1. The effect of working from home on motivation has a positive path coefficient value of 0.350, t value of 2.603 and p value of 0.009 which indicates that the relationship between the two variables is significant at the 5% significance level because it has t value of more than 1.96. This shows that working from home has a positive and significant effect on motivation so that Hypothesis 1 is supported.
2. The relationship between job characteristics and motivation has a positive path coefficient value of 0.472 and t value of 3.574. This shows that job characteristics have a positive and significant influence on motivation so that Hypothesis 2 is supported.
3. The influence of motivation on performance has a positive path coefficient value but is almost close to 0, which is equal to 0.069, and t value of 0.358 which indicates that the relationship between the two

variables is not significant because it has the t value of less than 1.96. This shows that motivation has a positive but insignificant effect on performance so that Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

4. The direct effect between working from home and performance has a positive path coefficient value of 0.314 and t value of 2.151 which indicates that the direct effect between the two variables is significant. While the indirect effect between working from home on performance through motivation as a mediator has a patch coefficient value of 0.024 with t value of 0.310 which means it is not significant because it is valued less than t table 1.96. This shows that working from home has a positive and significant effect directly on performance but does not have an indirect effect through motivation as a mediator so that Hypothesis 4 is partially supported.

5. The direct effect between job characteristics and performance has a positive path coefficient value of 0.448 and t value of 3.013 which indicates that the direct effect between the two variables is significant. While the indirect effect of job characteristics on performance through motivation as a mediator has a patch coefficient value of 0.033 with t value of 0.350 which means it is not significant. This shows that job characteristics have a positive and significant effect directly on performance but do not have an indirect effect through motivation as a mediator so that Hypothesis 5 is partially supported.

Table 2. Bootstraping Results

Path Coefficients						
Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t Value	p Values	5% Significance Level
Work From Home (X1) → Motivation (Y1)	0,350	0,357	0,135	2,603	0,009	Significant
Job Characteristics (X2) → Motivation (Y1)	0,472	0,472	0,132	3,574	0,000	Significant
Motivation (Y1) → Performance (Y2)	0,069	0,068	0,193	0,358	0,720	Not Significant
Work From Home (X1) → Performance (Y2)	0,314	0,321	0,146	2,151	0,031	Significant
Job Characteristics (X2) → Performance (Y2)	0,448	0,451	0,149	3,013	0,003	Significant
Specific Indirect Effects						
Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t Value	p Values	5% Significance Level
Work From Home (X1) → Motivation (Y1) → Performance (Y2)	0,024	0,029	0,078	0,310	0,757	Not Significant
Job Characteristics (X2) → Motivation (Y1) → Performance (Y2)	0,033	0,028	0,093	0,350	0,726	Not Significant

Source: Calculated using SmartPLS, 2021

Discussion

The results of hypothesis testing show that working from home has a positive and significant effect directly on the performance of civil servants. This shows that with the support of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the balance of responsibilities between family and work and the flexibility in determining work completion methods in the work from home system will have a direct impact on the performance of employees. These results are consistent with the results of previous studies that work from home has a positive effect on performance (Major et al., 2008; Martin & MacDonnell, 2012; Onyemaechi et al., 2018; Peros Khan et al., 2018).

Regarding the indirect effect of working from home on performance, the results of hypothesis testing show that motivation does not have a mediating effect on the relationship of the two variables. The thing that causes motivation does not have a significant mediating effect on performance in this study is related to the lack of intensity of socialization among employees in the work from home system. In accordance with Maslow's Needs Theory, social needs are one of the five needs that will affect a person's motivation. Gajendran and Harrison (2007) revealed that teleworking and social relations among workers have a negative relationship where low-intensity teleworking has no effect on coworkers relationships, but high-intensity of teleworking will have a negative effect.

The results of hypothesis testing also show that the job characteristics have a positive and significant effect directly on the performance of civil servants. This shows that the concept of the Job Characteristic Model (JCM) proposed by Hackman & Oldham (1976) which consists of skill variety, task identity, task significance and feedback are considered to be in accordance with the needs of the organization so that it will have a direct impact on improving the performance of employees, especially related to task identitiy. The results of this study support previous research (Johari & Yahya, 2016; Mendoza et al., 2018) that there is a significant influence of

job characteristics on performance because job characteristics will greatly determine the quality of employee work, starting from detailed planning, then carried out to describe specifically in detail the characteristics of the work that exist in each job.

Regarding the role of motivation as a mediator of the relationship between job characteristics and performance, the results of hypothesis testing in this study indicate that motivation does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between the two variables. This result is different from several previous studies that have been carried out where job characteristics apart from having a positive and significant direct effect on performance, job characteristics also have a positive and significant effect through motivation as a mediator. (Evelyne et al., 2018; Grobelna, 2019; Ramdhani & Sridadi, 2019). The results of this study indicate that in order to improve organizational performance, it is necessary to pay more attention to the design of work systems and the preparation of job descriptions that are in accordance with the positions occupied by employees compared to increasing employee motivation. This is because the suitability of job characteristics has a greater direct effect on performance than through increasing employee motivation.

V.   CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this study indicate that working from home and job characteristics have a positive and significant direct effect on motivation and performance. In addition, the results also show that working from home and job characteristics do not have an indirect effect on performance through motivation as a mediator. The work from home system for Civil Servants in Indonesia is implemented because of a necessity due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the future it is necessary to establish a national employment regulation related to the work from home system for Civil Servants so that with this regulation the work from home system can be applied sustainably for certain job characteristics.

Like any other research, this research certainly has its limitations, therefore future research can be carried out by expanding the scope of research to determine the effect of implementing a work from home on performance using different samples, analysis methods and indicators from this study. Future research can consider the effect of individual characteristics on performance when employees carry out work from home. Future research also could focus on the impact of control variables such as age, gender, years of service on other outcome variables.

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