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### A Study of Working from Home

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#### Abstract

In the context of today's growing job market, there are many opportunities to improve income that workers can take advantage of right at home. Working from home (WFH) is a trend chosen by many workers and firms. Suitable for subjects such as female workers who are raising children, students who have a lot of free time and want to earn extra income, and office workers who also want to take advantage of working at home in the evenings or in their free time to make up for my low monthly salary. Work from home (WFH) is a form of working online right at home without having to go directly to the office or workplace. This working model helps employees be proactive in arranging their time, consistent with their abilities and capabilities.

The nature of the work is also quite flexible, without time constraints, and not bound by strict rules and regulations like working at a company. WFH can bring benefits to both organizations and employees, such as helping to increase work-life balance (Allen, 2001) <sup>[3]</sup>, positively impacting work performance, and increasing organizational performance (Joshi *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[15]</sup>. The purpose of this study is to discuss working from home through qualitative research methods such as a review of research works, relevant theories, and expert interviews. Based on the research results, we propose recommendations for firms and workers.

**Keywords:** Work from Home (WFH), Employment, Human Resources, Labor Economics

**JEL codes:** C91, J81, M11

#### 1. Introduction

WFH can bring benefits to both organizations and employees, such as helping to increase work-life balance (Allen, 2001) <sup>[3]</sup>, positively impacting work performance, and increasing organizational performance (Joshi *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[15]</sup>. The effectiveness of WFH is limited by employees' access to and ability to use technology while working from home (Felstead & Henseke, 2017) <sup>[12]</sup>. WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced organizational performance (Ralph *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[26]</sup>. According to Bao & colleagues (2020), WFH during the pandemic has both positive and negative impacts on employee and organizational performance.

Olson & Primps (1984) <sup>[22]</sup> have shown that WFH increases employee autonomy and work performance and brings many positive outcomes for the organization.

WFH helps employees have greater autonomy, and they will reduce feelings of pressure and fatigue at work (Sardeshmukh *et al.*, 2012) <sup>[29]</sup>.

According to Purwanto *et al.* (2020), WFH can reduce workers' stress levels. Farooq & Sultana (2021) <sup>[11]</sup> argue that WFH negatively affects employees' work performance due to difficulties in adapting to the new workplace. WFH is also considered a cause of workers' feelings of social isolation, which reduces motivation and work performance (Martin & MacDonnell, 2012) <sup>[18]</sup>. WFH sometimes also reduces the boundary between work and personal life for workers, causing them to fall into work overload and experience more stress (Liu & Lo, 2018) <sup>[17]</sup>. Susilo (2020) <sup>[32]</sup> found no relationship between WFH and work performance, but WFH indirectly improves employee work efficiency because WFH increases employee satisfaction and work motivation.

WFH increases the level of concentration at work (Frolick *et al.*, 1993) <sup>[14]</sup> and also leads to increased work flexibility and employees can optimize their time, thus, WFH significantly increases tell about employee performance (Cascio, 1986) <sup>[8]</sup>.

Besides, a suitable and interesting environment when WFH will help them have a better working status, improving the quality and quantity of employees' work (Susilo, 2020) <sup>[32]</sup>.

The method of working from home has been proven to directly affect employee work performance (Allen *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[3]</sup> as well as indirectly through job satisfaction and work motivation (Susilo, 2020) <sup>[32]</sup>.

Susilo (2020) <sup>[32]</sup> has shown that working from home helps employees have better work results. Mehdi & Morissette (2021) <sup>[16]</sup> studied the work results of employees when working from home. The results showed that up to 90% of people working from home achieved at least equal efficiency compared to themselves in an office work environment.

Teleworking has a positive effect or increases job satisfaction (Dubrin, 1991 <sup>[10]</sup>; Norman *et al.*, 1995) <sup>[21]</sup>, mainly because people working at home can adjust and arrange their work schedules and tasks to be done at work (Baltes *et al.*, 1999) <sup>[5]</sup>. Some recent studies by Susilo (2020) <sup>[32]</sup> and Bui (2021) <sup>[7]</sup> have proven that working from home has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction in the context of COVID-19.

When employees work from home, their work motivation increases for two main reasons: Productivity and personal life. It is easier for employees to increase productivity because working remotely and having the opportunity to handle private tasks during work hours allows them to seek greater fulfillment in their personal lives (Akhmetshin *et al.* 2018) <sup>[1]</sup>. Susilo (2020) <sup>[32]</sup> demonstrated that working from home positively and significantly affects employee motivation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thus, currently, studies on the effects of WFH still have disagreement. The goal of this research is to discuss the method of working from home, which is one of the methods that many firms are applying in each specific condition.

## 2. Perspectives on working from home

WFH is also known as remote work, teleworking, or telecommuting (Baruch, 2001) <sup>[16]</sup>.

According to Savić (2020) <sup>[28]</sup>, the work-from-home method is the way employees work outside the company office. It includes four basic characteristics: (i) a person is an employee of a company or a member of an organization; (ii) they participate in performing work for a company or organization; (iii) work is performed outside the company headquarters; and (iv) they use electronic devices with information technology applications to exchange work with managers and colleagues.

According to Nguyen (2021) <sup>[20]</sup>, in terms of awareness and attitude, WFH is motivated by fear of COVID-19 and hindered by difficulty concentrating on work and limited information connection.

WFH refers to many different working methods related to the use of information technology to support work while at the same time working at home.

According to Timsal & Awais (2016) <sup>[33]</sup>, WFH will be associated with new and advanced technology, thereby helping workers work more easily and keeping them motivated to work. In addition, Susilo (2020) <sup>[32]</sup> believes that WFH makes employees feel more interested in work because they can avoid phenomena such as traffic jams, no longer have to worry about how long it takes to get to the office, and can protect the health of themselves and their families against the pandemic.

We believe that WFH includes: (WFH1): I spend all my time indoors working; (WFH2): I always communicate with others remotely for my work; (WFH3): I use the Internet to do my work as much as possible; (WFH4): I do not meet colleagues directly during work; (WFH5): The time I work at home is equal to the time I work at the firm; (WFH6): The firm can track my work results easily when I work from home.

## 3. Theories related to employment

### Human capital theory

Human capital was first mentioned in the 17th century (Petty, 1690) <sup>[23]</sup> and was discussed by Smith (1776) <sup>[31]</sup> and many subsequent scholars. Human capital is something like an asset, in contrast to the classical concept of the labor force (Schultz, 1961) <sup>[30]</sup>. Human capital is generally defined as knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors in an individual (Rastogi, 2002) <sup>[27]</sup>.

Human capital emphasizes the knowledge and skills that a person acquires through training activities and accumulation processes, such as through compulsory training, post-secondary training, or vocational training (Alan *et al.*, 2008) <sup>[2]</sup>.

Human capital is a combination of factors such as education, experience, training, understanding, energy to work, work habits, reliability, and self-determination capacity that affect the value of that person's marginal product (Frank & Bemanke, 2007) <sup>[13]</sup>.

Human capital theory explains the relationship between human capital (education) and economic activity (employment) (Schultz, 1961) <sup>[30]</sup>. Human Capital Theory emphasizes that education increases worker productivity and efficiency by increasing levels of cognitive learning. Human capital is formed and accumulated through education, training, and labor experience. Human capital is made up of three main factors: Initial capacity; this factor is associated with the innate and gifted factors in each person; competencies and professional knowledge are formed and accumulated through formal training; skills, professional abilities, and experiences are accumulated from life and work.

### Theory of Interleaved Learning Transfer

The Theory of Interleaved Learning Transfer explains that positive interleaved transfer occurs because individuals view the knowledge and skills created in one role as particularly valuable for performance in another role (Marshall *et al.*, 2018) <sup>[19]</sup>. Personal motivation is influenced by a person's goal orientation and situational and contextual factors (Marshall *et al.*, 2018 <sup>[19]</sup>; Pryor *et al.*, 2019) <sup>[24]</sup>. Individuals are guided within a pattern of characteristics: Interests, aptitudes, achievements, and personality traits; this seems to suggest that an individual may have some control over their destiny if properly guided (Christie, 2016) <sup>[9]</sup>.

## 4. Conclusion and implications

Work from home is a form of working online at home for businesses, partners, customers, or anyone in need. Workers can perform work at any location or time, as long as they can complete the work before the specified time.

Working from home has advantages such as being proactive with your time, not needing to travel in traffic, minimizing costs, being more flexible and proactive at work, balancing health and life, etc. However, working from home also has

disadvantages such as requiring higher discipline, more social isolation, a loss of work-life balance, excessive stress or tension, and the fact that employment may not be uniform and stable.

For firm administrators, they should build or complete a comprehensive work-from-home process to strictly control the quality, quantity, and time of work completion; be aware of the role and goals of supervision at work and do not need to supervise with too high a frequency; you need to supervise the right job at the right time. Do not cut off employee promotion policies when working from home to promote employee job satisfaction; understand the capacity of each employee to have a plan to distribute workload in a reasonable and scientific way to reduce employee work stress.

For employees, it is necessary to be clearly aware of the necessity of working from home in each situation, review and reconsider their own working from home situation, and train themselves to be self-aware, be proactive, and eliminate procrastination. Be aware of the causes of stress at work, improve your knowledge and work skills, spend time correcting shortcomings that you haven't had a chance to fix when working at the office, and manage your own time. Work optimally to reduce stress at work.

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