

Effectiveness of Working from Home and Online Based Training to Support Employee Performance During Covid 19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to measure the effectiveness of working from home and online employee training to support employee performance throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. This research uses a quantitative approach through a survey by distributing questionnaires online to employees who have experienced workplace changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic, namely working from home and experiencing online training patterns organized by the organizations where they work. This research involved 112 respondents from various backgrounds in the field of work. The hypothesis testing results show that only online training changes can significantly sustain employee performance during the Covid-19 pandemic, not by working from home. Another exciting point shows that most respondents (70.54%) chose to return to work from the office, and as many as 29.46% chose to continue working from home for the long term. Currently, research on employee performance during Covid-19 is still minimal, so these results are expected to contribute to investigating respondents' perceptions of various changes in work patterns during the pandemic. The results of this research require caution in generalizing the results of the research. Further researchers can further explore to understand the effect of changes in work systems and their effects on employee attitudes and behavior using different contexts.

Keywords

Work from home, online training, employee performance, Covid-19

Introduction

The spread of the Covid-19 virus has caught the attention of various countries. The World Health Organization (WHO), on March 11, 2020, officially announced the status upgrade from epidemic to pandemic. Determination of pandemic status is carried out by considering a contagious disease and spreads to many regions or countries. Various countries have implemented the Covid-19 protocol by the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO): starting from washing hands, not gathering or holding meetings, maintaining distance, limiting leaving the house, and even taking isolation steps from independent isolation of individuals, communities, and even regions. These various things have resulted in various work patterns, especially the pattern of working from home and online training methods.

In the press conference at the Bogor Palace, West Java, on March 15, 2020, President Joko Widodo asked the public to work, study, and pray from home and working from home is a follow up from President's appeal. This policy must be carried out to minimize the possibility of transmission of the

Covid-19 virus because the work environment is a public place where many people gather in one closed room to have a greater risk of spreading. Therefore, working from home throughout the Covid-19 pandemic is not an option but necessary for possible jobs to implement it.

Another aspect of work that must then change but is still being carried out is providing employees training to support their work. The increasingly rapid spread of Covid-19 demands a change in training patterns from conventional to technology-based training as stated by Kniffin et al. (2000) that the acceleration of migration from routine work to virtual or online work environments occurred due to Covid-19. Changing training patterns by utilizing technology applications with e-learning is the best choice. Changing the training pattern is not easy, both in terms of training organizers and participants.

Literature Review

The Effectiveness of Working from Home on Employee Performance

Norbert Wiener has introduced the term remote working for the first time in his book *The Human Use of Human Beings Cybernetics and Society* in 1950 known as telework (a term popular in Europe to this day). Furthermore the University of Southern California first used the term telecommute in a report that focused on a peak hour traffic reduction project financed by the National Science Foundation (Hidayat & Sidharta et al., 2015).

According to Heathfield (2019), there are various work schemes, including working freely (flexible schedule) and working remotely (telecommuting). Freely working is defined as allowing employees to work differently from conventional working hours so that employees can balance work and life while working remotely (from home or outside the office) is a flexible work arrangement that allows working away from the office all or part of the time (Mungkasa, 2020).

Working remotely (from home and other locations outside the office) is a flexible work arrangement that allows working away from the office all or part of the time. Understanding of working involves remotely at least 4 aspects namely the choice of a workplace, which refers to saving time/physical distance, part or total substitution of daily commuters, the intensity of remote work activities, which refers to the frequency and length of time and availability of communication technology information (Mungkasa, 2020).

According to Mungkasa (2020), several obstacles are felt by employees when working remotely. Namely, employees who are accustomed to a conventional office atmosphere have difficulty coordinating with colleagues. This pattern requires tidier work scheduling. It may even need to set a fixed time to gather at the office, there is no clear boundary between the office and home, even the working time tends to be unlimited, and remote employees tend to look unemployed. They have an impact on relationships with neighbors and family. Meanwhile, for company/organization

leaders, some of the obstacles that may arise, namely, some leaders have difficulty adjusting, especially for leaders who tend to lack confidence in their subordinates, in jobs that require a high intensity of group cooperation, it is necessary to arrange meeting schedules that will be troublesome, type of work who need to meet in person with customers only allows limited free work, not possible all the time away from the office. Meanwhile, when only some workers can work remotely, it will create a sense of injustice among workers, and some workers cannot work without supervision.

According to research conducted by Rosanti (2020), there is a positive and significant influence between work from home on employee performance at *Badan Pengawasan Keuangan dan Pembangunan* (BPKP) North Sumatera Province. The relationship between work from home and employee performance shows a strong and positive pattern. This is because most employees feel safer working from home to minimize the spread of Covid-19, and employees have little free time to do other work at home. According to research conducted by Udin (2020), indicators that can be used as benchmarks in analyzing the benefits or benefits of implementing the work from home program to make work more flexible, there are no office hours, payless for transportation and do not thinking about traffic jam from home to office. Meanwhile, one of the disadvantages felt by employees is the difficulty of accessing office data safely.

According to Crosbie and Moore (2004), Wahyu and Sa (2020), another benefits or advantage of work from home is that it can provide workers time flexibility to produce a better life balance. Work from home also provides benefits for companies because the operational costs incurred for workers are decreasing. While the weaknesses of work from home (Larson, 2020) include reducing productivity due to lack of supervision of workers, causing a loss of work motivation, many distractors make workers lose focus on work, frequent miscommunication, and data security problems. And some business sector jobs cannot be done by working from homes, such as food and beverage, retail and service (Mungkasa, 2020).

The current implementation of work from home with various challenges and obstacles can be done effectively if both companies and employees live it with responsibility and understand why this change in work patterns must be done.

Both companies and employees must understand about the conditions that occur, and strive to improve work performance, even though they are working in different places.

H1: Working from home has a positive effect in supporting employee performance during the COVID-19 pandemic

The Effectiveness of Online Training on Employee Performance

Several initiatives to adapt to new work patterns due to the Covid-19 pandemic must be carried out by various organizations, one of which is related to the implementation of training. During a pandemic, companies' training patterns have changed a lot from conventional training, which is dominated by face-to-face training, to technology-based training. In this situation, the organization is required to show the agility skills needed to survive.

E-Learning is the basis of the logical consequences of developing information and communication technology as a learning system that utilizes electronic media as a tool to assist learning activities (Gilbert & Jones, 2001). When e-learning is carried out, the delivery of learning material is carried out through electronic media such as the internet, broadcast satellites, audio/videotapes, interactive TV, CD Room, and computer-based training (C.B.T.). Also, learners must play an active role in seeking new information and knowledge and be more independent to encourage success. The electronic learning system or e-learning or E-Learning is not a new way of teaching and learning. However, the Covid-19 pandemic requires a swift adaptation so that in the end, the application of a training pattern is not an option. The current use of e-learning varies widely. One of the benefits of e-learning-based training is the flexibility of time that employees have (Permatasari & Hardiyan, 2018; Wijayanto & Lucky, 2017).

H2: Changes in training patterns from offline to online positively affect employee performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology

Samples and Procedures

The data collection process was carried out using the snowball sampling technique by distributing instruments using Google Form, which was carried out during December 2020. Based on the data entered, 112 respondents met the criteria and were eligible to continue at the data processing stage. Table 1 shows that 58% of respondents are women, and the remaining 42% are men, with most respondents in the 26-40-year age group as much as 51%. Also, 96% of respondents are dominated by employees in staff positions, and the rest are leaders.

Table 1. Respondent profile

Respondent Profile	Frequency	Percentage
I. Gender		
Male	47	42%
Women	65	58%
II. Age		
< 26 years	55	34%
26 - 40 years	74	51%
41 - 56 years	26	15%
III. Position		
Staff	107	96%
Leader	5	4%

This research was conducted in Indonesia, therefore the research instrument was translated through the back-translation process (Brislin, 1986). All measurement indicators for each variable used in this research have high measurement validity. The total questionnaire items used were 29 questions.

Work from Home

Measurement of working from home variables in this research adopted a measurement instrument from Audrone Nakrošiene, Ilona Buciuniene, Bernadeta (Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Respondents gave each statement item answers using a scale consisting of 5-point scales (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire consisted

of 12 question items such as: (1) "I feel the time planning while working from home is quite difficult.," (2) "I was given the trust of my boss to work from home." and (3) " I found difficult to find access to company documents from home".

Online Training

The measurement of online training variables in this research, adapted the measurement instruments from Permatasari and Hardiyan (2018). Respondents provide answers for each statement item using a scale consisting of 5-point scales (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire consists of 10 question items such as (1) "The media used for online training (for example Zoom) is easy to use," (2) "Online training media is packaged attractively and attracts my interest in learning," and (3) "The online training materials are arranged in good order, packaged in short, compact modules for learning flexibility."

Employee Performance

The measurement of performance variables in this study adapted the measurement instrument (Arifin & Milla, 2020). Respondents provide answers for each statement item using a scale consisting of 5-point scales (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire consists of 7 question items such as: (1) "I start working on time according to working hours," (2) "I always monitor information that comes from colleagues and leaders," and (3) "I am responsible and remain discipline in carrying out work while working from home".

Results and Discussion

This study's main objective is to test the effectiveness of working from home and implementing online training in supporting employee performance during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the first step, the researcher described the answers from 112 respondents for

each of the variables studied. Researchers use the mean value for each statement item and compare it with the mean value for each variable to show the respondents' high/low perceptions.

After getting the mean value, the next step is to classify each average value according to the criteria presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Interval class classification

No.	Score	Criteria
1.	1.00 – 1.81	Very Low
2.	1.81 – 2.61	Low
3.	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
4.	3.41 – 4.20	High
5.	4.21 – 5.00	Very High

As presented in Table 3, the mean value for the variable of working from home according to respondents' perceptions is 3.28 (scale 1-5). Based on the criteria, this score is in the moderate category. This may indicate that respondents are hesitant to assess the effectiveness of working from home throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. There are five items of respondents' statements that have an average value below the overall average value, that (a) the respondent does not see any benefit from working from home, (b) the respondent feels that career opportunities are reduced by working from home, (c) the respondent does not can plan time while working from home, (d) the respondent does not develop so professionally when working from home, and (e) respondents had difficulty finding access to documents. There are positive things that respondents feel when working from home because it can save travel costs and have more time with family when working from home. This study only assesses at one point in time, so it is not sufficient longitudinally to reveal whether there has been a decrease or increase in respondents 'perceptions or the consistency of respondents' answers to this change in work patterns.

Table 3. Survey of work from home effectiveness results

No.	Statement	Frequency/Score						Total Score	Mean	Criteria
		SA	A	N	D	SD	NS			
1.	I feel the time planning while working from home is quite difficult.	9	18	43	21	17	4	305	2.72	Moderate
2.	I spend less time communicating with work partner when working from home.	23	42	25	15	7	0	395	3.53	High
3.	I was given the trust of my boss to work from home.	39	37	23	7	6	0	432	3.86	High
4.	I can save on travel costs	72	23	12	4	1	0	497	4.44	Very High
5.	I have more time with my family than when I work from home.	67	28	12	4	1	0	492	4.39	Very High
6.	I found difficult to find access to company documents from home.	16	18	37	19	19	3	320	2.86	Moderate
7.	I do not get enough supervision from my boss when working from home.	21	31	33	19	7	1	373	3.33	Moderate
8.	I can productively work while working from home.	19	36	30	16	11	0	372	3.32	Moderate
9.	I have been satisfied with the occasion to work from home.	27	38	29	14	4	0	406	3.63	High
10.	I do not see any benefit from working from home.	6	10	36	24	24	12	250	2.23	Low
11.	I feel like my career opportunities are reduced by working from home.	6	12	38	28	18	10	266	2.38	Moderate
12.	I do not progress so professionally while working from home.	4	28	37	22	17	4	304	2.71	Moderate
Work From Home Average									3.28	Moderate

Source: Results of Questionnaire Data Processing

S.A.: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree, NS: Not Sure

Calculating the average value for the online training variable (Table 4) shows an average overall score of 3.78 and is in the high category. One statement item has the highest average score, namely the ease of access to online training (for example, by using Zoom) by all staff that can be done at any time and does not interfere with

working hours. The three items with the lowest score in a row are assessing training ability online can provide practical training activities, improve good work skills for employees, and build a good learning culture in organizations in work units.

Table 4. Survey on the effectiveness of online training from home

No.	Statement	Frequency/Score						Total Score	Mean	Criteria
		SA	A	N	D	SD	NS			
1	The media used for online training (e.g., Zoom) is easy to use.	44	44	16	8	0	0	460	4.11	High
2	Online training media are packaged	26	38	32	14	2	0	408	3.64	High

	interestingly and interest me to learn.										
3	The online training materials are arranged in good order, packaged in short compact modules for learning flexibility.	28	40	31	13	0	0	419	3.74	High	
4	Online training (e.g., Zoom) provides practical training activities.	20	39	33	14	6	0	389	3.47	High	
5	Online training comes with no transportation costs.	53	32	15	12	0	0	462	4.13	High	
6	The material presented in an accurate system is useful for the smooth running of work in my work unit.	28	38	35	11	0	0	419	3.74	High	
7	Online training (e.g., Zoom) can be easily accessed by all staff at any time to not interfere with working hours.	44	41	26	10	1	0	483	4.31	Very High	
8	The material in online training varies and is always updated according to employees' knowledge needs.	26	40	33	10	3	0	412	3.68	High	
9	Online training builds a good learning culture in the organization in my unit of work.	23	30	45	12	2	0	396	3.54	High	
10	Online training promotes good employability for employees.	20	35	37	19	1	0	390	3.48	High	
Online Training Average									3.78	High	

Source: Results of Questionnaire Data Processing

S.A.: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree, NS: Not Sure

Finally, the overall average for the employee performance variable is 4.01 (Table 5). This score is in the high category. Two statement items have the highest score in that the respondent (a) sends back work online that is ordered by the leader or coworker on time and (b) participates in online meeting activities in a disciplined and timely

manner. These two statement items indicate that the respondent still strives to be disciplined in carrying out work with the existence of rules of adherence to the working time. However, the statement item that they start working on time according to working hours has the lowest average score than other statement items.

Table 5. Survey of results regarding employee performance

No.	Statement	Frequency/Score						Total Score	Mean	Criteria
		SA	A	N	D	SD	NS			
1	I start working on time according to working hours.	34	26	29	21	2	0	405	3.62	High
2	I always monitor information that comes from colleagues and bosses.	38	44	24	6	0	0	450	4.02	High
3	I am responsible and remain disciplined in carrying out work while working from home.	46	39	18	9	0	0	458	4.09	High
4	I resubmit jobs online as ordered by my boss or coworkers on time.	48	38	24	6	0	0	476	4.25	Very High
	I make reports or worksheets, covering any work that has been done during the day.									

5	I make reports or worksheets, covering any work that has been done during the day.	38	45	24	6	0	0	454	4.05	High
6	I attend online meetings with discipline and on time.	51	35	24	6	0	0	479	4.28	Very High
7	I finished work on time according to working hours.	44	30	24	6	0	0	424	3.79	High
Employee Performance Average									4.01	High

Source: Results of Questionnaire Data Processing

S.A.: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree, NS: Not Sure

In addition to measuring the three groups of variables, the researcher added questions about choosing to keep working from home or returning to the office for the long term. The results indicated that 29, 46% of respondents chose to continue working from home, and the remaining 70.54% returned to work from the office. This result is impressive for further investigation into employee preferences amid issues such as work-life balance, job stress, or employee mental health.

Furthermore, the results of hypothesis testing show that working from home throughout the Covid-19 pandemic was not supported to have a significant positive effect in supporting employee performance. Tashandra (2020) states that when working from home, some people become lonely and this has an impact on aspects of their health. These results should be concluded with great care. Chung et al. (2000) state that the shift to work from home cannot clearly be explained whether it can apply in all sectors of work, whereas this research does not explicitly categorize.

Finally, the second hypothesis is that online training has a significant positive effect in supporting supported employees' performance. Kshirsagar et al. (2020) from McKinsey & Company stated that managers (in this case, top management) could not press the pause button in capability building, so virtual learning in the middle of Covid-19 is the right time. Organizations must explore appropriate e-learning techniques so that they can spur better training effectiveness.

Conclusion

This research shows the positive role of online training carried out as organizational adaptation during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, this research does not show a significant positive effect when employees work from home. On the other hand, in the long term, most respondents want to return to work from the office rather than from home. These results need to be understood with caution given the limitations of both the generalizability of the results and ability to be replicated first, the inadequate sample size due to the limited research time that the researcher has. Second, the study only took data in a cross-sectional manner, so that it was not able to conclude the causality between variables. Longitudinal research designs are needed to test the consistency of results, including experimental study designs. Third, the geographical distribution is limited. Further, researchers can use control variables such as age, ethnic origin, employment sector, and education level to see differences in perceptions based on demographic diversity of changes in work patterns when the Covid-19 pandemic occurs. The study of the adaptation of work patterns is important and exciting to do in a situation full of uncertainty for the benefit of future organizational designs.

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