



Employee work stress based on gender differences during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract – This study aims to see employee work stress reviewed from gender differences during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This research involved employees at PT. Saka Mitra Sejati Medan. The results showed that there was a difference in work stress between male and female employees. The statistical calculations of empirical mean scores showed that subjects of the male gender had a lower average empirical mean score of 29.67, while the average empirical mean value of female subjects was 30.47. Thus, during the Pandemic, female employees had higher levels of work stress compared to male employees.

Keyword:

COVID-19; employee; gender; work stress

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INTRODUCTION

According to the data, the work stress of employees in Indonesia was 73% (CFO Innovation, 2016), a relatively high number in terms of psychological conditions that occur in Indonesian society. Work stress can arise in employees depending on how the employee responds. If the employee feels less able to carry out a task, it will cause work stress. The pressure gained from work will be answered differently by each individual. Some employees will work better under pressure. But some employees feel pressure will make it difficult for them. If the work stress is high on the employee, then the company's performance and employees become not sound.

In the current situation of the COVID-19 Pandemic, when people are not allowed to be in crowded places and always keep a distance from each other, it presents challenges for the company in handling its employees. This has an impact on the world of work in three main dimensions, namely the number of jobs, the quality of work (e.g. wages and access to social protection), and the effect on certain groups that are more vulnerable to labour market losses (International Labor Organization, 2020a). The COVID-19 Pandemic dealt a devastating blow and impacted all sectors of the world economy, particularly in Indonesia. Therefore, companies need to maintain mental health for employees.

Providing 24-hour service to customers will require employees to work more extra, especially for employees who work on night shifts, must be maintained to provide good service to employees. Some employees have a considerable task for employees who work regular hours, making employees work longer in the office.

The phenomenon that occurred during the COVID-19 Pandemic also has an impact on employees. Lack of revenue, impacting the company's revenue. Termination of contracts to employees is also carried out gradually. Employees who continue to work get the same salary as before because of the cut in working days. It happens because, during this Pandemic, almost all tourism sectors get the adverse impact of the COVID-19 outbreak (International Labor Organization, 2020b). As a result of the lack of visitors, employees also do not get incentives or bonus money.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, all necessities are limited and have high prices and employees who are now more at home. Plus, if employees have family members who do activities at home only, causing increased electricity bills reduced wages provide difficulties for employees.

This phenomenon certainly impacted the individual's psychological condition, such as the appearance of work stress experienced by employees who work. The pressure of the work that arises would undoubtedly have a different effect when viewed from the gender differences between men and women. As revealed by the Liputan6.com news page released that American Psychological Association research data says, nearly half of all women surveyed faced increased stress levels over the past five years. This is because women often complain about their economic condition and get greater physical and emotional impairments (Rahayu, 2017).

Similarly, Widiastara (2012) research conducted a significant difference in work stress between male and female nurses, where female nurses experience higher levels of stress than male nurses. The mean of work stress showed the difference in female nurses of 65.19 while the mean of work stress in male nurses was 57.03.

Gender refers to the psychological, cultural, and social differences associated with men and women, in contrast to sex, emphasizing the differentiation between men and women based on their biological nature (Lindsey, 2011). Gender is the psychological, social and cultural dimension of the existence of men and women, while gender roles are a set of expectations that determine how men and women should behave, think, and feel (Santrock, 2007). Hurlock (2013) calls gender roles an approved pattern of behavior accepted by social groups for both men and women. So it can be concluded that gender roles are a set of role behaviors that must be implemented by men and women that have been created and determined by society.

With the difference in gender roles between men and women, it can be said that this raises the issue where men and women have different role demands due to the prevailing gender stereotypes. Matlin (2004) explains that gender stereotypes referring to the thinking of social groups and is a broad category of beliefs about the characteristics or traits of men and women in which these two genders want to gain recognition and acknowledge differences between each other. Masculine stereotypes in men are perceived as mighty, rigid, powerful, dominant, athletic, assertive, independent, have leadership abilities, complex, rational, confident, face risk, aggression. While the feminine stereotype is easy to give up, meek, patient, compassionate, sensitive, passive, relentless, chatty, full of warmth (Handayani & Novianto, (2004).

Masculine and feminine stereotypes reflect the way we perceive ourselves, regardless of a particular social situation, and being a part of us that leads to certain expectations, behaviors and attitudes (Kazmierczak, 2010). In other words, masculine or feminine stereotypes in a person will have consequences on oneself. One will adhere to the values of masculine and feminine gender roles, thus causing gender role stress.

Mangkunegara (2005) stated that work stress is a feeling of stress or stress experienced by employees in the face of work. This work stress can cause unstable emotions, calm, loneliness, sleeplessness, excessive smoking, indigestion, anxiety, tension, nervousness, increased blood pressure and indigestion.

Suwardiana & Wibawa (2014), in their research, define work stress as a condition of employees who experience pressure in work both from the task, leadership and work environment in which the employee works. While according to Anoraga (2001), work stress is a form of one's response, both physical and mental, to a change in his environment that is felt to be disruptive and results in being threatened. Furthermore, work stress responds from the outside environment that the individual considers excessive because it is beyond its capabilities (Luthans, 2011., Gibson et al., 2012., Fahmi, 2013). According to Velmapy and Aravinthan (2013) that work stress are an emotional pattern of cognitive behavior and psychological reactions to adverse and harmful aspects of any work, work organization, and work environment.

The response from Alves (2005) stated that work stress could be interpreted as a physical and emotional response that occurs when the abilities and resources of employees cannot be overcome by the demands and needs of their work. According to Vigoda (2002), work stress is defined as the presence of self-turmoil, whether it is physical or not, arising from the burden of work.

According to Robbins & Judge (2008), stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity of constraint or demand associated with what he or she wants,

and the results are perceived as uncertain and essential. This will result in the emergence of different work stresses between male and female employees.

Research conducted by Rahmawati (2009) on the difference in employee work stress levels at PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Tbk Bogor Branch based on the characteristics of these employees was analyzed using Independent Sample t-test and ANOVA test. Employee work stress levels based on gender differences were scored in men at 2.43 and in women at 2.23. Although slight differences still show the differences between genders. Then, research conducted by Simorangkir (2016) In this study, the percentage of stress in female students was slightly higher at 48.5% compared to male students by 34.1%. Similarly, Amsar (2018) research showed a difference in work stress between male and female employees. Data showed that male employees' employment was 104.30 and female employee work stress was 110.14. Thus female employee work stress was higher than male employee work stress.

Therefore, based on the above explanation, researchers want to research more about the differences in employee work stress in reviewing gender differences during the COVID-19 Pandemic in employees.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method to be used is a quantitative approach, with a correlational approach. Quantitative research is an approach to test an objective theory with the testing of relationships between variables. Instruments can measure these variables so that data in the form of numbers can be analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2014). Correlational research aims to understand the relationship between variables (Kaufman & Kaufman, 2005).

The population in this study was employees of PT. Saka Mitra Sejati during the COVID-19 pandemic as many as 78 people. Then the sample and sampling techniques in this study is total sampling, i.e. the entire population is used as a research sample; because the population is less than 100 people, then the sample was 78 people.

The method used in the study is scale, where the scale contains questions or written statements that can measure both personalities, psychological and affective aspects (Manullang & Pakpahan, 2014). The scale of work stress is based on the indicators of work stress put forward by Robbins (2006), namely, the demands of tasks, demands of roles, interpersonal needs, organizational structure, and leadership. The work stress scale is prepared with a Likert scale model consisting of statements in a favorable and unfavourable form, using modifications to alternative responses into four levels, namely, "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree". The assessment given for favorable answers, i.e., "strongly agree" is 1, "agree" is 2, "disagree" is 3, and "strongly disagree" is 4. As for unfavourable items, the response is given the opposite value of the favourable item. To measure the validity of an instrument can be done with Product Moment correlation (Manullang & Pakpahan, 2014). While conducting reliability testing can be done using the formula Cronbach Alpha (Arikunto, 2002).

RESULT

Based on the scale of work stress filled by the subject, hypothetical means and standard deviations are obtained as below:

Table 1 Hypothetical Statistical Score

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work stress	22.00	39.00	30.00	4.5812

The hypothetical mean of work stress variables is obtained from tabulating work stress score data consisting of 15 valid items. The lowest score of each item is 1, and the highest score is 4. Based on the number of items for the scale, it can be known that the minimum total answer score is 22, and the maximum answer score is 39. The hypothetical mean of variable work stress is 30. And the hypothetical standard deviation is 4.58.

Researchers then use the summary of the data to categorize work stress on PT employees. Saka Mitra Sejati Medan in the levels to then be arranged based on the norms that have been determined. By paying attention to the hypothetical mean of 30 and the standard deviation of 4.58, the categorization for occupational stress variables in employees of PT Saka Mitra Sejati Medan with the number and percentage of subjects in it can be seen in the picture below

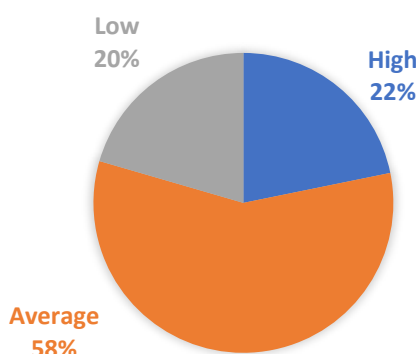


Figure 1 Employee work stress levels during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Then the final results of this study objective can be answered through the score of statistical calculations conducted that show the difference in work stress experienced by male employees has a lower mean value (29.67). While the employees are female (30.47). This can be seen in Table 2 as follows:

Table 2 Empirical statistical score

Gender	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	46	22.00	39.00	29.67	4.667
Female	32	22.00	39.00	30.47	4.486

From the data of statistical calculations of empirical mean scores, it can be known that male subjects have a lower average empirical mean value of 29.67, while when compared to the

average empirical mean value of female subjects is 30.47. Thus, female employees have slightly higher levels of work stress than male employees.

DISCUSSION

Based on the hypothesis test results between men and women in employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic, PT Saka Mitra Sejati Medan employees found a difference in work stress between men and women with data that male employees are lower female employees. This can be seen from Table 2 above that based on the results of statistical test calculations, and it can be known that male employees have a lower mean value (29.67) compared to the mean value of female employees (30.47).

According to Darmono in Purwono (2006), both men and women can experience stress. It is thought that more women than men are experiencing stress. Women who experience anxiety can appear as a side effect of their biological, psychological, and social circumstances and changes.

The results showed that (1) the work stress of male and female employees was reviewed from the physiological aspect of being in the high and very high category, (2) the work stress of male and female employees was reviewed from the psychological aspect of being in the high and high categories, (3) the work stress of male and female employees was reviewed from the social aspect of being in the high and high categories, and (4) there was a significant difference between the work stress of male employees and female students. Furthermore, Anatan and Ellitan (2009) stated that from a gender perspective, women are more prone to stress than men because they have a dual role, especially married ones. On the other hand, women are more likely to have sensitive feelings than men.

CONCLUSION

Then if we look at that, the study results that can be from this study shows a comparison of the difference in the average empirical mean that is not far ie work stress in employees who are male by 29.67 and work stress in employees who are male who are women 30.47. Only a distance of 1.20 can be said that the difference is minimal. However, it can be said that the two still have differences in work stress experienced.

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