

## Flexible Working Arrangement: does Really Give Job Satisfaction Toward Employee?

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**ABSTRACT.** This study aims to examine the impact of Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA) on employee job satisfaction with wellbeing as a mediating variable. Data processing techniques used SMART PLS 3.0, with mediation testing based on Hayes' process. The total number of respondents in this study was 108. The results of the study revealed that FWA does not have a direct influence on employee job satisfaction. However, after the mediation process, FWA does have an impact on job satisfaction through employee wellbeing. Based on this, the practical implication is that companies need to pay attention to the limitations of working hours and workload to ensure that flexible working hours do not make employees feel like they are working endlessly with unlimited time, so that employee wellbeing can be maintained, and job satisfaction can be achieved.

Keyword: Flexible Working Arrangement, Job Satisfaction, Wellbeing

JEL Classification: M54, J28, I31

## INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) has sharply increased over the past decade and has experienced a remarkable surge following the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Shifrin & Michel, 2022). Some earlier studies examining the impacts of flexible work arrangements in general suggest that FWA has a positive influence on employees' work attitudes and non-work attitudes (Choi, 2020). Numerous studies have shown that remote work can increase productivity and employee performance (Allen et al, 2015; Castellani et al, 2013; Golden & Viega, 2005). Flexibility allows employees to work during their most productive hours and in environments where they can focus, leading to better outcomes for both employees and employers. To better understand the results of previous investigations into flexible work arrangements, increasing attention is focused on the fundamental elements of flexible work practices that can be linked to positive employee outcomes.

Flexible working arrangements refer to the various ways in which employees can work and manage their work schedules, work-life balance, and work environment to suit their individual needs and preferences. This can include arrangements such as telecommuting, flexible hours, compressed workweeks, job sharing, and flexible start and end times. The literature on flexible working arrangements is vast and has been extensively studied in the fields of organizational behavior, human resources, and management. Studies have shown that flexible working arrangements can lead to increased productivity, employee satisfaction, and job satisfaction (Hamari et al., 2014; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Flexible working arrangements can help employees achieve a better balance between their work and personal life, leading to improved overall well-being (Golden & Veiga, 2005; Thompson et al., 2012). Offering flexible working arrangements can be a key factor in retaining employees, particularly among women and minorities (Boswell et al., 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2007). Effective communication is crucial for successful implementation of flexible working arrangements. Managers must trust their employees to manage their time effectively and communicate regularly with them (DeFillippi & Arthur, 2011; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

The use of technology can facilitate flexible working arrangements by enabling remote work, virtual meetings, and instant communication (Rainnie et al., 2017; Wiesenfeld et al., 2012). Flexible working arrangements can have a positive impact on employee well-being, including reduced stress, improved mental health, and increased job satisfaction (Hill et al., 2011; Hülshager et al., 2015).

Managers play a critical role in supporting employees with flexible working arrangements. They must provide clear expectations, regular feedback, and opportunities for professional development (Kim et al., 2018; van der Meer & Poutsma, 2014).

Flexible work arrangements tend to be attractive from both the organizational and employee perspectives. Ashoush et al., (2015) argue that organizations value outcomes such as reduced turnover rates, lower absenteeism, increased loyalty and productivity, and more positive work attitudes. Similarly, employees appreciate the balance between work and family demands, reducing work-related stress, and improving the quality of work life. Despite these positive outcomes, access to and the use of FWA can vary significantly within and across organizational and national contexts, as explained later (Bessa and Tomlinson, 2017). The prevalence of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) has sharply increased over the past decade and has experienced a remarkable

surge following the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Shifrin & Michel, 2022). Some earlier studies examining the impacts of flexible work arrangements in general suggest that FWA has a positive influence on employees' work attitudes and non-work attitudes, 64% of employees would be more likely to stay with an organization that offers flexible work arrangements (Choi, 2020). To better understand the results of previous investigations into flexible work arrangements, increasing attention is focused on the fundamental elements of flexible work practices that can be linked to positive employee outcomes. A survey by Buffer (2020) found that 95% of remote workers reported having a better work-life balance, and 85% reported feeling more relaxed and less stressed and a study by Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2020) found that offering flexible work arrangements was a top priority for employees, with 64% of employees reporting that they would be more likely to stay with an organization that offered flexible work arrangements.

### **Wellbeing**

Wellbeing is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects of an individual's life, including their physical, emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Research has shown that wellbeing is essential for overall health and happiness (Diener et al., 2000). A study by the Gallup Organization found that employees who reported having a high sense of wellbeing were more likely to experience better physical health, have higher job satisfaction, and be more productive (Gallup, 2013). Furthermore, a review of 40 studies on wellbeing found that it was positively correlated with mental health, life satisfaction, and social relationships (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

The concept of wellbeing has been linked to various factors, including job satisfaction, work-life balance, and organizational culture. A study by Demerouti and Bakker (2018) found that employees who experienced a better work-life balance reported higher levels of wellbeing. Similarly, a study by Gao et al. (2017) found that employees who worked in organizations with a positive organizational culture reported higher levels of wellbeing.

The literature also suggests that wellbeing is influenced by individual characteristics, such as personality traits and coping styles. A study by Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) found that individuals who were more optimistic were more likely to experience positive emotions and higher levels of wellbeing. Additionally, a study by Kobasa (2012) found that individuals who used problem-focused coping strategies were more likely to experience higher levels of wellbeing.

Wellbeing has also been linked to various demographic factors, such as age and socioeconomic status. A study by Lucas et al. (2003) found that older adults reported higher levels of wellbeing than younger adults. Similarly, a study by Kim et al. (2015) found that individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds reported higher levels of wellbeing.

In conclusion, wellbeing is a complex and multifaceted concept that is influenced by various factors, including job satisfaction, work-life balance, organizational culture, individual characteristics, and demographic factors. Understanding these factors can help individuals and organizations promote wellbeing and improve overall health and happiness.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a crucial aspect of an employee's overall well-being and performance. According to the study by Hackman and Oldham (1976), job satisfaction is influenced by three core

psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When employees feel that their work provides autonomy, they are more likely to be satisfied with their job. Similarly, when employees feel competent in their roles, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction (Amabile & Gitomer, 1984). Finally, when employees feel a sense of connection with their colleagues and supervisor, they are more likely to be satisfied with their job (Baer & Miller, 2000).

Research has consistently shown that flexible work arrangements can contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction. A study by Allen et al. (2015) found that employees who worked from home at least one day a week reported higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those who did not work from home. This may be due to the increased autonomy and flexibility that comes with working from home, which can lead to a better work-life balance and reduced stress (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Furthermore, a study by Golden et al. (2014) found that employees who had flexible schedules reported higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment compared to those who did not have flexible schedules.

In addition to flexibility, other factors such as communication style and work environment can also impact job satisfaction. A study by Allen et al. (2013) found that employees who had positive communication with their supervisor and colleagues reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Furthermore, a study by Probst et al. (2013) found that employees who worked in an environment that was supportive and encouraging reported higher levels of job satisfaction.

Overall, the literature suggests that job satisfaction is influenced by a combination of factors including autonomy, competence, relatedness, flexibility, communication style, and work environment. By understanding these factors, organizations can take steps to increase employee job satisfaction and improve overall performance.

Previous researches have suggested that flexible working arrangements have a positive influence on job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2015; Casper & Harris, 2018; Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). Flexible working arrangements, such as telecommuting, job sharing, and flexible scheduling, provide employees with more control and autonomy over their work schedules, which can lead to increased job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2015; Casper & Harris, 2018). Furthermore, research has shown that flexible working arrangements can lead to lower levels of work-family conflict, improved work-life balance, reduced stress, and increased job performance (Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; Gajendran & Harrison, 2017). These positive outcomes can contribute to job satisfaction and employee retention. Overall, the literature supports the hypothesis that flexible working arrangements have a positive effect on job satisfaction. However, further research is needed to investigate the specific types of flexible working arrangements that are most effective and to identify potential drawbacks or challenges associated with implementing these arrangements in the workplace.

Flexible working arrangements improve employee well-being, as employees have greater control over work hours and can better balance work and personal life responsibilities. Study by the American Psychological Association found that flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible schedules, were associated with lower levels of job stress and burnout (Allen et al., 2015). Survey by the Society for Human Resource Management reported that employers who offered flexible work arrangements had higher employee satisfaction and retention rates (SHRM, 2018). Meta-analysis of 46 studies found that flexible work arrangements were associated with increased job satisfaction and better work-life balance (Gajendran & Harrison,

2007) and a study by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found that flexible work arrangements were associated with lower levels of psychological distress and better mental health outcomes (AIHW, 2019). Overall, the research suggests that flexible work arrangements can positively impact employee well-being by reducing job stress, improving work-life balance, and leading to higher job satisfaction and retention rates.

Previous research has found that individuals who experience high levels of well-being are more likely to experience job satisfaction. A study by (Salleh et al., 2021) demonstrated that well-being was positively linked to job satisfaction among employees in Malaysia. Another study by Greenhaus & Powell (2006) found that individuals who reported high levels of well-being were more likely to experience job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, research has demonstrated that different dimensions of well-being, such as emotional well-being, physical well-being, and social well-being, are all positively related to job satisfaction (Ewen et al. 2021). Finally, studies have shown that interventions aimed at enhancing employee well-being can lead to improved job satisfaction and productivity (Sonnetag, Venz, and Casper, 2017). Overall, the evidence suggests that high levels of well-being have a positive effect on job satisfaction, and that promoting well-being in the workplace can lead to improved job satisfaction and work outcomes.

Furthermore, flexible working arrangements have also been found to have a positive effect on employee well-being (Allen et al., 2015). Thus, it can be hypothesized that well-being acts as a mediator in the relationship between flexible working arrangements and job satisfaction. That is, flexible working arrangements promote employee well-being, which in turn leads to higher levels of job satisfaction. This hypothesis is supported by a study by (Ernst, 2015) who found that flexible work arrangements were positively related to employee well-being, which in turn mediated the effect of the arrangements on job satisfaction. Overall, the literature supports the idea that promoting employee well-being through flexible working arrangements can lead to higher job satisfaction. Future research can explore this relationship further, and investigate the specific aspects of flexible working arrangements and well-being that are most strongly related to job satisfaction.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This research is quantitative research because it involves numerical data, measures objective facts, focuses on variables, and involves statistical analysis. This study used cross-sectional data, which is a sort of data used to record a phenomenon at a certain time (Couper & Schindler, 2017). Online surveys are used in this study to gather data. It makes use of a questionnaire that has been translated into Indonesian and has been verified by prior research. There are 13 item statements in the surveys as a whole. The validity test in this study uses the convergent validity method. Convergent validities used in this research are the use of outer loading and AVE values. Further, reliability tests are continued by reviewing the values of cronbach alpha and composite reliability.

### **Participant**

The sampling technique used in this research is non-probability sampling because researchers do not know accurately the number of existing populations (Cooper & Schindler, 2017). A more specific type of sampling technique uses purposive sampling, namely taking samples by

determining certain criteria that will be selected as samples (Neuman, 2016). The questionnaires were distributed since August-September to worker who applied flexible working arrangement by using on line survey. Respondent in this research are from some province in Indonesia. The selected respondents were characterized by age, sex, education level, and tenure. For that reason, the number of samples will be determined based on the results of the minimum sample calculations. The determination of the minimum sample size for SEM according to Hair et al. (2014) is: (Number of indicators + number of latent variables) x (estimated parameters). Based on the guidelines, the minimum sample size for this study is: Minimum sample = (13 + 3) x 5 = 80 respondents.

**Table 1. Demographic Respondent**

Categories	Total	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	47	43,52%
Female	61	56,48%
<b>Education Level</b>		
Diploma	14	12,96%
Bachelor	86	79,63%
Master	8	7,41%
Doctoral	0	0%
<b>Age</b>		
20-25	19	17,59%
26-29	28	25,93%
30-35	25	23,15%
36-39	13	12,04%
40-45	15	13,89%
>45	8	7,41%
<b>Job Position</b>		
Staff	89	82,41%
Supervisor	10	9,26%
Manager	7	6,48%
Senior Manager	2	1,85%

Source : Data processed, 2023

**Data Analysis**

This research uses the Partial Least Square (PLS) SEM method or variance based SEM. SEM PLS is a causalistic modeling approach that aims to maximize the variance of the criterion (dependent) construct that can be explained by the predictor (independent) construct (Hair et al., 2014). This research uses SEM PLS because it wants to explore existing theories, involving many constructs with many indicators, estimating a one-way (recursive) model. The data processing process in this research uses SEM PLS by testing the instrument using validity tests with discriminant validity (outer loading and AVE) and reliability tests using composite reliability and Cronbach alpha. After instrument testing, it continues with model testing. There are two stages of model testing in SEM PLS, known as two-step structural equation modeling, to estimate the measurement model first,

which is called outer model testing, and then estimate the structural model, which is called inner model testing (Kock, 2018).

Mediation analysis is a statistical method used to evaluate evidence from studies designed to test hypotheses about how some causal antecedent variable X transmits its effect on a consequent variable Y. Mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS, with a mediation hypothesis test performed using bootstrapping techniques. Boot-strapping is a technique recommended by Hayes (2022) to observe the indirect or indirect effects between variables, allowing the production of confidence intervals in the statistical estimate

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

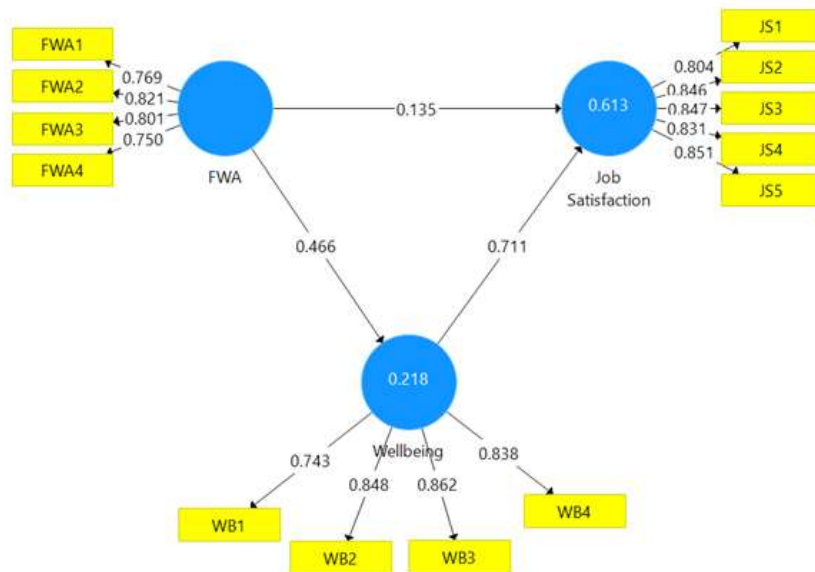
This research process begins by testing the research instrument. Research instrument testing was carried out by conducting validity and reliability tests on the research model. The validity test is used to ensure that the indicators used in the research are able to reflect the research variables. The validity testing process adopting discriminant validity is used in this research by ensuring the AVE (Average variance Extracted) and outer loading values for each research indicator. Meanwhile, the reliability test in this research uses Cronbach alpha and composite reliability as parameters.

**Table 2. Calculation Results**

Variable	AVE	Result	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Result
Flexible Working Arrangement	0.617	Valid	0.866	0.793	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.699	Valid	0.921	0.892	Reliable
Wellbeing	0.679	Valid	0.894	0.843	Reliable

Source : Data processed, 2023

**Figure 1. Relationship Between Variables**



Source : Data processed, 2023

Based on the results of the validity and reliability tests on the research model, it is known that all indicators developed in the research have met the validity and reliability tests. The next process is testing the model developed with SRMR, Chi Square, NFI, d\_Uls, d\_G, and RMS Theta. The following are the results of testing the research model.

**Table 3. Calculation Results**

Model	Saturated	Estimated
SRMR	0.085	0.085
d_Uls	0.661	0.661
d_G	0.384	0.384
NFI	225.052	225.052
RMS Theta	0.745	0.745

Source : Data processed, 2023

The SRMR test results are known to have a value of  $0.061 < 0.08$  so the model is fit. The d\_Uls and d\_G values are 1.506 and 1.266 respectively with a significance value above 0.05 so the results are marginally fit. The NFI value has a value of 0.791 so the results are good fit. Meanwhile the results The RMS Theta value is  $0.162 > 0.102$  so the results are marginal fit. Test the theory using the suggested model. The t-statistic  $> 1.96$  is the result of the parameters in the PLS SEM hypothesis testing to support the hypothesis. In the meantime, the hypothesis is not supported if the t-statistics findings are less than 1.96. In the meantime, the path estimate value shows the effect's size and direction. (Hair et al, 2014).

**Table 4. Hypothesis Results**

Hypothesis	Original	Sample	Standard	T Statistic	P Value
<b>FWA =&gt; Job Satisfaction</b>	0.135	0.134	0.082	1.645	0.101
<b>FWA =&gt; Wellbeing</b>	0.466	0.483	0.072	6.461	0.000
<b>Wellbeing =&gt; Job Satisfaction</b>	0.711	0.716	0.067	10.669	0.000
<b>FWA=&gt;Wellbeing =&gt; Job Satisfaction</b>	0.332	0.346	0.064	5.146	0.000

Source : Data processed, 2023

According to Hypothesis 1, which examines the impact of Flexible working arrangement (FWA) toward job satisfaction had a coefficient of ( $\beta= 0.135, p=0.101$ ) so that hypotheses 1 is not supported. As for hypothesis 2, Flexible working arrangement influences employee wellbeing with values ( $\beta=0.466, p=0.000$ ) so that hypotheses 2 is supported. Hypothesis 3, employee wellbeing influences job satisfaction had a coefficient ( $\beta=0.711, sig=0.000$ ) so hypothesis 3 is supported. Hypothesis 4, which tests the effect of wellbeing as mediating the relationship between flexible working arrangement toward job satisfaction has a coefficient of ( $\beta= 0.332, p=0.000$ ) so that hypotheses 4 is supported.

While FWA is designed to improve work-life balance, it can also lead to negative consequences, such as blurred boundaries between work and personal life, increased stress and pressure to be constantly available, difficulty in disconnecting from work-related tasks, reduced social interaction



and isolation. These factors can negatively impact job satisfaction, leading to decreased employee engagement, motivation, and overall job performance.

On the other hand, FWA can have a positive impact on employee wellbeing by providing greater autonomy and control over work schedule, enabling employees to manage work-life balance more effectively, reducing commuting time and stress, improving work-life integration. Wellbeing is a critical factor that influences job satisfaction. When employees feel their needs are being met and they are able to maintain a healthy work-life balance, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION

In the hypothesis testing process, it is known that one hypothesis is rejected, while the remaining hypotheses are accepted. Based on the results of testing flexible working arrangements on job satisfaction, it is known that the hypothesis is rejected, so FWA has no influence on job satisfaction. FWA in which employees are not required to be physically present in the office to fulfill their responsibilities; instead, they can work from different locations and use technological tools like smartphones, tablets, or laptops for necessary communication (Bellmann & Hübler, 2020). Even though the pandemic was shifting toward becoming endemic, data indicated that 83% of employers had an increasingly positive outlook on and trust in remote work. Approximately 25-30% of employees intended to continue working remotely for one or more days per week following the pandemic (Global Workplace Analytics, 2022). Although literature suggests that FWA offers several benefits both to the employees and the employers such as increasing job satisfaction (Irawanto et al., 2021). Companies that implement flexible work systems do not directly provide satisfaction to their employees. FWA can lead to an increase in technostress, where employees often feel as though they are constantly at work, under continuous surveillance, and may experience feelings of loneliness. They also encounter challenges related to the interference between their work and home life, particularly when they perceive that the demands of their job and family life are in conflict (Wang et al., 2021). Moreover, existing literature has observed that FWA blurs the boundaries that traditionally separate the mental distinctions between the work and home domains, making them more porous (Basile & Alexandra, 2016). As a result, employees frequently find themselves torn between thinking about work and performing work-related tasks, which can hinder their ability to meet their domestic obligations, leading to increased stress and a compromise in their overall well-being (Delanoetje et al., 2019). Simultaneously, work-related tasks may be disrupted by various household demands, which can reduce their work engagement and contribute to stress associated with completing their job responsibilities (Darouei & Pluut, 2021).

Meanwhile, flexible working arrangements have an influence on employee wellbeing. Work processes that free employees to choose work times and work places allow employees to have more autonomy in managing their personal and work lives. The findings indicate that flexible work increases employees' control over working hours and has beneficial effects on depressive symptoms, burnout, fatigue, psychological distress, and emotional exhaustion.

Well-being is a broad concept that refers to individuals' valued experience in which they become more effective in their work and other activities (Huang et al., 2016). According to Diener (2009), well-being as a subjective term, which describes people's happiness, the fulfillment of wishes, satisfaction, abilities and task accomplishments. We have known that they impact life at work and

a plethora of research has examined the impact of employee well-being on work outcomes (Karapinar et al., 2019; Turban and Yan, 2016). Job satisfaction is a person's attitude towards work. Jex (2002) states that employees' beliefs about work situations characterize job satisfaction. For example, employees may believe their jobs are interesting, useful, boring, and rewarding. Job satisfaction is expressed by employees' willingness to always work well, work hard, and remain part of the organization. People who are highly satisfied with their jobs have positive feelings about them, and those who are dissatisfied with their jobs have negative feelings.

In the future research, researcher can add another variable that can relate and relevant to flexible working arrangement. On the other hand, this research can also help company to understand the need and effectiveness for work life balance for their employees.

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