

Does Flexible Working Time Make Start-up Company Workers More Engaged?

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Abstract

Currently, one business model that is particularly prevalent in Indonesia and has an impact on state revenue is start-up. There is one technology start-up in Indonesia that also influences economic development in Indonesia, namely company X. Behind the good performance of technology start-ups, there are roles of workers, culture, and the environment. Start-up X has a culture, namely a flexible work arrangement in which employees can have the freedom to choose when and where to work. This flexibility also has a lot of impact on the way of work and also the daily life of the workers. Flexible work arrangement (FWA) works as resources in a company. The high freedom affects workers' engagement. Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the effect of flexible work arrangements on the work engagement of employees at Start-up Company X. This research was conducted on 102 workers selected with a convenience sampling technique. This study uses a non-experimental research design with a correlational study method. Data collection was carried out using the Flexible Work Arrangement measuring tool adapted from Umi Farida (2020) and the Indonesian Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)-17 questionnaire from Schaufeli (2004). The results of this study indicate that there is a significant effect ($p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.245$) of the flexible work arrangement on the work engagement of employees at start-up company X. It means if there is a change in flexible work arrangement, it will impact the result of the work engagement. Our research adds new insights about the impact of FWA and WE variables on startup companies. Furthermore, when FWA is supported by adequate job resources and balanced with job demands, it can improve employee's WE in startup companies. This study can provide information on future research on FWA and WE variables in start-up companies and with FWA supported by job resources that are balanced with job demand, will increase the WE of start-up company workers.

Keywords: Work Engagement, Start-up, Flexible Work Arrangement

Abstrak

Salah satu tipe perusahaan di Indonesia yang sangat banyak dan juga memengaruhi pendapatan negara adalah start-up. Terdapat salah satu start-up teknologi di Indonesia yang juga berpengaruh terhadap perkembangan ekonomi di Indonesia, yaitu perusahaan X. Di balik performa start-up teknologi yang baik, terdapat peran pekerja, budaya, dan lingkungan yang juga mendukung. Start-up X memiliki salah satu budaya, yaitu flexible work arrangement di mana pekerja dapat memiliki kebebasan untuk memilih kapan dan di mana akan bekerja. Fleksibilitas ini juga berdampak banyak terhadap cara bekerja dan juga keseharian dari para pekerja. Flexible work arrangement (FWA) bekerja sebagai resources atau sumber daya dalam suatu perusahaan. Dengan kebebasan yang tinggi yang dimiliki oleh pekerja, berpengaruh terhadap engagement pekerjanya. Sehingga, tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh flexible work arrangement terhadap *work engagement* pekerja perusahaan start-up X. Penelitian ini dilakukan kepada 102 pekerja dengan teknik convenience sampling. Penelitian ini menggunakan rancangan penelitian non-eksperimental dengan metode studi korelasional. Pengambilan data dilakukan menggunakan alat ukur Flexible Work Arrangement yang diadaptasi dari Umi Farida (2020) dan kuesioner Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)-17 Bahasa Indonesia dari Schaufeli (2004). Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat pengaruh yang signifikan ($p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.245$) dari flexible work arrangement terhadap *work engagement* pekerja perusahaan start-up X. Hal tersebut menyatakan bahwa jika

terdapat perubahan dalam flexible work arrangement, akan mengubah work engagement pula. Penelitian ini dapat memberikan informasi terhadap penelitian selanjutnya mengenai variable FWA dan WE di perusahaan start-up serta dengan FWA yang didukung dengan *job resources* yang seimbang dengan *job demand*, akan meningkatkan WE pekerja perusahaan start-up.

Kata Kunci: Keterlibatan Kerja, Start-up, Pengaturan Waktu Fleksibel



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia shows an increase in economic growth from year to year. According to Kurniawati & Sugiyanto (2021), Indonesia's average economic growth increased from 2.9% in 2000-2005 to 4.05% in 2010-2015. One type of company in Indonesia that is very numerous and also affects state income is start-ups. Start-ups are institutions that create products and services where they move a lot from innovation and use technological breakthroughs (Akkaya, M., 2019; Graham, 2012; Ries, 2011). Indonesian start-ups contribute to the increased of economic growth in Indonesia where 52 start-ups in Indonesia generated revenues worth 1.9 million dollars in September 2020 (Amvesindo Data in Lokasari, 2020). There is one start-up in Indonesia that also affects economic development in Indonesia significantly, namely company X. Company X itself contributes to GDP in Indonesia as much as IDR 249 trillion or 1.6% of Indonesia's GDP in 2020 (Demographic Institute FEB University of Indonesia (UI), 2021).

Company X is also the first unicorn start-up in Indonesia. A start-up unicorn means that the start-up's income reaches one billion dollars or equivalent to 14.4 trillion rupiah (Lee, 2013). In 2022, company X was also named the single most influential company in Indonesia according to TIME magazine (Pearse, 2022). This can happen because of the IPO of 1.26 billion dollars which can provide a value of 29 billion

dollars to the company and can be many times more in 2025 of 360 billion dollars (CNBC Indonesia, 2022).

Behind the good performance of technology start-ups, there is the role of workers and the environment that also supports the performance of a company because the environment will also support the product whether it will fail or succeed (Brikman, 2015; Men et al., 2019). The role of the environment or culture plays an important role and becomes a differentiator in a modern organization (Men et al., 2019). Innovation is also a key culture of technology start-ups that encourage their workers to take risks and also try trial-error (Akkaya, 2020; Graham, 2012; Men et al., 2019; Ries, 2011). In addition, one of the other cultures is to have control for itself, such as what will be done, when to do it, and others (Brikman, 2015). Having control for when, for how long, and where to do a job can be referred to as a Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA).

FWA is the ability of workers to make choices about when to work, the duration of work time, and work location (Byden, 2016; Hill et al., 2008; Kossek et al., 2014). Based on preliminary data taken from 29 employees of company X with different divisions, company X also applies a culture of FWA. Company X workers have the most flexibility in the form of time and place in work. Workers of Company X have flexible time; means they do not have exact working hours nor specified time to arrive or leave the office and also, Flexible place, indicates

that workers can work from anywhere and are not required to go to the office at a certain time.

FWA identified as resources in a company. Flexible work arrangement is included in one type of job resources according to Bakker et al. (2004), namely task. Task in job resources has a meaning where workers have freedom of choice or autonomy. This also affects various parts of the company because with this FWA, workers have more autonomy to manage themselves and their work (Thompson et al., 2014). The role of FWA as a resources affects several aspects of work. One of them is worker attachment which can be seen from the results of increased worker performance (Kelliher & de Menezes, 2019). With the work system in Company X that implements FWA, workers continue to do their duties as much as possible and strive to achieve the targets given. This is shown by if there is a job with high demands, workers usually continue to carry out the task and try their best, even in meetings at night, doing tasks at more than expected.

Some workers also feel that they don't feel long working with Company X, even though it has been for years. Also, never get bored with the work you get because there are new job variations and challenges. With great effort given to the company, workers feel proud of their company's achievements so far because they feel the impact directly by seeing the results of their work. For example, Company X can support the Indonesian economy, reduce unemployment in Indonesia, and help the economy of business partners and others. Most of them also feel happy to be working together with Company X.

The behavior raised by the workers of Company X is work engagement. Engagement is also an aspect that is

influenced by FWA. According to Farida (2020) that stated the existence of FWA resulted in the increase of worker work engagement. Rudolph & Baltes (2017) and Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa (2008) also found similarly, that flexible work arrangements have an influence on employee work engagement. Work engagement is a positive affective-motivational state related to work (Bakker & Leiter, 2010).

This positive affective-motivation state will vary from individual to individual because it is individual according to the level of trait or one's views that will be different from each other (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). Bakker & Leiter (2010) also stated further that work engagement is a motivational concept that reflects the energy and enthusiasm given by workers to their work. This can be seen when workers are given a challenging task, the worker wants to achieve success and show more effort. According to Schaufeli et al. (2002), work engagement is a positive psychological condition characterized by vigor (high energy and resilience when working), dedication (strongly involved in a task, enthusiasm), and absorption (focusing on a certain role and feeling cool about a certain task).

The influence of work engagement is quite large on the work process of workers. Kahn (1990) said that work engagement also produces more positive work results, both at the individual level and at the organizational level. Work engagement was found to be a potential cause of individual performance or influencing employee work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lisbona et al., 2018). The culture of flexible work arrangement at start-up X presents autonomy which then becomes one of the things that can affect work engagement. Company X also embraces a flexible work

culture where it has flexibility in time and location. Worker engagement or work engagement is also supported by the consistent and growing achievements of start-up X where it shows good work engagement (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010). Therefore, this study is intended to see the effect of flexible work arrangement as job resources on the work engagement of Company X employees.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach and looks at the strength of inter-variable relationships in the form of correlation coefficients. This study will review the effect of flexible work arrangements on the work engagement of workers in company X. The population of this study is workers from Company X, Indonesia. Based on data on the Indonesia Stock Exchange, company X in 2022, there are 3750 active full workers in company X and details are not known per department of each department in company X. The sampling method used in this study is convenience sampling, which is a sample selection technique that is not random and adjusted to the needs of researchers (Etikan & Alkassim, 2016).

The selection of convenience sampling types is done because there is no available data on total workers of company X, so the sampling technique is appropriate. Therefore, it was determined based on Roscoe's opinion (Sugiyono, 2009) that the feasible sample size is 30 to 500 participants. Researchers sampled 102 participants for the study. Data collection is carried out online through a Google Form questionnaire. After obtaining the data, testing was carried out through the IBM SPSS Statistics application. It was found that the majority of respondents were in the age range of 19-27 years (59.8%), unmarried

(75.53%), and worked for less than three years (52.94%).

The variables measured are flexible work arrangement and work engagement. The measuring instrument used to measure flexible work arrangements is adapted and modified from the theory of Flexible Work Arrangement, Thompson (2015) and developed in Umi Farida's (2020) research on "The Effect of Flexible Working Arrangements on Work Engagement of Online Motorcycle Taxi Drivers", see Table 1.

The measuring instrument is also further adapted by researchers to adjust to a more appropriate context. The FWA measuring instrument used has 9 items with two dimensions, namely flextime and flexplace. For work engagement variables, using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)-17 measurement tool with the theoretical basis of Schaufeli & Bakker (2004). The UWES used contains 17 Indonesian-language items from Schaufeli (2004) with three dimensions, namely vigor, absorption, and dedication. Both measuring instruments have good reliability and reliability reliability, listed in Table 2.

A simple linear regression test was carried out to see the magnitude of the influence of the two variables, as well as to test the hypothesis of the study. Previously, several classical assumption tests were carried out to ensure that the regression equation obtained was unbiased and accurate in estimation. In this study, all classical assumption tests were fulfilled with normally distributed residual data ($p>.05$), the two variables had a linear relationship ($p<.05$), and there were no symptoms of heteroscedasticity ($p>.05$) so that a simple linear regression test was carried out and an equation was found with the following formula: $Y = a + bX$ (Y = Score

of the dependent variable; $X = \text{Score independent variable}$).

RESULT

The results of the study were obtained from 102 participants who were permanent workers from company X. The majority of respondents in this study were men as many as 61 respondents (59.8%), while women as many as 41 respondents (40.2%). Based on age, the majority of respondents in this study were in the age range of 19-27 years as many as 61 respondents (58.8%), while others were in the age range of 28-41 years as many as 41 respondents (40.2%). The minimum age of participants was 19 years and the maximum was 41 years old. The average participant in the study was 27 years old. The majority of participants in this study were unmarried as many as 75 participants (73.53%) and married as many as 27 participants (26.47%). 80.8% or as many as 84 respondents with the last education S1, followed by 8.7% or nine people with the last education S2, and the rest diploma or high school / equivalent.

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the flexible work arrangement of company X workers. Based on [Table 3](#). It was found that the average statistical test result of flexible work arrangement of Company X workers was at a value of 30.1 with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.04. It can be concluded that the FWA of company X workers falls into the high category, [Table 3](#) shows the results.

A descriptive analysis of the work engagement variable was also carried out and it was found that the average work engagement of company X workers was 4.30 which was included in the medium

category. The minimum value is at 2.53 which is included in the low category and the maximum at number 6 which is in the very high category. Company X workers have a dedication score of 4.62 and fall into the medium category. The other two dimensions of work engagement are also included in the medium category, where the vigour of company X workers is 4.13 and absorption is 4.16. [Table 4](#) shows the statistic results.

To see the effect of flexible work arrangement dimensions on work engagement, several assumption tests were carried out first. The results stated that the variables passed the assumption test using the following assumption tests: the normality test using Kolmogorov Smirnov, the linearity test, and the heteroscedasticity test using Breusch-Pagan. Because it has passed the assumption test, a multiple linear regression analysis test was carried out to determine the effect of flexible work arrangements on work engagement. [Table 4](#) shows that, with a confidence degree of 95%, there is a significant effect between flexitime on the WE of company X workers ($p\text{-value}<0.05$) and there is no significant effect between flexplace on the WE of company X workers ($p\text{-value}>0.05$). Flexitime testing with WE obtained a coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.158. This shows that in this study FWA played a role of 15.8% to WE. Meanwhile, the value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) between flexplace and WE is 0.026 or 2.6%. Therefore, the regression equation obtained is $WE = 1.9188 + 0.0567(\text{flexplace}) + 0.0980(\text{flexitime})$.

Table 1. Variable Measuring Instruments FWA & WE

Items of FWA (Adaptation from Farida, 2020)
<i>I like my job because I can move from place to place.</i>
<i>I do not have the freedom to organise my work duration</i>
Items of UWES-17 (Schaufeli, 2004)
<i>I think my work is full of meaning and purpose</i>
<i>When working, I get carried away with my work</i>

Table 2. Recapitulation of Reliability and Validity of FWA and UWES-17

Variable	r	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Flexible Work Arrangement	0.792	0.962*	0.948*	0.055*
Flexible Place	0.621			
Flexible Time	0.774			
Work Engagement	0.901	0.901	0.896*	0.846*
Vigor	0.749			
Dedication	0.882			
Absorption	0.696			

Note. CFI \geq 0.80, TLI \geq 0.80, SRMR $<$ 0.08.

Table 3. Statistical Test Results Flexible Work Arrangement

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Flexible Work Arrangement	30.1	4.04	18	36
Flexible Place	13.8	1.91	7	16
Flexible Time	16.4	2.74	8	20

Table 4. Statistical Test Results Work Engagement

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Work Engagement	4.30	0.676	2.53	6.00
Vigor	4.13	0.718	2.33	6.00
Dedication	4.62	0.837	2.40	6.00
Absorption	4.16	0.718	2.67	6.00

Table 5. Statistical Test Results of Flexible Work Arrangement

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Std. Estimates	R ²
Intercept	1.918	0.46	4.17	<.001	0.49	0.245
Flexplace	0.056	0.03	1.60	0.113	0.16	0.026
Flextime	0.098	0.02	3.97	<.001	0.39	0.158

Table 6. Statistical Test Results Work Engagement & Flexible Work Arrangement

Variable	Statistics			
	M	SD	Min	Max
Flexible Work Arrangement	30.1	4.04	18	36
Flexplace	13.8	1.91	7	16

Flextime	16.4	2.74	8	20
Work				
Engagement	4.30	0.676	2.53	6.00
Vigor	4.13	0.718	2.33	6.00
Dedication	4.62	0.837	2.40	6.00
Absorption	4.16	0.718	2.67	6.00

DISCUSSION

After conducting a simple regression test, it was found that there was a significant effect of flexible work arrangements on the work engagement of start-up company X workers ($p<0.01$; $R^2=0.241$). This can be interpreted that the existence of flexible work arrangements causes employee attachment to their work and the higher the flexible work arrangement, the higher the work engagement. The results of this study are in line with several previous studies which also stated that flexible work arrangements affect work engagement (Farida, 2021; Ng et al., 2006; Richman et al., 2008; Rudolph & Baltes, 2017; Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). Da Costa's (2016) research with start-up companies is also in line with this research, where the culture of flexibility of start-up is also related to the engagement of its workers. Company X workers also felt this was supported by supporting data as many as 89 out of 102 participants felt enthusiastic, enthusiastic, and proud of their work because of the flexibility provided by the company. The extent to which workers have the freedom to regulate when to work and place of work is called flexible work arrangements or FWA (Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008). FWA is one part of the type of job resources. Job resources balance the job demands that exist within the company. Job demands are job characteristics that have the potential to increase pressure if it exceeds the adaptive ability of workers (Bakker et al., 2007). With job resources that play a role in work, it can be a

counterweight to the high job pressure (Hakanen & Roodt, 2017).

This study sees FWA as one of the job resources and FWA that can reduce pressure from job demand and also increase work engagement (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). In the JDR-WE Model of Bakker & Demerouti (2007), flexible work arrangement is one of the job resources in the task section because workers have more autonomy or control between their daily lives and work by applying FWA (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008; Rudolph & Baltes, 2017). Hakanen & Roodt (2017) further explained that job resources increase extrinsic motivation in working because workers have to deal with high job demands. In addition, job resources that satisfy basic human needs can increase the intrinsic motivation of individuals (Van den Broeck et al., 2008). In this study, FWA satisfied basic human needs due to autonomy or feelings of belonging from individuals with their jobs. With the increase in worker motivation, workers are also increasingly attached or engaged with their work.

Multiple regression tests were also conducted to see the effect of both dimensions of flexible work arrangement, namely flextime and flexplace on work engagement. It was found that there is a significant influence between flextime on work engagement and there is an influence between flexplace on work engagement which can be seen in Table 5. FWA has two dimensions, namely flextime and flexplace. Flextime is the freedom of workers to the extent to which they can choose when or

duration of work (Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008). Flextime has a significant impact on work engagement ($p<0.05$, $b=0.0980$). With high flextime company X affects the work engagement owned by the company. The significant effect of flextime on work engagement also means that the higher the flextime, the higher the work engagement.

This finding is in accordance with research by Ugargol and Patrick (2018) and Shah et al. (2020) that flextime can affect work engagement in workers. This happens because workers have more freedom or autonomy and control to regulate when to start work and complete their work with daily life (Haddock et al., 2006). With more freedom and control, workers are better at regulating work rhythms and completing additional work (Haddock et al., 2006). Working based on time and rhythm of personal preference causes workers to feel more saved time and energy as well (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Therefore, it was also found that with flextime, worker stress decreased (Timms et al., 2014; Shah et al., 2020). The positive impact of flextime was also found from the supporting data of this study where company X workers stated that with existing flexibility, workers felt less stressed and increased freedom in managing time, especially with family/friend / etc.

The second dimension of FWA is flexplace. Flexplace is defined as the freedom of workers to determine where to work (Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008). Flexplace influences work engagement ($b=0.0567$; $R^2=0.026$). It was found in the results of the study that the very high flexplace of company X affects the work engagement of company X workers. The influence between flexplace on work engagement means that the greater the flexplace, the greater the work engagement. Research by Gajendran & Harrison (2007) and Brummelhuis et al.

(2012) found that with Flexplace, there is an increase in the efficiency of the work process because it saves time for work commutes. Peters & Van der Lippe (2007) also stated flexplace is associated with reduced worker stress levels. This happens because workers can work while travelling or adjusting to daily life and avoid interrupting informal meetings in the office (Brummelhuis et al., 2012). Company X workers can also customize where they will work and even on the go. Based on preliminary data, most work meetings are conducted through online meetings and scheduled in advance through Google Calendar. So, it adds efficiency to work.

The drawback, with flexplace, is that the boundaries between work and family become more blurred especially when electronic communication becomes increased and without boundaries (Brummelhuis et al., 2012; Hill et al., 1996). None of these restrictions make it difficult for workers to interact with family and for daily life (Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Then, a special workplace is needed when working remotely to increase concentration and also the attachment of workers to their work (Gangai & Rattan, 2021). This is potentially the reason flextime has a greater effect than flexplace because workers need more effort as workers to form a home environment that supports work or create their own workstations. This discovery is also supported by supporting data where working with flexibility feels more tedious and difficult to focus on doing the tasks.

Descriptive statistical tests of flexible work arrangement and worker work engagement were also obtained. Table 3 shows that company X workers have flexible work arrangements in terms of time and also places where company X workers can work from anywhere and anytime (Thompson et al., 2014). The high flexible

work arrangement of company X start-up is also in accordance with research conducted by Akmalia & Adhitama (2022), it is stated that start-up have a tendency to implement flexible work arrangements because flexibility is the main key to defining start-up companies. In this study, the flexplace picture of company X workers was also examined. It was found that company X's flexplace was very high ($M=13.8$). According to Thompson et al. (2015), high flexplace means workers can work anywhere in work, including remotely. Meanwhile, for flextime, it was found that company X had a high flextime ($M=16.4$). High flextime in company X means workers can work at any time and have high freedom to have when to start or finish work in one day, but it must be there within a certain time. This is in accordance with Thompson et al. (2015) that company X implements flextime with core hours where workers can work at any time and remain ready or available within a certain hour range (usually 9 am – 6 pm). Based on the results of work engagement with workers in company X, it was found that company X workers were in the medium work engagement category ($M = 4.30$) and 50.98% of workers had moderate work engagement. It can be interpreted that company X workers have a fairly positive, satisfying, and motivating state between several times a month and once a week (Wan et al., 2018). It was also found that each dimension in work engagement was included in the medium category where dedication was the dimension with the highest value, followed by vigor, then, absorption.

Companies can implement FWA in their companies by looking at existing work arrangements and cultures. For start-up with a fast work tempo, the freedom of individuals to set the tempo of work with

where and when to work, is very helpful for individuals to do their jobs well. Based on the results of the study, balancing between existing resources is also important where workers' work needs are met with existing equipment, development support and environmental support; also with the demands given.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the effect of flexible work arrangement on work engagement for company X workers, it was concluded that there is a significant influence of flexible work arrangement on the work engagement of company X start-up workers. This shows that start-up company X workers have a high ability to choose when and where to work. The work engagement of company X's start-up workers is in the medium category, where each dimension of work engagement, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption is also in the medium category. This means that the workers of start-up company X are quite positive, satisfying, and motivating between several times a month and once a week.

Based on demographics, it was found that departments and length of work have differences with flexible work arrangements. Also, for gender demographics and marital status has no difference with the flexible work arrangement of Start-up Company X workers. Based on demographics for work engagement, it was found that demographic data, gender, marital status, department, and length of work did not have differences with the work engagement of start-up X company workers.

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