



Research Article

Literature Study on The Development of a Work-Life Balance for State Civil Apparatuses (ASN) Following the Pandemic in Indonesia

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Abstract.

The aim of this research was to formulate a development model of work-life balance for Indonesian ASN after the pandemic. Work-life balance for ASN is important since it will increase work satisfaction which will, in turn, increase their performance. Thus, both the government and state civil apparatuses (ASN) will acquire big benefits. The literature study was conducted by reviewing several journals. This research found that there are domains to determine the work-life balance for ASN. First, the government domain which contains policies that may support the realization of ASN's work-life balance. Second, ASN's individual domain, which contains ASN's individual characteristics. Third, the ASN's family domain which contains family characteristics. This study provides additional knowledge of work-life balance in the public sector in the post-pandemic context.

Keywords: post-pandemic, state civil apparatus, work life balance

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1. Introduction

Work life balance, or the balance between time for working at workplace and time for enjoying life for employees, is one of the functions to fulfill in human resource management [1]. The concerned functions are retention and welfare functions. In fact, work life balance cannot be completely enjoyed by employees, especially in developing countries. Work life balance is enjoyed more by employees in developed countries. According to the results of survey conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2022, 10 countries had successfully applied work life balance, including (1) Italy; (2) Denmark; (3) Norway; (4) Spain; (5) the Netherlands; (6) France; (7) Sweden; (8) German; (9) Russia; and (10) Belgium. In developing countries, meanwhile, work life balance has not served as an important function in human resource

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management, including Indonesia. However, there are many studies on work life balance in developing countries. Dolai [2] confirms that work life balance it not only an issue for the West, India with its developing economy must also deal with this issue, and so does Nigeria [3]. The practice of work life balance gets more attention in some parts of Asia-Pacific such as in China [4], Australia [5], New Zealand [6] and Japan [7]. Therefore, accurate measurement will be quite beneficial to help evaluate the effectiveness of work life balance program for human resource management practitioners and researchers.

According to the 2021 Sakernas by the Statistics Indonesia, there were 80,434,950 15-year-old and up people working for 35-44 hours weekly out of totally 131,050,523 working population. This means that most of Indonesian workers work over 8 hours per day. This exceeds the working hours determined by Law Number 13 of 2003 on Manpower, that is 7 working hours within 1 day or 40 working hours within 1 week for 6 work days and 8 working hours within 1 day or 40 working hours within 1 week for 5 work days. The same also applies to State Civil Apparatus (ASN), as set forth in Circular of Minister of Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucracy Reform Number 16 of 2022 on the Obligation to Comply with Working Hours Provisions for State Civil Apparatus (ASN), in which working hours for ASN is 37.5 hours per week.

It is then reasonable to expect of the condition above, so that workers including ASN have not had work life balance. Work life balance is very important for ASN individually and for organization (government institution). From individual perspective, it can lead to satisfaction and in return have their performance enhanced [2,8–11]. For individual, work life balance is also a challenge in the balance of job responsibility and family responsibility, thus employees will have their professional and personal lives matched better [8,12–16]. From organizational perspective, it is also a challenge in realizing high performing organization through productivity, quality service, and on the other hand it can reduce employee absence level and enhance job satisfaction [9,17–20].

In current highly competitive condition, the demand for service excellence, advanced information technology, information load, and the need for fast response are unavoidable for public organization, including the existence of COVID-19 pandemic, thus ASN have big workload that they are required to complete even exceeding effective working hours. Consequently, ASN often feel imbalance between job role and non-job role. This condition leads to dysfunction and is detrimental both to individual and organization. Such a focus leads to sense of exclusion, injustice and stress. This may eventually cause public organization's declining productivity and performance [3,21–23]. This occurs with workers in China in the last two decades who have longer working-hours and bigger stress, leading to work life conflict [24].



The issues above illustrate the importance of work life balance for Indonesian ASN. ASN's work life balance is one of the important factors that we need to pay attention to [25]. During COVID-19 pandemic, there was a work from home and work from office policy for Indonesian ASN. Some research results show that this policy may increase ASN's work life balance [26–28]. After COVID-19 pandemic, Indonesian ASN started to work from office again every day with strict scheduling, since presence at the office is one of the indicators of performance assessment which will affect compensation acquisition. From this condition, it is quite urgent to formulate a development model of work life balance for Indonesian ASN. Therefore, the problem in this study is how is the development model of work life balance for Indonesian ASN?

2. Method

This study used a literature study method by reviewing 43 relevant journals for research purpose. The results of journal reviewing were used to identify the indicators of development of work life balance and potential application in the context of State Civil Apparatus (ASN).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Concept of Work Life Balance

Work life balance is the balance between work, family and individual responsibility, in which each individual performs their obligation by fulfilling personal role (family, public activity, voluntary work, personal development, leisure time and recreation) and job role. Work life balance shows high satisfaction level in both job life and personal life and declining job and non-job disturbance [14,29,30]. Work life balance is an extensive concept that it is related to appropriate prioritization between work (career), on one hand, and life (happiness, recreation, family, and spiritual development, playing, love), on the other hand [31–34]. Work life balance also refers to the effort to create a healthy and supporting work environment, which allows employees to have balance between work and personal responsibility, so as to enhance employee's performance [14,35,36]. Psychologists give the concept of work life balance as a condition in which employee's career demand should not exceeds individual's ability of enjoying personal life beyond work environment [37].

Work life balance is very important for organization since it serves to determine employee's motivation so that they will stay committed to working [38–40]. This function is very important in human resource management since it is one of the variables influencing employee's productivity, having employees avoided stress, complaint, and various psychological symptoms [2,41]. Through work life balance, employees are able to hold down work family conflict and, conversely, enhance work family facilitation or work family enrichment, thus in other words work life balance greatly influences employees' work continuity [41,42] confirm that work life balance is very important for both organization and employee individually since it has big benefits as described below:



Figure 1: Work life balance influences organizational productivity and change.



Figure 2: Work life balance influences employees' work continuity.

Hudson [43] states that work life balance has three components of components as follows: (1) time balance, concerning the amount of time given to work and non-job role; (2) involvement balance, concerning involvement of psychological level or commitment to work and non-job; (3) satisfaction balance, concerning job and non-job satisfaction level. Work life balance covers a number of aspects: (1) how long a person works; (2) when a person works; (3) where a person works [44]. Meanwhile, Fisher et al. [45] identify the following aspects of work life balance: (1) time, that is the comparison between time spent for work and time spent for other activity; (2) behavior, that is comparison between employee's behavior in working and their behavior in other life aspect; (3) tension, that is tension experienced by employee in working and in other life aspect which may cause conflict of role in employee's mind; (4) energy, that is comparison between energy used by them to finish their work and energy used in other life aspect. Some studies find some components the form work life balance, including ambition, leadership, religiosity, family, work design, and time management [42,43]. These components can be described as follows [46,47]:



Figure 3: Components of work life balance.

There are four indicators to measure work life balance: (1) Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), that is dimension referring to what extent work disturbs employee's personal life; (2) Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW), that is dimension referring to what extent employee's personal life influences their career/work life; (3) Personal Life Enhancement of Work (PLEW), that is dimension referring to what extent employee's personal life enhance their performance in serving their work duties; and (4) Work



Enhancement of Personal Life (WEPL), that is dimension referring to what extent work implemented by employee enhance their personal life quality [45].

3.2. Strategy to Develop Work Life Balance

The most standing strategy related to work life balance development is flexible work arrangement [1,48–50]. This strategy allows employee to design a work arrangement as per both parties' interest in consideration of effective organizational outcome without violating employee's personal life lines [51,52] state that flexible work arrangement has some dimensions: (1) time flexibility, referring to how flexible employee modifies work duration; (2) timing flexibility, referring to how flexible employee chooses work schedule; and place flexibility, referring to how flexible employee chooses work place. This arrangement is reflected in flexible policy variation and working procedure such as part time work, temporary work, work from home, remote work, flexible working hours, compressed working week, annual working hours, and career break [53]. Flexible work arrangement should be followed with sufficient infrastructure and technology. Technology use is very important to reach employees who work remotely so that they will keep in network connected with leader and other coworkers [54,55]. Therefore, digital based system operating skill training for employees is also a primary necessity [54].

Fisher et al. [45] state there are five strategies to establish work life balance: (1) alternating, that is a strategy of arranging alternative activities, for example relaxation among busy activities; (2) outsourcing, that is a strategy of doing some side-jobs while not overlooking obligatory work; (3) bundling, that is a strategy of doing some activities simultaneously, for example, accompanying child learning while doing office duties; (4) tecflexing, that is a strategy of using advanced technology to complete works for more flexible use of time; and (5) simplifying, that is a strategy of reducing some works that are less necessary and based on the needs, economic value, and benefit that employee will obtain.

Factors that are related to work life balance include: (1) organization's support, both formal and informal; (2) family's support, especially spouse's support; (3) personality, that is individual's perception of work life balance; (5) career ladder, in which the higher the position, the harder it is to achieve work life balance; and (6) organizational atmosphere, in which work life balance will be realized more easily if the organization is supportive of employee's family. In addition, some factors are likely to influence work life balance:



(1) characteristics of personality; (2) family's characteristics; (3) job's characteristics; and (3) attitude.

Slightly different from what is stated by Clark [14], with regard to work life balance, each individual is faced with two different domains, work and family/home. In his opinion, there are four factors influencing the relation of the two domains: (1) border, that is the border limiting the two domains consisting of physical border, temporal border, and psychological border; (2) permeability, that is indication of whether external elements of the domain can enter the domain or not. Physical and temporal elements are commonly in the form of interruptive acts, but can also serve as reminder. Psychological elements, meanwhile, are commonly in the form of emotion and negative behaviors brought from work to home environment; (3) flexibility, that is indication whether a domain widens its border in consideration of other domain's demand or not. If an employee has free working hours, their temporal border is very flexible; and (4) blending, referring to the condition where permeability meets flexibility. Thus, it is a process of forming new border where the two domains are no longer exclusive from each other.

3.3. Developing Indonesian State Civil Apparatus's Work Life Balance

Based on the concept, benefits and components of work life balance and development strategy as explained above, we can develop a development model of work life balance for Indonesian ASN after the pandemic. During pandemic, in prevention of COVID-19 transmission, Indonesia applies the Work From Home (WFH) and Work From Office policy for ASN through the Ministry of Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucracy Reform in Circular No. 34 of 2020 on Adjustment of State Civil Apparatus's Working System. Despite the pro and contra against the policy from the community who are concerned about declined quality of public service, but based on some researches this policy can enhance ASN's work life balance, which may enhance ASN's performance instead.

In the post-pandemic era, work life balance is still an important for ASN and public organization. Moreover, the government does not cease initiating the work from anywhere policy. Therefore, there is a need to design a model which may be taken into account in developing work life balance for Indonesian ASN.

Sorted out, there are three big domains that will contribute to realization of Indonesian ASN's work life balance: organization domain, in this case, the government; individual domain, in this case, ASN; and ASN family domain. Government domain contains policies



that drive realization of work life balance. ASN domain contains various individual factors that determine formation of work life balance. ASN family domain covers, meanwhile, the characteristics of family themselves. The concerned policies cover flexible work arrangement policy [1,48–50], development of digital technology based work system allowing ASN to work flexible [45,54,55], career ladder policy, organizational atmosphere policy and ASN management policy especially retention and welfare function, job design and training [45,54]. Individual factors that determine work life balance include personality, attitude, ambition and religiosity [46,47]. ASN family domain, meanwhile, covers family characteristics factors.

The models are described as follows.

The benefit of ASN work life balance is quite big for both the government and ASN individually. It is beneficial for the government in reducing employee absence and late presence, improving productivity, enhancing organizational image, improving employee's loyalty and commitment, increasing retention of valuable, and reducing staff turnover rate. For ASN individual, meanwhile, it is beneficial for increasing job satisfaction, increasing job security, increasing control over work life environment, reducing stress rate, and increasing physical and mental health quality. therefore, there is a need to develop ASN's work life balance through government policies in the form of flexible work arrangement, digital based work system development, career ladder for ASN of each position level to have better work life balance, enhance to higher career ladder, work life balance gets more difficult to realize, supportive organizational atmosphere for ASN family policy, ASN management policy especially in training, retention and welfare functions, and policy on work design which supports flexible work. Moreover, it should be supported with ASN individual's character including personality full of passion, positive and lovely emotion, full of integrity and togetherness, big ambition for better performance, and religiosity in which ASN believe in God who will help them complete their job duties and other duties. Lastly, family support is needed, with open characteristics, allowing them to work as ASN.

4. Conclusion

Work life balance for ASN is very important that it will enhance job satisfaction that will in turn enhance their performance, thus big benefits will be gained by both the government and ASN individually. Therefore, there is a need to develop a development model of work life balance for ASN. There are three domains that determine work life balance for ASN: First, government domain containing policies which may support

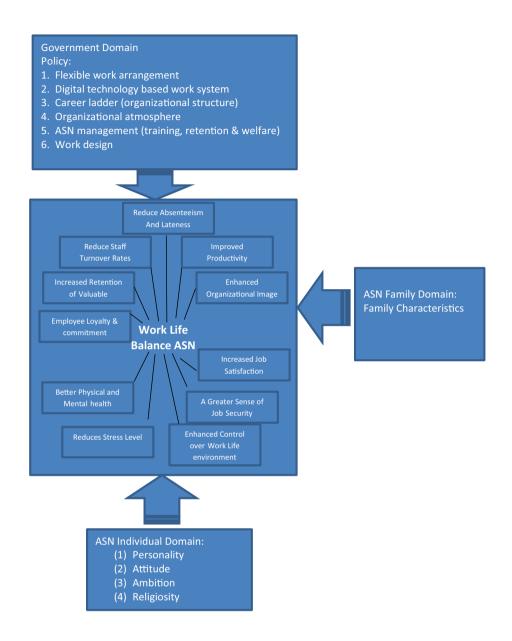


Figure 4: A model of work life balance of ASN.

realization of ASN's work life balance; Second, ASN individual domain containing ASN' individual characteristics; Third, ASN's family domain containing family characteristics.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.



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