

Kismono, Gugup; Paramita, Widya; Lintang, Gabriela B.

Article

Can acceptance promote life satisfaction during a work from home regime? The mediating role of work-life balance and job stress

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*Corresponding author: Gugup Kismono, Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Gadjah Mada University, Sosio Humaniora Street Sleman, Sleman, Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia
E-mail: gugup_kismono@ugm.ac.id

Reviewing editor:
Joseph Amankwah-Amoah, Kent Business School, University of Kent, UK

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MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Can acceptance promote life satisfaction during a work from home regime? The mediating role of work-life balance and job stress

Gugup Kismono^{1*}, Widya Paramita¹ and Gabriela B. Lintang²

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has come to an end, so organizations need to make decisions about whether to maintain the work-from-home (WFH) practice or to go back to pre-pandemic working arrangements. Statistics showed that although 56% of the employers continue to adopt WFH the rest of it called back the employees back to the office in 2023. Moreover, the literature on the benefits of WFH has produced mixed findings, and so this study evaluates the impact of employees' psychological acceptance on the life satisfaction of employees who practiced WFH due to the pandemic. A survey was administered to employees in Indonesia who worked from home and 406 valid and completed responses were returned to be analysed using Smart-PLS statistical software. This study contributes theoretically by highlighting the role of context in predicting the influence of acceptance on life satisfaction. In the WFH context, acceptance is neither directly related to life satisfaction, nor promote life satisfaction by reducing job stress. However, acceptance represents a psychological resource that helps employees to improve work-life balance (WLB), as balancing WLB is one of the most relevant issues during the WFH arrangement. Several managerial implications are elaborated, mainly to ensure employees gain a mindset of acceptance through recruitment and training.

Subjects: Employment Relations; Human Resource Development; Public & Nonprofit Management

Keywords: Work-related acceptance; life satisfaction; job stress; work-life balance; work from home; pandemic era

1. Introduction

Happiness can exist only in acceptance. -George Orwell, English writer

The COVID-19 pandemic required people in the workplace to maintain social distance and, to do so, organizations allowed their members to work from home (WFH). WFH refers to a working arrangement where the employees do not need to go to the office to complete tasks; instead, they work at various locations and engage in the necessary communication using technology such as smartphones, tablets, or laptops (Bellmann & Hübler, 2020). Although the pandemic was heading towards an endemic state, statistics showed that 83% of employers had a more positive attitude towards and confidence in WFH and about 25–30% of the employees would continue with WFH

one or more days a week after the pandemic (Global Workplace Analytics, 2022; Waterhouse Cooper, 2021). However, a survey by McKinsey revealed that 19% of older workers and 12–13% of younger workers offered remote work but did not opt for—and many of them feel compelled to engage in—WFH as they preferred to work on site due to limitations in terms of skills, tools, and a conducive home environment for WFH or because they believed that working on-site would be beneficial for them (McKinsey & Company, 2022). In addition, as much as 44% of the employers do not allow WFH practices (Anon, 2022)

Although literature suggests that WFH offers several benefits both to the employees and the employers such as increasing job satisfaction (Irawanto et al., 2021), and employees' motivation and productivity (Galanti et al., 2021) when the employees perceive positive interdependencies between work and family (Wolfram & Gratton, 2014), previous studies also found that WFH is correlated with several negative outcomes. For instance, WFH causes an increase in technostress as they feel like being at work and monitored continuously, feeling loneliness, and experiencing work-home interference (De et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021) when the employees perceive that the demands of work and family are mutually incompatible (Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). Also, literature has documented that WFH causes the boundaries that reflect employees' mental constructions of the borders between work and home domains between work and home domain, more permeable (Basile & Alexandra, 2016). Consequently, employees often experience dilemma as they keep thinking about work and doing work tasks that prevent them from fulfilling the demands of their home life that further compromises their well-being and increases stress (Delanoeije et al., 2019). At the same time, work tasks are also interrupted by various home demands that might lower their work engagement and induce stress related to the completion of their work (Darouei & Pluut, 2021).

The effects of WFH practice are contingent on various contextual factors, especially the presence of facilitating factors, such as perceived emotional support (Kelly et al., 2020), social support and job autonomy (Wang et al., 2021), and supportive organizational culture (Sok et al., 2014). In conclusion, contextual factors that promote WFH as a flexible working arrangement and a means for an organization to address the employees' need for work-life balance are more likely to have positive outcomes (Sok et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021). On the other hand, WFH produces higher work-family interference and procrastination when it involves more workload and higher intensity of monitoring (Wang et al., 2021).

Although contextual factors represent an important aspect explaining the success of WFH practice, these factors are volatile and may vary depending on the supervisor's as well as the organization's characteristics (Kelly et al., 2020; Sok et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2021). In addition, research has shown this only when the employees possess the cognitive capability to translate these contextual factors into the necessary psychological resources so that WFH could produce positive outcomes (Junjunan, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). For instance, Kelly and colleagues (2020) have found that employees who have stronger prosocial motivation are more likely to contribute the psychological resources that they have acquired from the supportive environment to the organization. Another study by Wang et al. (2021) concludes that contextual factors (e.g., monitoring, emotional support from supervisors, workload, etc.) provide less self-disciplined employees with psychological resources to regulate themselves, while contextual factors are less relevant for self-disciplined individuals. As employees' mindsets represent a more stable and predictive determinant of WFH outcomes (Kelly et al., 2020), this research aims to examine the role of employees' mindsets in the success of WFH practice.

This research builds upon the Conservation Resource Theory (COR) (Hobfoll et al., 2018). COR postulates that individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect their central value by the means of acquiring and conserving the resources needed (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020). Consequently, when key resources are threatened with loss, individuals experience stress (Hobfoll et al., 2018). COR also posits that the resources can be in the form of personal, social, and material

resources created in people, families, and organizations to meet current or expected stressful challenges (Hobfoll et al., 2018). WFH includes negative spillovers that impose threats to work and family, two things centrally valued by the employees (Kelly et al., 2020). Thus, employees need certain resources to eliminate the impact of the negative spillovers of WFH.

Amongst the mindsets of employees, this study aims to examine the role of acceptance in promoting the effectiveness of WFH practice. Conceptually, acceptance refers to an individual's open attitude towards each experience without the need to judge it, push it away, cling to it, or react to it in any way (Simione et al., 2021). Consequently, individuals do not feel or react negatively towards an ongoing unpleasant mental or sensory experience (Goldin et al., 2019; Kowalewska et al., 2020). Acceptance is deemed to be an important factor for individuals as previous studies have found it has the ability to rule out negative contextual factors by attenuating negative beliefs and emotions related to depression (Kowalewska et al., 2020; Nakamura & Orth, 2005). For instance, a study by Simione et al. (2021) reveals that acceptance reduces ill-being or psychological distress symptoms while increasing an individual's well-being. Another study by Nakamura and Orth (2005) shows that—given unchangeable events—acceptance produces positive psychological outcomes. Therefore, acceptance is expected to reduce the negative emotions resulting from unpleasant consequences of WFH practices such as loneliness, higher intensity of work-family conflict, higher pressure resulting from being monitored all the time (De et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Accordingly, understanding whether acceptance represents individual's resource that prevent loss of personal, social, and material aspects due to the negative consequences of WFH is important.

Drawing from previous studies, this study proposes that acceptance will increase life satisfaction—an indicator of subjective well-being—as it promotes work-life balance and reduces job stress during the WFH arrangement (Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). This study aims to examine whether employees' acceptance promotes their life satisfaction, as explained by the reduced job stress and the increased work life balance. Such that, when employees have the psychological capability to accept both positive and negative consequences of WFH practice, they are less likely to feel stressed and are more capable to maintain work life balance by performing cognitive segmentation between work and home (Althammer et al., 2021; Verweij et al., 2018). Consequently, they tend to be more satisfied with their life.

2. Literature review and theoretical development

2.1. The role of acceptance in promoting life satisfaction

WFH may cause stress as it can involve loss of resources due to the home-work conflict or a feeling of being ostracised, isolated, or ignored (Ribenstein et al., 2020; Xia et al., 2019). Previous studies have found that an individual's life satisfaction decreases when they cannot fulfil the need to create a balance between work and family when the work-family conflict occurs (Liu et al., 2019; Yue et al., 2020). Life satisfaction refers to the cognitive evaluation of a person's overall quality of life (Liu et al., 2019). When individuals are satisfied with their lives, they tend to feel more positive emotions and happier than people with low life satisfaction (Liu et al., 2019). Life satisfaction promotes an individual's social life, psychological behaviour, mental and physical health (Erdogan et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2019), as well as job performance, such as increasing in-role performance, work commitment, and innovative work behaviour while reducing job burnout (Hunsaker, 2019; Yue et al., 2020). Therefore, examining factors that can increase life satisfaction within the WFH arrangement is important.

Previous studies found that contextual as well as individual factors influence life satisfaction within the job context (Hunsaker, 2019; Lu et al., 2020). For example, the life satisfaction of the employees increases when an organization's leaders apply spiritual leadership that promotes the extrinsic and intrinsic needs of the organization's members (Hunsaker, 2019). In addition, personality shapes an individual's perception of, and sensitivity to, life environment (Lu et al., 2020; Steel

et al., 2019). Thus, evaluation of life differs across different personalities (Lu et al., 2020; Steel et al., 2019). Personality also promotes life satisfaction by increasing positive emotions; as such, altruistic individuals experience more positive emotions due to a higher sense of social value and self-enhancing psychological needs compared to others who are less altruistic (Lu et al., 2020). A meta-analysis conducted by Steel et al. (2019) reveals that agreeableness increases life satisfaction by promoting cooperation and minimizing conflicts. As contextual aspects vary depending on different situations whereas evaluation of life satisfaction represents a long-term evaluation where individuals integrate their evaluation of various life experiences (Kelly et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020), examining individual factors (i.e., personality) will have more general contribution in various industries. Moreover, personalities are more stable over time regardless of the contextual aspects (Kelly et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020), this research assumes that, for its examination, individual factors are more relevant.

Amongst individual characteristics that can promote positive outcomes of WFH such as psychological detachment and self-leadership (Junjuran, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021), this study focuses on acceptance. Acceptance is considered an important psychological mechanism as it can retain resources during an adverse life event (Bardoel & Drago, 2021; Simone et al., 2021). Acceptance is described as an individual's willingness to accept unpleasant experiences from within and hence, prevent negative reactions due to potential resource loss (Kowalewska et al., 2020). Acceptance represents the psychological capability to treat negative feelings as a normal part of their day-to-day life that do not need to be eliminated or avoided even when these feelings are commonly judged as stressful (Goldin et al., 2019; Moran, 2015). Previous studies demonstrated that individuals vary in their acceptance level (Umucu & Lee, 2020). Employees who have a high level of acceptance tend to have an open attitude towards these negative spillovers (i.e. work-family conflict and feeling isolated) during WFH that otherwise might cause stress (Ribenstein et al., 2020; Xia et al., 2019). Individuals who experience less stress are more satisfied toward their life (Simione et al., 2021). In other words, acceptance promotes life satisfaction by reducing stress during WFH. In conclusion, as employees with a high level of acceptance experience less stress, their life satisfaction increases. Formally, this research hypothesizes that:

H1: There is a positive relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction.

2.2. The mediating role of job stress

Job stress is defined as an individual's awareness or feeling of negative deviation from the normal self-desired functioning because of perceived conditions or happenings in the work setting (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). Job stress occurs when employees' capabilities, resources, needs, and the job requirements are incompatible (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Job stress affects various outcomes such as decreased subjective well-being, reduced job performance, reduced prosocial behaviour, burnout, and turnover intention (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Wong et al., 2021). In addition, previous studies have found that job stress is negatively related to life satisfaction as it reduces employees' perceptions of work-life balance and health quality (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021; Simone et al., 2021).

Previous studies have generally examined workplace conditions that increase job stress, such as overcrowding, excessive noise, and extreme temperature, along with the presence of unethical behaviour (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021). In addition, previous studies focused on examining the effect of organizational interventions on job stress such as the type of leadership (e.g., ethical leadership and toxic leadership), work-life balance initiative, and management commitment to service excellence (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Karatepe et al., 2018; Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021). However, the feeling of stress can be dissipated through cognitive or behavioural efforts; thus, identical workplace conditions and interventions might cause job stress for some

employees but not for others (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Wong et al., 2021). In other words, cognition plays an important role in determining whether employees experience job stress.

According to the conservation resources theory, stress occurs when individuals perceive potential or actual resource loss (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Likewise, job stress might occur when employees are exposed to threatening work conditions and feel that they are unable to fulfil the demands of the job (Choi et al., 2019). However, when individuals perceive that they have the necessary personal resources to prevent or deal with the loss, they are less likely to experience stress (Choi et al., 2019; Karatepe et al., 2018). As WFH also involves negative consequences that might threaten their resources (e.g., incompatible jobs, the demands of home life, and the strain from one domain possibly affecting the other domain), employees are likely to experience stress (Sok et al., 2018; Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). Besides the role of supportive contextual factors, cognitive strategies could be an alternative way to prevent the stress (Choi et al., 2019; Hobfoll et al., 2018). There are various types of personal resources, such as employees coping strategies and personal resiliency that could help employees to turn adverse events into positive outcomes such as a positive effect on life satisfaction by eliminating the negative emotions and psychological distress elicited by the events (Choi et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2016).

Stress can also be prevented by exercising acceptance; high-acceptance individuals are receptive to all happenings without reactivity, including negative emotions and stress reactivity (Brinkborg et al., 2011; Lindsay et al., 2018). Understanding the role of acceptance in reducing employees' stress is important for management because acceptance is enhanced by training and psychological intervention, often referred to as Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) (Lindsay et al., 2018; Moran, 2015). As job stress is detrimental to employees' life satisfaction, it is important for managers to promote acceptance as a way to reduce stress during WFH. Acceptance regulates negative emotions by reducing emotional reactivity triggered by adverse events without having to change or eliminate the negative happenings (Brinkborg et al., 2011; Lindsay et al., 2018; Rudaz et al., 2017). Previous studies have found that acceptance reduces stress as it regulates an individual's emotional experiences and reduces the physical symptoms of stress (Brinkborg et al., 2011; Goldin et al., 2019; Lindsay et al., 2018; Rudaz et al., 2017). Therefore, individuals who are accepting regard negative happenings as a normal condition without having to experience negative emotions or stressful reactions. Hence, this study proposes that acceptance reduces job stress and subsequently increases life satisfaction. The formal hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Job stress mediates the positive relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction.

2.3. The mediating role of Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's perceptions of how well his or her roles and life are balanced (J. M. Haar et al., 2014). Previous studies have confirmed the role of WLB in promoting life satisfaction (J. M. Haar et al., 2014; Karckay-Tasdelen & Bakalim, 2017). WLB increases life satisfaction through various mechanisms such as allowing individuals to participate in activities that are important to them; individuals who perceive they have achieved WLB are mentally healthier as they experience a sense of harmony in life and optimal psychological conditions to meet the long-term demands of work and non-work roles (Greenhaus et al., 2003; J. M. Haar et al., 2014). In other words, as individuals perceive little or no conflict between the job and non-job demands, they are more satisfied with their life.

Previous studies have focused on examining the role of contextual factors in promoting WLB, such as, amongst others, job autonomy, supervisor support, and leadership style (Clercq & Brieger, 2022; J. M. Haar et al., 2014). However, employees use subjective indicators to assess WLB, such as the ability to achieve balance between work and the rest of life, low role conflict, high role enrichment, equal division amongst the multiple roles that individuals have

(J. M. Haar et al., 2014; Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Consequently, factors that promote WLB might vary between employees (Greenhaus et al., 2003; Tejero et al., 2021). For example, job autonomy might promote WLB by allowing employees to determine how they carry out their job and giving them a sense of control (Clercq & Brieger, 2022; J. M. Haar et al., 2014). However, the predictability of job autonomy in WLB depends on employees' ability to separate between work and home life (Simione et al., 2021; Tejero et al., 2021). Additionally, when employees experience conflict or difficulties in allocating resources to fulfil work and home roles, WLB is less likely to be achieved (Obrenovic et al., 2020). Similarly, literature suggests that employees' inability to separate between work and home life as well as to allocate resources to fulfil work and home demands are the disadvantages of WFH practice (Kelly et al., 2020; Wolfram & Gratton, 2014).

Regarding the inhibitors of WLB mentioned above, previous studies have found that acceptance helps employees to perform cognitive segmentation and draw them back from negative future thoughts to the present realities (Althammer et al., 2021; Verweij et al., 2018). Therefore, employees would retract from work-related thoughts when they were at home and retract from home-related thoughts when at work (Althammer et al., 2021; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). As they were more attentive to their current role, they could balance their roles (Raza et al., 2018). Psychological detachment is important for recovery from work and other stressors and hence, it increases perceived WLB (Raza et al., 2018; Verweij et al., 2018).

In addition, acceptance allows employees to notice the ongoing thoughts or feeling without having to ruminate about them, hence, they may take the necessary actions to engage in the cognitive or behavioural intervention needed to achieve the WLB such as taking time off for a holiday or simply be kinder to themselves, and this might increase their overall work and life balance and satisfaction (Raza et al., 2018; Verweij et al., 2018). Formally, this research hypothesizes that the relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction is mediated by WLB (H3). The relationships amongst the constructs in this study are depicted in Figure 1.

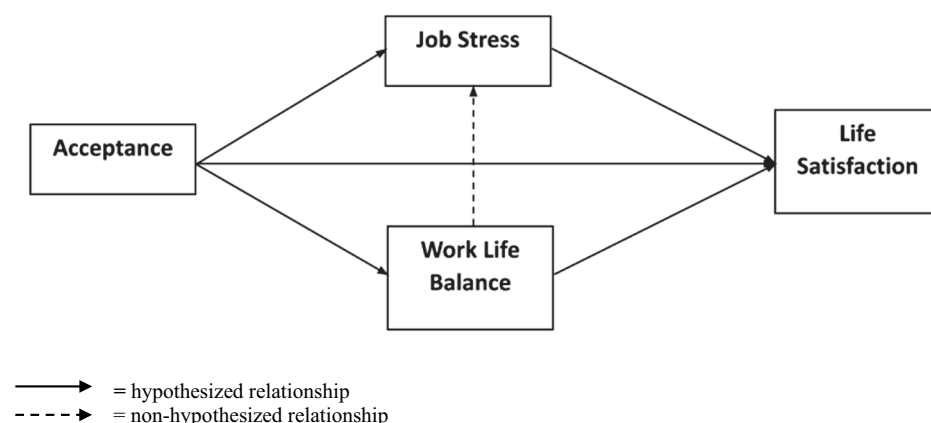
H3: Work-life balance mediates the relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction.

3. Methods

3.1. Data collection and sample

Purposive sampling technique is employed by applying specific criteria for the respondents. Specifically, only employees from Indonesian companies from various industries who work from home were invited to take part in an online survey. Indonesia was selected as the context of the

Figure 1. Research model.



study because it is a developing country that had adopted WFH due to COVID-19 although the system and technological support were still underdeveloped (Rachmawati et al., 2021). Consequently, WFH would produce a positive experience for employees who possess the cognitive capability to translate these unsupportive contextual factors into the necessary psychological resources to overcome the challenges (Junjuran, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021).

3.2. Measurement instrument

All items used a Likert-type 5-point scale. The five items of life satisfaction are taken from Larsen et al. (1985). Seven items of ACC are adapted from Bond et al. (2013). Job stress is measured using Parker and DeCotiis (1983). There are 10 items to measure job stress. Lastly, the five items of work-life balance are adapted from Jarrod (2013).

4. Data analysis and results

4.1. Sample profiles

There are 406 data collected. The sample size has met the minimum required sample size to run PLS-SEM, which is 10 times the largest number of structural paths directed at a particular latent construct in the structural model, which is 210 (Hair et al., 2011). Participants are from various regions in Indonesia. The predominant age group is 20 to 29 years (72.91%). As for gender, female respondents account for 59.61% of the sample. Most respondents are single and have no children. Table 1 presents the profile of the participants.

4.2. Assessment of measurement model

Validity and reliability tests were performed on the measurements used in this study. Internal consistency was measured using the Composite Reliability scores as it considers the outer loadings of the variable indicators; the Composite Reliability scores were above 0.7 indicating high reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The convergent validity was examined using the factor loading scores of each indicator. Three indicators with loading factors below 0.5 were eliminated from further analysis (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, the convergent validity was also measured using average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE values in this study exceed 0.5, and so are considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). To assess the discriminant validity indicator cross-loading was examined with each item having the greatest load on its associated construct but not on any other construct of interest (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 2 shows that the factor loadings to assigned constructs are the highest and thus the constructs differ from one another. As seen in Table 3, HTMT ratio was assessed for each construct resulting in HTMT values below the threshold of 0.9 indicating that each construct is distinct to other constructs (Henseler et al., 2015). The correlation analysis results presented in Table 4 indicates no substantial multicollinearity problems amongst the constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Lastly, Harman's single factor test was performed to check the presence of common method bias resulting in 31.81 % of variance indicating no substantial common method variance in the data (Fuller et al., 2016).

4.3. Hypothesis testing results

PLS-SEM using Smart-PLS version 3.0 was employed to test the relationships between the variables. The results are presented in Table 5. As such, the direct relationship between Acceptance and Life Satisfaction is insignificant ($\beta = 0.057$; $p = 0.232$). Likewise, the indirect relationship between Acceptance and Life Satisfaction through Job Stress is also insignificant ($\beta = 0.000$; $p = 0.993$). However, the relationship between Acceptance and Life Satisfaction is significant through Work-life balance ($\beta = 0.356$; $p = 0.000$). The results highlight the fully mediating role of Work-life balance on the relationship between Acceptance and Life satisfaction. Therefore, H3 is supported, whereas H1 and H2 are not supported. Figure 2 presents the path-analysis of the model.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provided nuance to the previous studies related to the role of acceptance in improving individual's well-being. Although previous studies have documented the significant and

Table 1. Respondent profile

	Respondent(n)	Percentage
Age		
<20	4	.99%
20–29	296	72.91%
30–39	72	17.73%
40–49	18	4.43%
50–59	16	3.94%
Gender		
Male	164	4.39%
Female	242	59.61%
Tenure		
<1	147	36.21%
1–5	186	45.81%
6–10	40	9.85%
11–15	16	3.94%
>15	17	4.19%
Job Arrangement		
Fully working from home	216	53.20%
Working from home and office	190	46.80%
Status		
Single	296	72.91%
Married	104	25.62%
Divorced	6	1.48%
Number of children		
No child	318	78.33%
1	45	11.08%
2	34	8.37%
3	8	1.97%
>3	1	.25%
Industry type		
Technology	203	50%
Consultant	61	15%
Marketplace	81	20%
Other	61	15%

positive influence of acceptance in one's life satisfaction (Bond et al., 2013; Katajavuori et al., 2023; Ong et al., 2023), this study found no direct effect from acceptance on life satisfaction. Consistently, literature has acknowledged that the efficacy of acceptance in promoting life satisfaction might vary depending on the contextual aspects, such as the valued goals pursued by the employees (Bond et al., 2013; Ruiz & Odriozola-González, 2017). During the WFH context, employees often experience conflicting goals between work and home domain (Basile & Alexandra, 2016). While some other might aim to create balance between the two conflicting goals, others might prioritize one of them and sacrifice the other one. For example, the issues of balancing between work and home domain are more intense for married individuals, hence are more stressed (Lange & Kayser, 2022). Consistently, as the sample of this study is dominated by employees who are single (72.91%), it is logical that

Table 2. Measurements validity and reliability

Variable	Outer Loading	AVE	Cross-Loadings	Composite Reliability
Life satisfaction				
Overall, my life is close to my ideal life	0.824	0.636	0.824	0.896
My life condition is very good	0.843		0.843	
I am satisfied with my life	0.867		0.867	
So far, I have gotten important things that I want in life	0.778		0.778	
If I could turn back time, there is nothing I would change about my life	0.657		0.657	
Acceptance				
I can work effectively even when I have personal concerns	0.664	0.542	0.664	0.892
I can admit my mistakes in my workplace and still be successful	0.617		0.617	
I can work effectively even when I am anxious about something	0.786		0.786	
My concerns will not hinder me from being successful	0.753		0.753	
I can perform my job as required regardless of my feelings	0.750		0.750	
I can work effectively, even when I am doubtful	0.788		0.788	
My thoughts and feelings will not hinder my work.	0.777		0.777	
Job Stress				
Sometimes I am worried to see mail notification when I am not working because the email is likely to be about my job	0.764	0.530	0.764	0.900
Sometimes I am worried when I receive a call when I am not working because the call is likely to be about my job	0.783		0.783	
I feel like I have no holiday	0.706		0.706	
Too many people at my level in my company cause me stress due to the demands of my job	0.764		0.764	
I feel anxious about my job	0.690		0.690	
My job gives me a bigger burden than it should	0.743		0.743	
There are many moments when my job makes me upset	0.669		0.669	
Sometimes when I think about my job, I feel my chest tighten	0.696		0.696	
Work-Life Balance				
Currently, I enjoy every part of my life equally well	0.868	0.788	0.868	0.918
I am satisfied with the work-life balance; I enjoy both roles	0.918		0.918	
I have succeeded in creating a balance between work and the demands of my family and private life	0.875		0.875	

Table 3. HTMT Ratio

	ACC	LS	JS	WLB
ACC				
LS	0.473			
JS	0.336	0.356		
WLB	0.636	0.777	0.537	

Source: Primary Data

Notes: The sign ** indicates p-value < 0.01 (two-tailed); LS=Life Satisfaction, ACC=Acceptance, JS=Job Stress, WLB=Work Life Balance.

Table 4. Mean, standard deviation, and correlation

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	LS	ACC	JS	WLB
LS	3.352	0.789	1			
ACC	3.765	0.680	0.396**	1		
JS	2.933	0.887	-0.291**	-0.274**	1	
WLB	3.590	0.887	0.661**	0.546**	-0.466**	1

Table 5. Results of hypotheses testing

	β	P-value	Description
Direct relationship			
H1: ACC \rightarrow LS	0.057	.232	Not supported
Indirect relationship			
H2: ACC \rightarrow JS \rightarrow LS	0.000	.993	Not supported
H3: ACC \rightarrow WLB \rightarrow LS	0.356	.000	Supported

Source: Smart-PLS Analysis

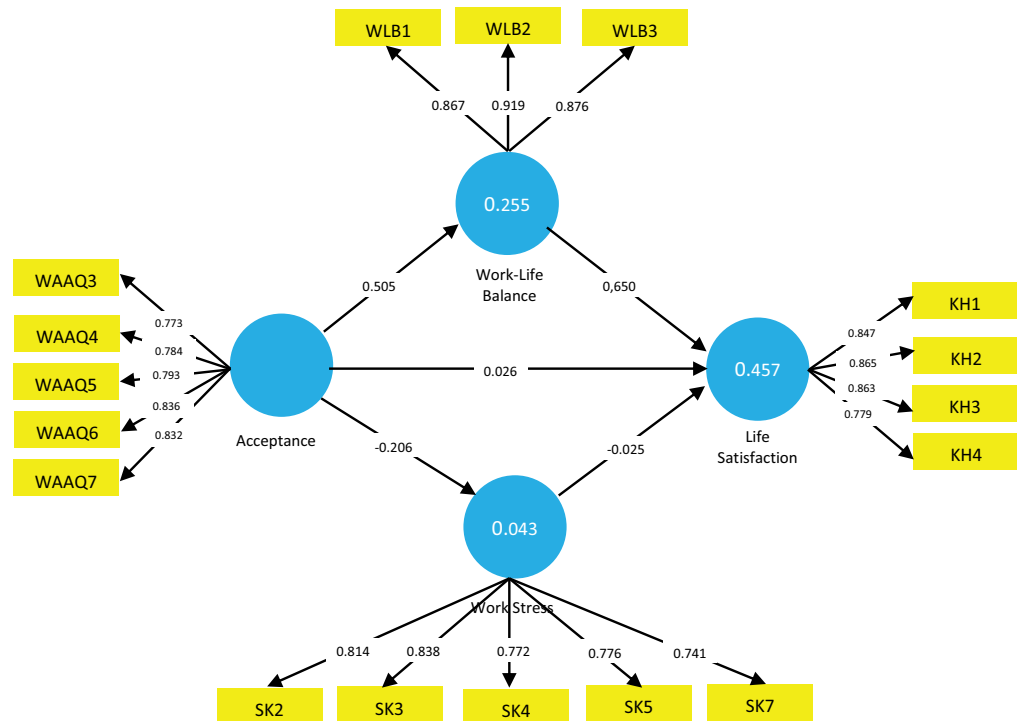
Notes: LS=Life Satisfaction, ACC=Acceptance, JS=Job Stress, WLB=Work Life Balance.

acceptance is not deemed as critical strategy to achieve life satisfaction during the WFH. Subsequently, employees will act accordingly to achieve their valued goals (Bond et al., 2013).

In addition, although previous studies suggest that acceptance allows individuals to be focus on their current roles without being distracted by thoughts about other roles in the past or in the future (Raza et al., 2018; Verweij et al., 2018), it might not be the case during the WFH situation where the presence of work-related materials are present at home and *vice versa* that prompt employees to continue thinking about and doing work rather than spend on personal or family businesses (Basile & Alexandra, 2016). Another explanation could be that acceptance alone may not be enough to promote life satisfaction in the context of WFH, as employees need to translate acceptance into coping strategies that can resolve the WFH issues (Dawson & Golijani-Moghaddam, 2020). For example, approach strategies, physical strategies, time-based strategies, among others (Basile & Alexandra, 2016).

Furthermore, this study found that the mediating role of job-stress in the relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction is not significant. Job stress is conceptually defined as a negative feeling that affects the desired self-functioning due to the incompatibility between employees' capabilities, resources, needs and the job requirements (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). Consistently, although some studies confirmed the negative relationship between acceptance and job stress (Holmberg et al., 2019), others found no relationship between acceptance, job stress, and

Figure 2. Relationships between variables with mediation effects.



satisfaction (Pingo et al., 2020). It could be that, at certain situations, acceptance helps individuals to focus on strategies to resolve the problems while the stress-related thoughts and feelings linger (Bond & Bunce, 2000; Pingo et al., 2020). For instance, individuals who have a high propensity to innovate tend to look for strategies to remove the stressors (Bond & Bunce, 2000). Specifically, employees focus on solving the problems related to work-home conflict during the WFH practice while still experiencing stress (Pingo et al., 2020). On the other hand, acceptance can promote employees' focus on the positive aspects of WFH, so the employees feel less stressful about WFH-related issues. The former argument might explain the insignificant mediating role of job stress on the relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction.

Consistent with the above explanations related to H1 and H2, this study found that acceptance promotes life satisfaction through creating WLB. Specifically, acceptance allows individuals to be aware of their current state and engage in balancing or remedial actions when they experience negative emotions or stress such as taking a day off, or going on a holiday, amongst other actions (Raza et al., 2018; Verweij et al., 2018). Not only is reducing role conflict important to promote WLB, taking the necessary cognitive or behavioural actions to adjust the perceived imbalance is important too. More importantly, this study has revealed a full mediation, which means that only when employees with high acceptance perceive WLB will acceptance increase life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the COR theory. Such that, COR postulates that individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect their central value by the means of acquiring and conserving the resources needed (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020). The absence of WLB, named the work-family conflict or family work-conflict, represents a threat of employees' central value or goals and hence, employees need to take action to prevent work-family conflict to occur during the WFH practice (Basile & Alexandra, 2016; Lange & Kayser, 2022). Acceptance serves as a signal that alert individuals when their resources are diminishing so that they can take further action to prevent them. Thus, when the individuals take action accordingly, they will be able to create WLB and are more likely to feel satisfied with their life.

6. Research contributions

This study offers several theoretical contributions to the existing literature on the influence of acceptance on employees' well-being. First, this study confirmed the influence of acceptance on life satisfaction is not significant within the WFH context. Thus, this finding highlights that contextual factors need to be considered as the efficacy of acceptance varies across contexts. Although previous studies found that acceptance could improve life satisfaction of the employees who work from the office and also students (Bond et al., 2013; Gregoire et al., 2018), acceptance does not directly improve life satisfaction in WFH context. In the office and student context, acceptance is possibly relevant to increase life satisfaction as it reduces stress or negative emotions given the job-related problems (Pingo et al., 2020). In the WFH context, acceptance does not promote life satisfaction unless it solves WFH-related problems, such as work-home conflict as a common problem during WFH arrangement (Bond & Bunce, 2000; Kumar et al., 2021). Therefore, specifying the context and identifying the nature of the context is necessary to study acceptance.

Consistently, although literature has documented the influence of acceptance in reducing job stress and that job stress reduces life satisfaction in the workplace (Holmberg et al., 2019; Pingo et al., 2020), this study did not find support that acceptance influences life satisfaction by reducing job stress during the WFH arrangement. Work-life balance is an important determinant of life satisfaction during WFH (Wolfram & Gratton, 2014), acceptance that helps solve the problems (problem-focused) is more important than acceptance that reduce stress (emotion-focused) (Bond & Bunce, 2000; Kumar et al., 2021). In line with this argument, this study contributes to the literature by confirming that acceptance significantly influences life satisfaction as mediated by work life balance (WLB). In other words, acceptance can increase life satisfaction only if it can increase work life balance. Consistent with the existing literature, WLB represents a challenge during WFH that might deteriorate employees' life satisfaction during WFH. As acceptance helps employees to promote WLB, it can also increase their life satisfaction. Therefore, when acceptance induces strategies that promote WLB, it can increase life satisfaction.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study suggest that managers might be able to improve employees' life satisfaction through mindfulness and acceptance training as previous studies have confirmed that his type of training has been found to be effective in promoting individual's acceptance in various industries background according to previous studies (Lundgren et al., 2020; Moran, 2015). Specifically, the training should direct the employees to treat acceptance as a mean to increase awareness of the presence of work-family (Lott, 2020; Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). Hence, they are more likely to be satisfied with their lives. Besides this, managers might use acceptance measures during the recruitment process as previous studies have found that high psychological acceptance is correlated with high satisfaction with life (Flaxman & Bond, 2010; Moran, 2015), as also supported by our study. Given that life satisfaction predicts job performance, recruiting high-acceptance employees will be beneficial to companies. Lastly, previous studies using the conservation of resources theory suggest that an individual's characteristics may interact with contextual factors to provide psychological resources for the employees (Junjuran, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Therefore, companies need to provide supporting conditions that strengthen the influence of acceptance on life satisfaction, such as, an empowering leadership style, job autonomy, and more control of the job (Junjuran, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021).

7. Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations. First, it treats acceptance as an individual's predisposition although acceptance can be improved using specific mindfulness or acceptance training (Lindsay et al., 2018; Moran, 2015). However, the efficacy of acceptance training was not considered in this research. Future studies might examine acceptance both as an individual predisposition and as the outcome of a specific intervention strategy. Second, this study did not control for any contextual variables present in the organization; previous studies have suggested that those variables significantly affect life satisfaction within the WFH context (Kumar et al., 2021; Zhang & Tu, 2018).

However, the objective of this study is to demonstrate the role of acceptance as an individual factor to promote life satisfaction (Junjunan, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). As acceptance can be promoted in various contexts and industries (Moran, 2015), this study does not focus on a specific context or industry. However, a study by Clark and Loxton (2012) found that the influence of acceptance varies across different contextual factors. Thus, future studies will be benefited by examining a specific context and the interaction effect between acceptance and specific contextual factors within a specific industry (Morikawa, 2022). Third, although life satisfaction is of importance for both single and married employees, the sample of this study is dominated by single employees whereas WLB is often an issue for married employees, especially women (Martins et al., 2002). This could be because the sample was dominated by respondents aged between 20 and 29; they represent the largest group of employees in Indonesia who mostly haven't married yet (Databoks, 2022). Hence, the authors suggest that future studies create a proportional sample of single and married respondents and compare these two groups. However, the findings of this study remained identical even after gender and marital status were included in the analysis. The objective of this study is to demonstrate the role of acceptance as an individual factor to promote life satisfaction (Junjunan, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). As acceptance can be promoted in various contexts and industries (Moran, 2015), this study does not focus on a specific context or industry. However, a study by Clark and Loxton (2012) found that the influence of acceptance varies across different contextual factors. Thus, future studies will be benefited by examining a specific context and the interaction effect between acceptance and specific contextual factors within a specific industry (Morikawa, 2022).

8. Conclusions

The role of acceptance in promoting life satisfaction varies across context. During the WFH arrangement, acceptance does not directly influence life satisfaction. Instead, acceptance can increase the life satisfaction of employees who work from home only when acceptance can promote WLB. Such that, WLB is an important issue during the WFH arrangements. On the other hand, the mediating role of job-stress on the relationship between acceptance and life satisfaction was not supported. Specifically, reducing job-stress and negative emotions will not solve the work-home conflict that needs to be managed during the WFH arrangement to improve employees' life satisfaction. Therefore, beside acceptance training and intervention, organizations also need to provide contextual supports that may translate acceptance into problem-solving strategies to achieve WLB during WFH context.

Author details

Gugup Kismono¹
E-mail: gugup_kismono@ugm.ac.id
Widya Paramita¹
Gabriela B. Lintang²

¹ Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Gadjah Mada University, Sleman, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

² Management Development Program BCA, Menara BCA, Jakarta Pusat, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia.

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