



## Flexible Working Arrangements in Realizing Work-life Balance in Women Workers of Small and Medium Enterprises PIA RB Sidoarjo East Java

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out how the Implementation of Flexible Working Arrangements and Schedule Flexibility which is often applied to Women Workers of PIA RB Small and Medium Enterprises that makes workers feel that there is a work-life balance. The research method uses a qualitative approach of the type of case study. The informants and at the same time the object of research were female workers in the small and medium enterprise PIA RB Pasuruan totaling 12 people and business owners. The results of this study are known that the implementation of flexible work arrangements in workers by allowing workers to come not according to predetermined working hours if there is a personal interest, and there is no punishment, workers can set their own work schedules to get results as targeted and to get wages as expected by workers. The schedule flexibility applied by the company is more about time flexibility and timing flexibility, but with the application of this flexibility, workers have felt a balance or work-life balance

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### INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises are the driving force for the exploitation of a region or country. Small and medium-sized enterprises create jobs and can significantly increase gross domestic product in an area. Workers in Small and Medium Enterprises have an important role in creating products that customers can enjoy, of course, with the standards that have been previously programmed by business owners. Anugerah & Nuraini: 2021 said that the number of MSMEs in East Java has an influence on poverty in East Java, but the number of workers in the MSME sector does not affect poverty in East Java. Simultaneously, there is a significant influence on both variables, namely the number of MSMEs and the Workforce of the MSME sector, on the bound variable, namely poverty in East Java. Based on this opinion, we can know that small and medium enterprises have an important role in improving the welfare of the people in an area.



One way for organizations to retain workers is to implement a flexible work system that makes it easier for employees to carry out their duties and obligations. Maxwell & Rankine: 2007 concludes that there is a significant gap between potential and current practices in Flexible Working Arrangements in small businesses. While owners-managers generally support Flexible Working Arrangements in their business, most have yet to make the move to implement them. In particular, the service business implements a limited number of Flexible Working Arrangements. The operational and business imperatives of small businesses, in conjunction with a lack of resources, seem to act decisively to deter the implementation of Flexible Working Arrangements. By targeting information and guidance on the implementation and supervision of Flexible Working Arrangement, specifically for small business owners, whose position can be reduced. Indrawati & Pradhanawati (2019), that flexible work arrangements can have a positive impact, including more leeway to complete tasks that increase job satisfaction and productivity due to satisfactory results.

Flexible working hours or flextime is one of the practices in the flexible working arrangement that is professionally and directed to work a certain amount with flexibility applied and can regulate when to start work and when to end work as if the employee can meet the number of working hours that the company has set regarding how to implement the Flexible Working Arrangement affects male and female employees. Preliminary research shows that the application of this work system is distributed unevenly, where the work-from-home system burdens women more than men (Mallett et al., 2020). Flexible Working Arrangement is a concept that allows workers to manage their performance flexibly but still complete their work well (Irawati, 2019). Flexible Working Arrangements help reduce employee work-life conflicts (Adame-Sánchez and Miquel-Romero 2012) and improve their psychological health by reducing stress, anxiety, sleep disorders and depression (Haar et al. 2014). Carlson et al (2009) state that schedule flexibility means the selection of places and times to work, whether formal or informal which facilitates employees in the policy of how long (time flexibility), when (timing flexibility) and where (place flexibility) employees work. Flexible Working Arrangement can increase job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work-life balance and encourage employees to perform at their best (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Shagveliyeva, S. & Yazdanifard, R., 2013)

PIA RB is one of the Small and Medium Enterprises that produces snacks that can be used as souvenirs for consumers visiting the Pasuruan area in East Java. This Small and Medium Enterprise also has several branches in East Java. The owner of this small and medium-sized business Named Ninik's mother, and information from Mrs. Ninik, to produce this food, she hired 12 workers who had a place to live not far from the PIA production site which was none other than Mrs. Ninik's own residence with her family. The 12 workers are all women, of course, a female worker often has problems with her role as a worker and as a wife or mother for her family. However, from the results of pre-research observations and a little interview with Mrs. Ninik, her workers have never experienced conflicts because of their dual roles, this can be seen from the workers who can at any time be allowed to go home for the benefit of the family, and from the results of preliminary observations, it can be seen that workers in small businesses that produce food that consumers usually buy for souvenirs look psychologically happy to work on this PIA RB small business, and the workers remain loyal to working for this small business owned by Mrs. Ninik, this could be because employees feel that there is a work-life balance between personal and work life because the owner where she works applies flexible working hours and a sense of family to her workers. This is in stark contrast to other similar small businesses, where workers do not get flexibility in arranging work schedules, so they are often faced with the confused condition of managing time between work and personal or family interests. Based on this, the objectives of this study are to: 1) Know how the Implementation of Flexible Working Arrangements, 2) Which Flexibility Schedule is applied to Women Workers of Small and Medium Enterprises PIA RB which makes workers feel that there is a

work-life balance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on *flexible Working Arrangements* to create Work-life balance is still rarely carried out on MSME workers, especially MSMEs that produce food, as food as souvenirs. Some previous studies that examined flexible Working Arrangements were research conducted by Subramaniam, et.al, (2015), on Flexible Working Arrangements, Work Life Balance, and Women in Malaysia, from the results of her research it was found that socioeconomic factors influence women's uptake of Flexible Working Arrangement in the workplace. Highly educated women who have a bachelor's degree and earn a higher income with higher employment status will tend to be more interested in Flexible Working Arrangement at work compared to women who do not have a higher education. This research focuses on the object of female workers in large companies that have gone public. Chung & Lippe 2020, researching on Flexible Working, Work-Life Balance, and Gender Equality: Introduction, the results of the study show that the Flexible Working Arrangement is useful in creating a better work-life balance and family functioning, but we need to be aware of the potential gender ways in which it is / and is expected to be used. In other words, gender is important when it comes to understanding the consequences of inseparable work. Men and Women using flexible work in different ways that lead to different outcomes for well-being, work-life balance, and work improvement.

Research conducted by Bjärntoft, et.al., (2020), on Occupational and Individual Determinants of Work-life Balance among Office Workers with Flexible Work Arrangements, it is known that organizations that implement flexible work arrangements are able to create work-life balance in their workers by focusing on providing information on how to organize work, clear guidelines and policies for flexible work, clear expectations regarding availability outside of working hours, and a relationship-oriented leadership style. Overall, a high level of perceived flexibility, particularly in combination with other positive factors in the work environment, can support a good work-life balance among workers with flexible work arrangements.

## METHOD

This type of research on Flexible Working Arrangements in PIA RB Sidoarjo East Java Women Workers is Qualitative Case Study research. Creswell (2015:135) said that qualitative research case studies are research that intends to explore real life, contemporary limited systems (cases), or various limited systems (various cases), through the collection of detailed and in-depth data involving various sources of information or multiple sources of information, (such as observations, interviews, audio visual materials, and documents and various reports carried out intensively), and reporting the case description and case theme. The informants in this study were 12 female workers, PIA RB business owners bu Ninik and Husband, and one micro, small and medium enterprises business assistants in Sidoarjo City from the Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises Office. Data collection techniques are carried out by making observations about the behavior of the research subject, depth interviews with informants, as well as documentation of photos and videos of workers' activities in carrying out their work, and the results of this small and medium enterprise product. Data analysis in this study consists of: Data reduction, data presentation and conclusion of images or verification results. This research uses source triangulation, namely to workers, owners, and business assistants from the Office of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises in Sidoarjo, as well as using Engineering triangulation through interviews and also documentation, observation. Sugiyono: 2016

states that qualitative research, findings or data can be declared valid if there is no difference between what the researcher reported and what actually happened to the object under study. In this study, researchers used technical triangulation (triangulation) because this method is considered by researchers to be most in line with the research to be carried out, namely checking various data obtained gradually. Triangulation is one of the data testing techniques, that way the data will become more credible and certain.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research conducted on workers and business owners of PIA RB, namely Mrs. Ninik regarding Flexible working Arrangements applied to 12 female workers, with characteristics ranging in age from 25 to 50 years, Mrs. Ninik said that the working hours she applied were from 07.00 wib to evening, but these working hours could be arranged by the workers themselves. If workers have family interests, they can come more than 7:00 a.m., and there is no punishment for their late arrival, wages are adjusted according to the worker's labor output. Workers who come not according to working hours, if they want to get more work results, the workers will naturally go home later than usual. This statement is reinforced by the opinion of the workers who convey that if they have a personal interest, they can get permission directly, and for the work to be continued by their other friends, the interview was conducted on October 5, 2022. Flexibility in providing leeway for working hours is carried out as a form of family towards workers, so that workers feel a work-life balance between work and responsibility to the family personally. When a female worker decides to work, of course, what she hopes is that there will be no conflict between her personal life and work, so that psychologically they will avoid stress and can improve their performance. This is in accordance with the results of research by Weerakkody et al. (2017) which states that to be able to provide maximum performance employees need to feel happy, and one of the sources of employee happiness is from family and personal life. Therefore, work-life balance must be considered to support employees in working optimally. Maintaining a balance between work life and personal life is sometimes a problem that is often felt by employees, Wambui et al., 2017, and of course this requires support from the company or industry where they work, and one way to achieve this work-life balance can be done by implementing flexible Working Arrangements.

Subramaniam et al., (2015) in their research stated that flexible working arrangements have a good influence on the work-life balance of female workers in Malaysia. In this research, it can be concluded that if a flexible working arrangement is applied to female workers, there will be a good relationship with their families. The results of Nastiti and Lisandri's research: 2022 also state that the Flexible Working Arrangement affects the Work-Life Balance of female workers.

The following is documentation of an interview conducted with Mrs. Ninik as the owner of a small and medium business PIA RB regarding working hours and flexibility in work applied by Mrs. Ninik as a business owner.



Figure 1. Interview with PIA RB Business Owner

Female workers at PIA RB are not bound by a contract in writing, they are accepted to work orally, and are given training with a coaching system until they can make PIA in accordance with established procedures. That's why their working hours are not as tied as working hours in companies or industries usually. But so far for flexible working arrangements related to Schedule flexibility, in PIA cake maker workers the application is still on how long (time flexibility), and when (timing flexibility) only, where workers can determine what time they can come and go home, and when they start doing their work, if it has been conveyed and agreed with the owner. Meanwhile, regarding where (place flexibility) does the work of making PIA cakes, this cannot be taken home, to maintain the quality of production products so that they are in accordance with the standards that have been set. So that in making PIA cakes, it must be done at the production site. Starting from making cookie dough, making pia cake stuffed dough, shaping, burning in the oven to packaging PIA cakes, a place that has been determined by default by the owner has been provided. Raw materials and production equipment are fully available at the production site, namely at the house of Mrs. Ninik as the owner of the business so that workers cannot work on making this PIA cake at home or cannot bring it home to their work. So that if the worker arrives at noon, because of family needs, so that the work results are as expected by the worker to arrange his own return schedule or can still go home according to the return schedule of other workers who arrive early, but the work results are not as much as targeted and will certainly affect the wages earned.

Poluan:2018 states that factors that can support comfort and enthusiasm include work-life balance, therefore flexible work arrangements are needed. One of the important aspects of attracting or retaining workers is to provide work flexibility or better known as Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA). Work flexibility is given as a form of variation when working, to make workers not feel bored, Wicaksono, 2019. Flexible working, that is, workers' control over when and where they work, has increased substantially over the years in most industrialized countries, Chung & van der Lippe:2020. Based on this previous research, of course, the decision of the owner of PIA RB to provide flexibility to his workers, regarding working hours, makes his workers feel that there is flexibility in dividing time between family and work, which in turn will have an impact on the quality of their work.



Figure 2. The Room Where Workers Produce PIA Cakes

The flexibility of working arrangements for women workers of small and medium-sized enterprises is more towards freedom in coming to work, but previous workers must notify business owners, in advance, if they will arrive late because of an interest and no punishment, or a reduction in wages for workers, if the work can still be completed according to the target set by the employer, namely the PIA RB business owner.

These PIA RB workers are very focused on doing their work, even though the production of PIA cakes is still done manually by hand, so the application of flexible working arrangements to workers is very useful in supporting the productivity and quality of workers' work. Because, if workers work





with a calm mind, not divided their minds because there are two things to work on at the same time, then, it will affect what they are doing. This condition reflects the work-life balance in workers. This is in accordance with the opinion expressed by Fisher, Bulger, & Smith, 2009 which states that Work-life balance is a state in which employees perceive that they can meet the demands of their work without interfering with the fulfillment of their needs outside of their work, and vice versa, they can meet their needs outside of their work without interfering with the demands of their work.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusions that can be drawn from the results of research on Flexible Working Arrangements in Realizing Work-life Balance in Women Workers of Small and Medium Enterprises PIA RB Sidoarjo East Java are as follows: The implementation of Flexible working arrangements for female workers in PIA RB's small and medium enterprises by providing freedom to arrange the schedule for coming to work, if there is a personal interest and has been notified in advance to the business owner. And there is no enforcement of late arrivals to work. Schedule flexibility, which is often applied to female workers in PIA RB, is more about time flexibility and timing flexibility, for place flexibility has not been applied, which means that work must be done at work cannot be brought home, because it must be in accordance with standard operational procedures applied. Workers feel that there is a work-life balance with the application of time flexibility and timing flexibility. Based on the information obtained at the time of the study, to maintain the work-life balance of the next worker, there can be more increase in work flexibility regarding place flexibility, that is, work can be taken home, of course with the rules and standards set, and flexibility can also be applied in paying wages.

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