Understanding of employees’ performing professional duties at home: A qualitative study

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Abstract. Purpose. The purpose of this study was to determine the eustress and distress of employees during the pandemic. Method. The participants of this study were the employees who work from home during COVID-19. Semi-structured interviews were applied to 21 employees from various public institutions and private companies in the Jakarta area. This study is qualitative research; the choice of this design is to study the phenomena that occur among employees when faced with a pandemic condition and are required to change the way they work and maintain the independence of research results. Findings. Workload, poor communication, and work pressure are types of distress experienced by participants. The way how employees perceive and how to adapt these parameters of distress depends on setting work priority scales. However, they also have the influence of positive stress in sharing time with family and flextime. The participants, little by little, can divide their time and finish the work on time. From this study, it can be concluded that most of the participants chose the work priority scale as an essential part of this issue vital in this case. With the passage of time, the workers will be more active in the way they solve problems. The pandemic will not end soon, but the ability to start a new life (new normal) is a necessary to survive.

Keywords: eustress, distress, COVID-19, qualitative research, work pressure, quarantine; working from home.

Introduction

Lack of vigilance and insufficient information about the Covid-19 virus has greatly impacted countries that were not alert. This virus has claimed more than one million lives worldwide to date. The solution is that all governments' standard steps should incorporate lockdowns to prevent the spread of the virus, and experiments to produce a vaccine should begin. In addition, governments' non-populist policies are aimed at avoiding dangerous conditions such as the collapse of societies. Government officials have considered these policies to mitigate economic crises and even the collapse of countries. However, these policies have negative impacts on companies, business stakeholders, and workers themselves. Thus, those who have good management skills will try to conserve finances

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to survive this pandemic by, for example, laying off employees, closing branch offices, and reducing employee working hours.

The International Labour Organisation (2020) stated that the labour market has been greatly affected by the enforcement of lockdown actions, including some forms of workplace shutdown (International Labour Organisation, 2020). As of June 15, almost a third of the staff worldwide (32 percent) residing in their respective countries experienced required business closures for all except vital workplaces. An additional 42 percent resided in countries that required business closures for several fields or types of staff, and another 19 percent resided in countries with advised business closures (Figure 1).

Overall, 93 percent of labour markets have had to remain in their countries, with business closure actions of several types are still required. This market share has remained consistent since mid-March, although there has been a marked shift to softer measures. As an illustration, the portion of staff in countries with a tight form of business closure reached its peak at around 70 percent at the end of March, following which it decreased to 32 percent in mid-June (International Labour Organisation, 2020).

Indonesia is no exception; the large-scale social restrictions that the government has imposed force workers to work from home. This is stated in The Republic of Indonesia’s government regulation (2020) concerning large-scale social restrictions for social limitation guidelines within the framework of accelerating the handling of Corona Virus Disease 2019. Furthermore, the reduction in working hours and the requirement to work from home have had negative psychological effects on employees. If this continues for an extended period, it can result in acute stress. Presently, occupational stress is a massive issue in many work fields and businesses. Increasingly, employees have to deal with poser conditions such as ‘overwork, job insecurity, low levels of job satisfaction, and a lack of autonomy’ (Bickford, 2015). Consequently, inspecting how and under which circumstances distress and eustress are experienced is of substantial interest for this research so that it can help in generating a better understanding of all stress constructs. Before focusing on distress and eustress constructs, however, the disparate aspects of stress need to be explained in more detail.

Indonesia, to date, has not indicated any reduction in COVID-19 cases. However, data accessed in June 2020 from the official website of the Indonesian government (www.covid19.go.id) demonstrated...
that the spread of COVID-19 has reached all areas of the country. In addition, some areas have reported new cases. Thus, it cannot be stated that this outbreak will end soon.

The Indonesian government has taken various steps to inhibit the transmission of COVID-19. For instance, it published Regulation No. 9 of 2020 (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2020), which focuses on large-scale social limitation guidelines for COVID-19 management. The government has also implemented several limitations for society affecting, for instance, the operation of public transportation, working from home (WFH), and changes in school hours. These ordinances limit people’s mobility (The Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). Thus, policies to address the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia have affected various aspects of life. Further, large-scale social crises of anxiety (disorder), depression, and stress, factors that can cause a person to experience environmental disturbances, as well as emotional and physical effects, have arisen. In addition, the spread of false information (hoaxes) and conspiracy theories can worsen the mental health conditions of community members.

Boredom and fatigue often appear while WFH due to COVID-19. Signs of stress and fatigue when WFH include having a tired body. Several other symptoms that appear can also indicate that the body is tired and needs refreshment. Stress and fatigue while WFH can be a result of overworking or being in an uncomfortable atmosphere. Thus, over time, WFH is more tiring than working from an office and can even cause burnout. The triggers of burnout include changes in habits and being forced to adapt to new situations. At the workplace, stressors negatively impact employees’ health, but they can positively impact employees’ performance. Employees can experience the eustress condition when a stressor is appraised as something positive, while the distress condition is the opposite. D. L. Nelson and B. L. Simmons argued that eustressed employees are more engaged at the workplace (Nelson, Simmons, 2011).

Recently, there have been several studies regarding what distress and eustress are in connection with the positive effects that eustress entails. All of this is important in helping to arrange the restoration of working situations by discovering what the constructs of eustress and distress signify to workers, as well as how they experience these constructs. The aim of this research is, therefore, to explore the distinctions between the experience of distress and that of eustress concerning when and how workers in different working fields perceive them.

A greater understanding of the elements that distinguish eustress from distress may increase their value for workers, employers, policymakers, and intervention designers trying to adapt to new working situations and increase or produce eustress to encourage mastery, growth, and development. Therefore, the research questions for this study are the following.

1. Under which conditions do employees feel eustress?
2. How do employees perceive eustress?
3. Under which conditions do employees feel distress?
4. How do employees perceive distress?

Stress

There are many conditions that workers perceive as imposing. These conditions can be defined as stressors. After appraising and coping with a stressor, workers either experience a negative impact on their wellbeing and mood or experience energy and growth (Selye, 1974). R. S. Lazarus mentioned that stressors are a dynamic construct comprising environmental and individual elements that are constantly exposed to change (Lazarus, 2000).

It is because of a person’s cognitive assessments that a condition is classified as stressful. These assessments include the controllability, duration, source, and desirableness of the condition (Fevre et
al., 2003). R. S. Lazarus differentiated between primary and secondary assessments (Lazarus, 1990). Primary appraisal refers to investigating the significance of a stressor, while secondary appraisal includes evaluating what can be done about the condition, which implies that the stressor has been accepted, following which it is evaluated and interpreted. Finally, this assessment helps to discover a way to respond to a specific stressor.

Coping is aimed at responding to a stressor emotionally, behaviourally, and cognitively. The primary goal of coping is to mitigate or even destroy distress (Lazarus, 1984). C. S. Carver with colleagues identified two categories of coping strategies, namely emotional-focused coping and problem-focused coping, which aim to address an issue or control a stressor, with the ultimate aim of transforming the emotional distress connected to a condition (Carver et al., 1989).

A stress reaction is the proper reaction to a noticed stressor, which can be perceived as either eustress or distress. Since determining which conditions are stressors and how to cope with these are highly subjective processes, there are many differences among people. These subjective cognitive factors and situational elements provide distinctions in the stress reaction (Fevre et al., 2003).

**Distress and Eustress — Two Different Stress Responses**

If stress develops in large quantities, the individual struggles to cope with it, possibly leading to distress, which negatively impacts mental or physical health (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, 2000). That is, distress is an adverse stress reaction to a negative appraisal of a condition and inadequate coping strategies. Although the description of distress is unclear, it is agreed upon that distress is caused by an inequality between perceived demands and the capital available to overcome these demands (Fevre et al., 2003). Furthermore, stress is frequently associated with a negative allusion (Schafer, 1996). However, unlike distress, eustress leads to adaptive outcomes (Selye, 1976). Eustress develops when stress is assessed positively and the individual is competent in using coping strategies to prevent distress from arising. J. C. Quick with colleagues emphasised eustress as a constructive and positive stress reaction crucial to mastery, development, and growth (Quick et al., 1997). In addition, eustressed workers are often more concerned about their work, which implies that they will experience more appropriateness, handleability, wish, and positive effects regarding their job demands (Simmons, Nelson, 2007).

**Occupational Eustress Models**

Health quarantines cause severe deterioration in psychological health, which grows more concerning the longer the quarantine lasts. According to S. E. Hobfoll's the conservation of resources
theory, those who have a good supply of resources cope better with difficulties and experience less distress (Hobfoll, 1989; Merino et al., 2021).

A person evaluating a stressor as a challenge or threat to both their mental and physical health is likely to perceive the condition as eustressing rather than distressing. M. A. Cavanaugh with colleagues supported this argument with their Challenge Hindrance Framework, in which challenge-related stressors lead to positive outcomes and obstacle-connected stressors lead to negative outcomes (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). Issue stressors can be defined as business demands that are evaluated as challenges, including job responsibility, job complexity, workload, and work pace (Podsakoff et al., 2007). With a determinate evaluation, these types of stressors improve the performance of tasks and lead to personal growth.

Methodology

This study is qualitative since, according to C. R. Kothari, qualitative research is often used when analysing human behaviour or people’s ways of thinking. In addition, qualitative studies can identify specific research problems (Kothari, 2004). Qualitative studies are also better when aiming to understand individuals and (or) groups’ experiences and viewpoints (Hammarberg et al., 2016). However, it was argued that qualitative research makes it difficult to find the relationships among meanings, emotions, and experiences (Rossetto, 2014). Regardless, considering that reactions to stress tend to be subjective, any study related to the stress condition would benefit from using the qualitative and narrative methods since it is assumed that these will allow for understanding the participants’ lived experiences (Bryman, 2004).

In addition, this study used the case study approach to gain a better understanding of the stress experience of employees who are WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic in Jakarta, Indonesia. This design was chosen to study the phenomenon that occurs among employees when they face a pandemic condition and are required to change how they work, as well as to maintain the independence of the research results.

The targeted participants of this study were employees at the managerial or staff level who were WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic (Table 1). The employees from both levels were from private and public organisations in Jakarta, Indonesia. In this study, a purposive sampling technique was used, and semi-structured interviews were done with 21 employees.

Table 1. Participants’ demographic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Type of Work</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Job Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant 1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 8</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 11</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 14</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 15</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the data collection process, considering the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the people who expressed interest in participating in this study were sent the list of interview questions via email, while the others were interviewed face-to-face. The interview consisted of four questions that covered participants’ understanding of stress. Each participant was interviewed about their responses to the email interview and then they were followed up with telephonically. The e-mail, telephonic, and face-to-face interviews were conducted in Bahasa and then translated into English. The first and third authors created the codes needed and conducted the initial analyses (after translating the responses from Bahasa to English), and the second author reviewed the codes and analyses. The first and third authors discussed any differences in coding until they reached an agreement, which the second author then reviewed.

In the study, to ensure that participants had a similar understanding of the concepts of eustress and distress and to avoid any bias therein, the authors first described these two concepts to the targeted interviewees before they answered the questions.

## Results

This section aims to answer the four research questions, namely ‘Under which conditions do employees feel eustress?’, ‘How do employees perceive eustress?’, ‘Under which conditions do employees feel distress?’, and ‘How do employees perceive distress?’ The semi-structured interviews were analysed by referencing the expanded scheme of coding, producing spacious types of cites concerning both form and content. The responses were translated from Bahasa to English to provide a better representation of the results.

All participants gradually began experiencing eustress while WFH. However, they might have been able to adapt to new situations that required them to work differently from their previous habits. Thirteen sub-codes were found from the interview results, as shown in Table 2.

### Table 2. Overview of the codes regarding eustress with definitions and frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept the situation</td>
<td>Believing something to be true/right.</td>
<td>2 (5.12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share time with family</td>
<td>Spending some time with family.</td>
<td>7 (17.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of new technology</td>
<td>Technology that totally changes how something is performed or produced, mainly through labour-saving automation or computerisation, and a sampling of such technology.</td>
<td>3 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>(Of a person) Working in a well-organised and competent way.</td>
<td>2 (5.12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flextime</td>
<td>Flextime refers to flexible time, a work adjustment that permits workers to choose the start and end times of their workday.</td>
<td>6 (15.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A healthy life</td>
<td>A healthy life is a mode of existence that mitigates the risk of becoming severely unwell or dying early.</td>
<td>1 (2.56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>A movement that takes physical effort to practice and that is used to support or improve fitness and health.</td>
<td>5 (12.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>A challenge is a new and often difficult situation that requires determination and much effort to overcome.</td>
<td>3 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open-mindedness
Open-mindedness is the readiness to seek evidence for your favoured goals, beliefs, or plans, as well as considering such evidence honestly when ready.
1 (2.56%)

Rest time
Rest time means taking a break from work or job-connected tasks and anything that causes tension in the mind or body.
3 (7.69%)

Hobby
An activity that you do for pleasure when you are not working.
4 (10.2%)

Interaction avoidance
Not participating in certain activities due to social anxiety disorder (SAD), thus lowering anxiety related to social situations.
1 (2.56%)

Comfortable room
Being comfortable or relaxed means not having anything around that has painful, disturbing, or distressing components and, in a positive sense, eases stress, increases satisfaction, and allows for independence from paying attention (a comfortable climate).
1 (2.56%)

Table 3. Overview of codes regarding distress with definitions and frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>The amount of work or working time expected or assigned.</td>
<td>7 (18.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work priority scale</td>
<td>Priority is derived from the impact and urgency of a task based on the context of the organisation. Octopus can automatically derive an incident's priority by selecting the impact and urgency thereof.</td>
<td>5 (13.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>A temporary state of mind or feeling.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost income</td>
<td>The terms 'lost income' and 'lost earnings' are synonyms that refer to money that a claimant/s has not received or will not receive because of conflict in the proposition's case. This can be in the form of lost income in the past or in the future.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side jobs</td>
<td>A job other than your primary job that provides additional income.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be grateful</td>
<td>Feeling or showing an appreciation for something done or received.</td>
<td>3 (8.10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor communication</td>
<td>Poor communication frequently occurs when there is incompatibility between what is talked about and what is heard. That is, the individual to whom one is speaking misunderstands what is being shared with them, thus causing understanding to stop being reciprocal.</td>
<td>5 (13.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>A person's ability to use time effectively, efficiently, and productively, especially in the workplace.</td>
<td>2 (5.40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low productivity</td>
<td>Low productivity in a business refers to situations in which one or more employee's complete production, processes, tasks, or sales ineffectively.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work pressure</td>
<td>Work pressure is currently recognised as a cognitive-energetic state that generates the experience of tension or felt pressure that is connected with the ongoing (in progress) and predicted execution of work tasks.</td>
<td>4 (10.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay cut</td>
<td>A pay cut is a decrease in a worker's wages. Pay cuts are frequently made to prevent dismissing employees while saving the company money during difficult economic periods.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbances</td>
<td>The interruption of a settled and peaceful condition.</td>
<td>2 (5.40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct communication</td>
<td>Direct communication is an oration that delivers obvious messages or that obviously points to actions. Direct communication is frequently used in the business world to confirm explication concerning who has the competence to give orders and what the demands are.</td>
<td>3 (8.10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being adaptive</td>
<td>Adaptive means being competent and able to adapt to different conditions.</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>37 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows 14 sub-codes, with the highest frequency being for ‘workload’ with seven mentions. Participant 1 provided the following example, ‘Sometimes, distress comes when homework accumulates and cannot be completed immediately.’ Participant 1 felt the need to help with homework, and this could not be avoided because the participant spent more time at home than at the office. Participant 3 experienced a different situation: ‘When work piles up, there is not much communication between employees and leaders, and conflicts with family and children who also work from home arise.’ Participant 3 indicated that in addition to their work at the office, they also helped out with (online) assignments for their children. Meanwhile, Participant 6, who was single, experienced a different problem, as expressed in the following statement: ‘I experience this when there is a high workload, but the resources that can be accessed from home are very limited. There are many things that distract attention, making it difficult to focus on work, so extra effort is needed to complete the task.’ The participants felt the difference between WFH and working from their office because of the many distractions at home and poorer access compared with working from their office.

‘Poor communication’ had the second-highest frequency, with five mentions. Communication among fellow employees or between superiors and subordinates is crucial for work to be done efficiently. Two participants, namely Participant 11 and Participant 12, shared this problem. Two participants, one from the managerial and the other from the staff level, experienced poor communication when they had to coordinate with their subordinates or supervisors. Hence, this condition certainly affects the effectiveness of the organisation. As Participant 11 stated, ‘I feel distressed when I get an office assignment that I have to finish because, in normal times, I am used to communicating with colleagues about assignments. While working from home, communication is limited because I can only communicate via mobile phone, so messages are not always conveyed well.’ Participant 12 stated, ‘I felt that when the assignment I gave to staff could not be done well. Usually, I will explain directly and guide the staff to do the task properly and correctly. Explanations can only be given online, so there is miscommunication between me and the staff.’

For the research question concerning how employees perceive distress, the most frequent sub-code found was the ‘work priority scale’, which was mentioned five times. Participant 1, Participant 6, and Participant 7 represent several other participants who had similar answers. Participant 1 stated, ‘My way of responding is to make a priority scale of which task is to be done first. The rest is done when conditions are right for continuing.’ Participant 6 said, ‘I take a short break and set priorities. I try to set a schedule for breaks at work so that I can focus more on work.’ Finally, Participant 7 said, ‘I must be able to calm the mind and focus, which needs to be done first.’ Most of the participants were able to adapt well when they were faced with conditions that they did not usually face every day and setting priorities for their work helped them to stay disciplined and better manage their time.

Discussion

This study’s results indicate the types of eustress and distress that workers experienced when they had to adjust to a new work system and how they dealt with them. The concepts of these types of stress, namely eustress and distress, were adopted from R. S. Lazarus and S. Folkman’s Transactional Model of Stress in which eustress and distress are responses to stressors (Lazarus, Folkman, 1987).

The interview results showed that two sub-codes from eustress were frequent, namely (1) ‘share time with family’ and (2) ‘flexitime’. Here, WFH is pleasurable for a worker because they have more opportunities to stay connected with their family, which they rarely get to do under normal conditions. However, beyond this pleasure, it has a negative impact for these workers, especially in
terms of the lack of communication and increasing number of tasks because they become complacent in their comfortable atmosphere. WFH can be fun, but it will gradually make workers feel stressed. This new WFH situation was forced and adapting to all of the shortcomings and limitations of WFH is challenging. Previously, when working in an office, the focus was only on office affairs. After returning home, workers could take a break from work, but the situation is now different: Employees are now forced to address both office and home affairs simultaneously, both of which are equally important, thus leading to prolonged and overwhelming stress. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all businesses changed from working at the office to WFH. Further, the lockdown has provided most working people with a chance to work from home, so they get some time for their family in their busy life, but WFH is not that easy (Kaur, Sharma, 2020).

The level of supervision is much reduced when workers work from home; they tend to complete tasks without the pressure of being monitored by their superiors. Thus, individuals who can complete office tasks quickly experience satisfaction because their remaining time can be used for positive activities such as sports or hobbies. C. Kelliher and D. Anderson evidenced that flexible workers record higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment than their inflexible counterparts (Kelliher, Anderson, 2010).

Table 3 shows three frequent distress codes: (1) ‘workload’, (2) ‘poor communication’, and (3) ‘work pressure’. When there is less control because employees are WFH, supervisors tend to increase their workload. Moreover, employees are faced with work–family conflicts, as employees who have children must help their children with their school needs because the school also provides online classes. This condition is enough to create a distraction for an employee every day. K. D. Y. Rahmawati stated that job satisfaction while WFH is influenced by several things, such as mental workload and work–family conflict (Rahmawati, 2020). As many as 80 percent of employees stated that their mental workload increased while WFH, and some employees felt a role imbalance between work and family.

Most employees experienced poor communication during the pandemic. However, the method of communication did not directly impact their misperceptions about tasks and vague meanings. Participants in both managerial and staff positions experienced this: Poor communication among employees or between employees and superiors causes the organisation to function less productively. Thus, M. Welch emphasised the need for more research in this area (Welch, 2012).

Staff-level participants felt that even though they had more flextime when WFH, their superiors gave them additional tasks and tighter deadlines. The adverse effects of schedule pressure arise mainly when working out of sequence, which generates work defects, perfunctory work, and loss of motivation (Nepal et al., 2006). To address the working conditions mentioned above, the participants tended to create a work priority scale, starting with their motivation while working and using their work satisfaction stemming from, for example, fair wages, promotions or advancement, occupational safety, professional opportunities, and worker relations and work status (Zeb et al., 2009). Each worker had their own priorities based on which were more urgent or more valuable for their future.

**Conclusion**

Living in a metropolitan city such as the economic centre of Indonesia is not always easy; many needs must be filled. Therefore, workers spend most of their time in the workplace rather than at home. This causes high levels of stress that disturb their mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic completely changed all of this; employees are now prevented from coming into the office or communicating directly with colleagues and clients. Although it is fun to spend time with family, WFH causes new stresses to arise that the employee may never have experienced. Increased workload,
poor communication, and increased work pressure are types of distress that the participants
experienced most, and they perceived and adapted to these challenges by creating work priority
scales. However, they also experienced eustress while sharing time with family and having flextime,
which allowed participants to divide their time and finish their work punctually.

From this study, it can be concluded that most of the participants, at both managerial and staff
levels, chose the work priority scale as an important part of this case. Over time, workers will become
more active in solving problems. The COVID-19 pandemic will not end soon, so the ability to define
a new normal for oneself is necessary for survival.

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Понимание сотрудниками выполнения своих профессиональных обязанностей в домашних условиях: качественное исследование

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Аннотация. Цель. Целью данного исследования было определение эустресса и дистресса сотрудников во время пандемии. Метод. Участниками этого исследования были сотрудники, которые работали в дистанционном режиме во время пандемии COVID-19. Полуструктурированные интервью были взяты у 21 сотрудника различных государственных учреждений и частных компаний в районе Джакарты (Индонезия). Это исследование выполнено в качественном формате; выбор этого дизайна заключается в изучении явлений, которые происходят, когда сотрудники сталкиваются с пандемией, и требуется изменить способ их работы и сохранить объективность результатов. Результаты. Рабочая нагрузка, плохая коммуникация и рабочее давление — это те источники дистресса, с которыми сталкиваются участники, а то, как они их воспринимают и как адаптируются к ним, зависит от того, как устанавливают шкалу рабочих приоритетов. Тем не менее, у них также развивается стресс от эустресса, когда они проводят время с семьей и в свободное время. Участники понемногу могут распределить свое время и закончить работу вовремя. Выводы. Из этого исследования можно сделать вывод, что большинство участников выбрали шкалу рабочих приоритетов как неотъемлемую, жизненно важную часть в этом случае. С течением времени работники будут более активны в том, как они решают проблему. Пандемия не скоро закончится, но возможность начать новую жизнь (новую нормальность) необходима для выживания.

Ключевые слова: эустресс; дистресс; COVID-19; рабочее напряжение; карантин; удалённая работа.