

ABSTRACT

This research focused on the meaning of working time amongst creative workers during the pandemic COVID-19 era, specifically in the middle of the ‘work from home’ situation. Using Yogyakarta and Bandung as case studies, this writing aims to examine the work vulnerabilities that has been experienced by creative workers in the middle of the labour market flexibility era. Furthermore, from this research I attempt to criticize various forms of ‘hidden’ exploitations which have been experienced by creative workers in the flexible workforce scheme.

In recent years, the creative economy sector is often seen and expected as future economies in Indonesia. Unfortunately, most academic researchers only focus on how creative workers become mode of production and only seen as economical catalysator, instead of being concerned about their rights, whilst their work protection and security that still remains unnoticed. Hence, from this ethnographic research, I analyze the meaning of time among creative workers, and try to investigate it in a comprehensive and grounded way. This research answers three main questions, a.) the relation of work and time in the sociological and historical context in Indonesia, b.) how creative workers in Bandung and Yogyakarta value themselves within the labour market flexibility situation, and c.) how creative workers their working time during COVID-19 pandemic situation.

To answer those three questions, I examine the meaning of working time among the creative workers in the various context, from historical meaning of time in the global industrial society, then more specific about the dynamics of creative economy discourses in Indonesia and its relation to flexible work time, and also how each informants value their subjectivity of time during COVID-19 pandemic era. Among creative workers' situations, their daily activities which have centered only at home must impact their daily life. The changes of their routine, mobility restriction (or limitation), and the shifts to work from home situations might impact their meaning of time that is caused by blur boundaries between ‘working time’ and ‘private time’. Therefore, the concept of time in this research is seen not only as a phenomenon, but it is an important analytical tool to examine how creative workers use their agency in managing their time, which could not be separated from social, economical, politics, and cultural construction and contestation. Hopefully, this study about the dynamic and meaning of time within creative workers could enrich labour studies in anthropological point of view.

Keywords: creative economy, creative worker, working time, work from home, the meaning of time.