

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Impact of Dual Roles of Working Wives on Psychological Well-being and the Influence of Social Support on Family Harmony

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ABSTRACT

Working wives often face significant challenges in balancing responsibilities at work and at home. This study focuses on the psychological well-being of wives who play dual roles as workers and family caregivers, as well as the impact of the support they receive. Involving 10 participants, the study used in-depth interviews to understand how their well-being affects family harmony. Findings indicate that emotional support from family and colleagues helps them communicate better, create positive interactions, and feel satisfied in family life. This research emphasizes the importance of psychological support programs to help working wives manage the pressures of dual roles.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Dual Roles, Family Harmony, Family Communication

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, women's roles in society have evolved significantly. In the past, women were often seen primarily as homemakers, with main responsibilities as mothers and wives, caring for their families (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). However, with economic development, increased access to education, and shifts in social values, many women are now actively participating in the workforce. This trend is especially evident in urban areas, where women work not only to support the family economy but also to achieve self-actualization and build their careers (Evans et al., 2022).

Balancing dual roles as both mothers and professionals presents unique challenges. On one hand, these roles bring benefits, such as increased self-confidence, financial well-being, and opportunities to engage more widely in society (Nelson et al., 2021). However, on the other hand, dual roles often bring challenges that can impact mental health, including fatigue, time pressure, and role conflicts (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Some studies show that managing dual roles can

positively impact emotional well-being by enhancing adaptability, but it can also be a significant source of stress when family and work demands frequently clash (Adams et al., 2018). This situation requires strong time and emotional management to prevent negative impacts on mental health (Karimi & Nouri, 2020).

According to recent data from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), approximately 55% of productive-aged women in Indonesia are now working, with this number even higher in large cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bandung (BPS, 2023). The increase in working mothers signifies a major shift in modern family dynamics. As the number of working mothers grows, so do the challenges in balancing time and energy between family needs and work demands.

Other studies reveal that in large cities, more than 40% of working mothers spend over eight hours a day outside the home, impacting the quality of time spent with their families (Sardjono & Hanafi, 2022). This limited time affects parenting patterns and the quality of relationships with partners,

which can ultimately lead to stress and emotional exhaustion (Smith et al., 2021).

Dual roles pose a significant challenge to the mental health of working mothers. Research shows that mothers managing dual roles are vulnerable to psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, and burnout, especially when faced with high demands without adequate social support (Mikolajczak et al., 2018). According to role strain theory, the tension resulting from role conflicts can worsen mental health when mothers struggle to meet the expectations of both roles in balance (Goode, 1960). This situation can be exacerbated by limited work flexibility and a lack of support from social networks and family (Hochschild, 2012).

Recent findings from Brown et al. (2023) reveal that mothers unable to balance both roles show higher levels of anxiety and are at greater risk of mental health issues compared to those who fulfill only homemaker roles or work without family responsibilities. Additionally, a study by Lee et al. (2022) emphasizes the importance of support from partners and family as a protective factor for the mental health of working mothers.

With the many demands of dual roles, paying attention to the mental health of working mothers is increasingly essential. A mother's mental health is closely linked to her quality of life and also affects family members, particularly children (Williams & Boushey, 2019). Research indicates that maternal mental health issues can directly impact a child's emotional and psychological development (Giallo et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to explore in depth the factors affecting the mental health of mothers with dual roles, including social support, coping strategies, and work-life balance.

Research by Rahman et al. (2023) found that mothers with flexible work arrangements and strong family support tend to have more stable mental health. These findings suggest that appropriate interventions, both in the workplace and at home, can support the mental health of working mothers. According to work-life balance theory, when a mother feels that both roles can

coexist in harmony, the risk of mental health issues can be minimized (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Research Questions

1. How do working mothers in Surabaya manage and cope with their dual roles as homemakers and employees?
2. What factors influence the mental health of working mothers with dual roles in public and private educational institutions?
3. What is the impact of dual roles on the mental health of working mothers?
4. What types of support do they receive from both family and the workplace in facing dual roles?

Research Objectives

1. To explore the experiences of working mothers in managing their dual roles as homemakers and employees in public and private educational institutions in Surabaya.
2. To identify the factors affecting the mental health of working mothers with dual roles.
3. To describe the impacts arising from dual roles on the mental health of working mothers.
4. To illustrate the role of social support from family and the workplace in helping working mothers manage dual roles in a mentally healthy way.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Dual Roles for Women

Dual roles for women encompass significant responsibilities, as they take on the roles of both homemaker and professional. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) state that dual roles involve commitments and expectations from two different domains, family and work, which often create conflicting demands. Pleck (1977) adds that these dual roles arise when women must fulfill both household duties and professional responsibilities.

According to Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), managing dual roles can be challenging for women, both in meeting expectations at home and at work. As mothers and wives, emotional support and time commitment are essential, while as

professionals, women are also expected to be productive and successful. This conflict intensifies with differing social expectations for these roles (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

Women who fulfill roles as both mother and worker face what is known as role strain, especially when the demands of these roles clash (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Factors Influencing Dual Roles for Women

Several factors influence how women manage their dual roles, including individual, family, work, and social factors. Based on Goode's (1960) role theory, strain in dual roles can arise when an individual struggles to meet the demands of multiple roles. Key factors affecting dual roles for women include :

Social Support

Support from partners, family, and coworkers plays a major role in helping women balance their dual roles. Karimi and Nouri (2020) found that women with strong social support are better able to balance work and family responsibilities compared to those with limited support.

Work Flexibility

Work flexibility is also a crucial factor. Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) explain that flexible work schedules can reduce role conflict and provide space for women to fulfill their household obligations.

Level of Education and Work Experience

Higher education levels enable women to access more flexible jobs or earn enough to afford household assistance (Evans et al., 2022). Additionally, longer work experience is associated with better adaptation to dual roles (Brown et al., 2023).

Social and Cultural Norms

Social norms that define women's roles at home and at work influence how women navigate their dual roles. In more traditional societies, women often feel greater pressure to prioritize family responsibilities (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

Impact of Dual Roles on Women

The impact of dual roles on women can be both positive and negative, depending on the support they receive and their ability to manage these roles. According to the work-life balance theory, balancing these roles significantly affects women's quality of life and mental health (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). The impacts include :

Positive Impact

Dual roles can enhance women's confidence and happiness, especially when they successfully manage these roles. Nelson et al. (2021) state that women who are able to handle role conflict and meet expectations at work and home tend to feel more satisfied and confident.

Negative Impact on Mental Health

On the other hand, dual roles can lead to stress, emotional exhaustion, and even burnout if role demands are not balanced (Mikolajczak et al., 2018). Goode (1960) explains that this imbalance creates stress as individuals struggle to meet the demands of various roles simultaneously.

Effect on Family Relationships

Conflict from managing dual roles often affects the quality of family relationships, particularly with partners and children. Sardjono and Hanafi (2022) show that mothers with long working hours frequently feel exhausted, which impacts interactions and communication within the family.

Effect on Workplace Performance

Role conflict can negatively affect workplace performance. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) note that conflicts between family and work roles often disrupt concentration and reduce productivity, as mental and physical energy is divided.

In managing roles as mothers, wives, and professionals, women face significant mental health consequences. Conflict and strain from these roles frequently lead to stress, anxiety, and even emotional exhaustion when women feel unable to meet expectations from each role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This stress, arising from role conflict, is known as role strain, a psychological pressure when individuals struggle to meet the responsibilities of competing roles

(Goode, 1960). If these roles are not balanced, particularly without adequate social support, women may face risks to their mental health, including anxiety and depression (Karimi & Nouri, 2020).

According to Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), women who lack time control or flexibility in their jobs are more susceptible to the negative effects of dual roles on mental health. They also found that support from family and coworkers can act as an effective buffer to help women manage the burden of dual roles.

METHOD

Research Design

This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the personal experiences of informants regarding their mental health as mothers who manage dual responsibilities. A qualitative method was chosen as it allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the feelings, perceptions, and challenges faced by these mothers in balancing their dual roles.

Participants

The study involved 10 working mothers employed at various educational institutions, including both public and private universities in Surabaya. Participants were selected purposively, meaning they were chosen based on specific criteria, namely as working mothers with dual responsibilities as both wives and mothers. This approach ensures that the informants have a strong connection to the research topic and can provide in-depth insights into how the experience of managing dual roles affects their mental health.

Data Analysis

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with open-ended questions, allowing participants to express their views freely and in detail. This method was chosen as it enables researchers to obtain a rich understanding of the emotional, psychological, and social aspects that these mothers experience in handling the demands of dual roles. Each interview was recorded with the participant's consent and then transcribed for further analysis.

The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes emerging from the participants' experiences concerning dual roles and their impact on mental health.

RESULTS

This study aims to understand the impact of dual roles on the mental health of working mothers in major cities, specifically Surabaya. Based on qualitative data analysis conducted with 10 participants employed at various public and private educational institutions, the following key findings were identified :

Role Conflict Affecting Mental Health

Most working mothers reported difficulties in balancing time between work and family, leading to tension and stress. A quote from one participant, Mrs. A (36 years old), a lecturer at a public university, illustrates this:

"I feel trapped between work and my children. At the office, I am expected to perform at my best, but at home, I also need to be an attentive mother. Sometimes, I feel there's not enough time for everything, and it affects my mood."

This conflict creates feelings of isolation and diminishes the quality of relationships with partners and children. Many mothers reported communication difficulties with family members due to their divided attention between work and household responsibilities.

Physical and Emotional Exhaustion

Physical fatigue after a day of work significantly contributes to emotional stress. Working mothers often feel physically exhausted but also experience emotional tension due to feeling unappreciated or unsupported at home. One participant, Mrs. B (40 years old), an administrative staff member at a private university, shared:

"After work, I'm already exhausted, but there's no one to help at home. I have to take care of everything—from the children, cooking, to house chores. I feel like I never have time for myself."

This exhaustion adds to the existing emotional burden, making mothers more prone to irritability, anxiety, and feelings of pressure.

The Importance of Social Support from Family and Workplace

Social support from both family and the workplace plays a significant role in coping with the effects of dual roles. Mothers who receive support from their spouses and children tend to report better emotional well-being. Mrs. C (34 years old), a lecturer at a private university, shared her experience:

"My husband is very supportive; he helps with household tasks, so I don't feel too overwhelmed. Even my children help out, which makes me feel better and more at ease."

However, many mothers reported struggles due to their partners being busy with work or not helping enough at home, which exacerbates their stress. Some mothers feel lonely and isolated because they do not receive adequate support at home.

Impact of Dual Roles on Stress and Emotional Exhaustion

Mothers who face high demands from their dual roles exhibit higher levels of stress and emotional exhaustion. This stress arises not only from work but also from the feeling of being unable to meet expectations as both a mother and a partner. Mrs. D (38 years old), a lecturer at a private university, explained:

"The demands at work and home feel very heavy. I often feel like I can't do everything well, and it makes me feel like a failure. This affects my mental health; I feel more anxious and depressed."

These findings indicate that mothers facing higher role demands, such as working longer hours or having more children, show increased levels of stress and emotional exhaustion.

Model Research

To illustrate these findings, the following is a diagram depicting the relationship between role conflict, social support, and the impact of dual roles on the mental health of working mothers:

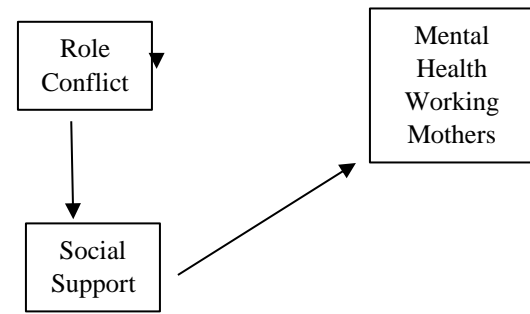


Figure 1. Model of the Relationship Between Role Conflict, Social Support, and the Mental Health of Working Mothers

DISCUSSION

Role Conflict Affecting Family Relationships

Working mothers who balance the dual roles of income earner and family caretaker often face significant role conflicts. The findings of this study reveal that mothers frequently feel a distance in their relationships with their partners and children, which is further complicated by the differing demands of each role. Communication can sometimes become strained, leaving them feeling “disconnected” during family conversations. This conflict impacts not only communication but also leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, making mothers more prone to feeling overwhelmed and emotional, especially when they are fatigued or under pressure.

According to Noor's (2011) research, conflicts between work and home roles can negatively affect the quality of family relationships, particularly for women who feel burdened by their dual roles. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) also found that conflicts between work and family demands can lead to stress, which ultimately affects communication dynamics and emotional involvement within the family. These findings suggest that distancing in relationships and ineffective communication can increase psychological strain on working mothers, making them feel increasingly isolated in managing their dual responsibilities.

The Importance of Family and Workplace Support in Managing the Impact of Dual Roles

The study also emphasizes that social support from family and the workplace plays a crucial role in helping working mothers face the challenges of dual roles. Many mothers expressed the importance of moral support from their spouses and children in reducing the psychological burdens they face. Without such support, they often feel alone at home, with partners and children engaged in their own activities, making them feel as though they must “struggle alone.”

Barnett and Hyde (2001) explain that family support can serve as a “buffer” or shield against the stress brought on by dual roles, thereby reducing the negative impact of these varied demands. Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) also found that support at work, such as from understanding colleagues and supervisors, can help individuals manage conflicts between work and home life and maintain emotional balance.

The Demands of Dual Roles and the Risk of Stress and Emotional Exhaustion

This study reveals that mothers facing high demands in their dual roles are more susceptible to stress and emotional exhaustion. Physical fatigue after a day of work often lingers when they return home, and a lack of comfort there can exacerbate their stress levels. The pressure to perform well in both areas adds strain that, over time, can lead to prolonged exhaustion or burnout.

Burke and Greenglass (1999) state that high workloads and demands can worsen emotional exhaustion in women managing dual roles. Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) also found that emotional demands from family and work can accelerate the onset of burnout, especially when sufficient support is not available. This indicates that working mothers with substantial role demands are at higher risk for chronic stress and emotional exhaustion.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the crucial importance of strong support for mothers who balance dual roles, both from their families and their workplaces, to help them manage the psychological burdens of their responsibilities. Without adequate support, conflicts between roles at home and at work can disrupt family harmony and lead to prolonged stress and emotional exhaustion. Therefore, the findings of this study can serve as a foundation for designing support programs for working mothers, whether through more flexible company policies or enhanced emotional support from family. Such efforts are essential to safeguard mothers' mental health, enabling them to fulfill dual roles with greater balance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH*Adding Contextual Variables*

Expanding research by adding contextual variables—such as specific social support from a spouse, flexible work environments, or wellness facilities at the workplace—can provide deeper insights into the factors influencing the mental health of working mothers. Future studies could also explore how certain policies or programs help lessen the negative impact of these dual roles.

Focusing on Emotional Support and Coping Mechanisms

Emotional support and coping mechanisms often play a vital role in managing the stress of dual roles. Future research could explore common coping strategies employed by working mothers, such as mindfulness, time management, and group support, along with the impact of these strategies on their mental well-being.

Broadening the Research Population

Expanding the research to include a wider area or mothers from various job sectors, such as industry or healthcare, could yield more generalizable and relevant results. Different types of jobs and levels of flexibility may influence how dual roles affect mental health.

Psychological Interventions and Support Programs

Future studies could focus on developing or evaluating psychological intervention programs aimed at enhancing the well-being of working mothers. Programs like coping skills training, social support development, or self-care improvements could be examined to see how effectively they reduce the negative impacts of dual roles on mental health.

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