



Integrating career women's experiences into family education

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of dual roles experienced by career women, the responsibilities as a mother and as a worker. This dual role presents both challenges and opportunities in modern family life. The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences of career women and integrate their relevance to the development of family education. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews with working mothers. The study's results indicate challenges for the informants in their roles, particularly regarding time and role management, as well as gender equality within the family. The challenges faced by the informants cause both physical and mental stress. The interview findings were then extracted to inform the development of family education. These findings emphasize the need to incorporate skills in role management, family collaboration, and gender equality values into family education, drawing on the real experiences of working mothers. This study provides a reference for the development of family education, enabling mothers to continue working while building high-quality families.

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ABSTRAK

Fenomena peran ganda yang dialami oleh wanita karier, yaitu tanggung jawab sebagai seorang ibu dan sebagai seorang pekerja. Peran ganda ini menghadirkan tantangan sekaligus peluang dalam kehidupan keluarga modern. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan pengalaman wanita karier serta mengintegrasikan relevansinya untuk pengembangan pendidikan keluarga. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara dengan narasumber, yaitu ibu yang bekerja. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya tantangan bagi narasumber ketika menjalankan peran, yang mana tantangan ini berfokus pada manajemen waktu dan peran, serta kesetaraan gender dalam keluarga. Tantangan yang dihadapi oleh narasumber memberikan tekanan baik secara fisik maupun mental. Temuan dari wawancara yang telah dilakukan kemudian diekstraksi sehingga dapat menjadi acuan dalam pengembangan pendidikan keluarga. Penemuan ini menegaskan perlunya memasukkan keterampilan dalam manajemen peran, kolaborasi keluarga, dan nilai kesetaraan gender ke dalam pendidikan keluarga yang didasarkan pada pengalaman nyata seorang ibu yang bekerja. Penelitian ini memberikan acuan bagi pengembangan pendidikan keluarga agar para ibu tetap dapat menjalankan perannya sembari membangun keluarga yang berkualitas.

Kata Kunci: pendidikan keluarga; peran ganda ibu; wanita karier

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INTRODUCTION

Family integrity is the main foundation for creating family welfare in family life. Family integrity can be achieved if all family members are able to carry out their roles and functions in a balanced manner according to their respective responsibilities. This balance of roles is key to maintaining the stability of family relationships and creating a safe, conducive environment for all family members. When one role does not function optimally, or there is an imbalance in the distribution of responsibilities, family integrity has the potential to be disrupted and impact the decline of family welfare (Widyasari & Suyanto, 2023).

In the traditional family concept, the division of roles among family members, particularly parents, is dichotomous. The father is positioned as the primary breadwinner, while the mother is fully responsible for managing the household and raising the children (Dewi & Hayat, 2023). However, alongside social and economic changes, the role of mothers in the family today has undergone significant expansion. Mothers not only carry out domestic roles within the household, but also actively participate in the public sphere as workers and breadwinners. With the expanding role of mothers working in the public sphere, challenges arise in the form of a double burden (Alimi & Darwis, 2022). Mothers work and are then expected to be professional in their jobs, support the family's finances, while also fulfilling their duties in childcare and household management. However, the reality on the ground shows that not all women can easily balance career and domestic roles. This pressure not only has implications for time and energy but also touches on the psychological and emotional dimensions of working mothers (Agustin, 2023; Thania et al., 2021).

Highlighting how working mothers face pressure to succeed in both public and domestic spheres, this can potentially disrupt family integrity, such as a lack of involvement and supervision in child-rearing (Mahmudin, 2024; Rakhmawati, 2022). Regarding this issue, the aspect of education, especially for working mothers, is needed as a foundation for empowerment and a support mechanism in carrying out their roles in the public and domestic spheres. With family education, it is hoped that working mothers can manage their responsibilities proportionally, thereby reducing their physical and emotional fatigue. This will also have an impact on maintaining the quality of family relationships (Adisa et al., 2021).

Research trends on the topic of family education in Indonesia are dominated by studies focusing on the role of parents in the development of children's character. Meanwhile, studies on parent empowerment, particularly among working mothers, tend to emphasize skill development to improve family economic conditions. The study of working mothers has not touched upon the domain of family education much. Based on the issues presented, this research seeks to complement family education studies by highlighting the management of the dual roles of working mothers. Specifically, this research is guided by the following research questions: 1) How do working mothers interpret and manage their dual roles?; 2) What strategies do working mothers use to maintain family relationships?; and 3) How does family education play a role in supporting the management of dual roles in working mothers?

This research is expected to provide a conceptual contribution, especially for the government and community groups, in building and supporting the development of family welfare through

the empowerment of working mothers. The experiences of working mothers are also relevant as material for study in social education. This field is oriented towards the formation of attitudes and values that are close to daily life, so studies on the dual role of women can help college or school students reflect on modern social dynamics. This is important so that the younger generation not only understands theory but can also internalize the values of collaboration, communication, and equality in their own lives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Family Education

Family is the smallest unit in the social sphere. Family education can be considered the initial foundation for an individual's development. Where the primary and first education for a child is not at school, but starts within the family (Handayani et al., 2020; Jailani, 2014). Simply put, family education is an effort to build a high-quality family for both children and parents. Where the family environment becomes the primary environment for children to learn, and in this matter, parents also have an important role (Ramdhani et al., 2020). If education within the family is good, then the growth and development of the child will also be good, and vice versa, if education within the family is bad, the growth and development of the child will also be bad (Besari, 2022; Jailani, 2014; Nasution, 2019).

The role of parents becomes important for children's education. Parents are the first teachers for their children, so parents must also know the proper education for children, which is also related to parenting patterns (Nasution, 2019; Widiyanto, 2015). Parenting itself becomes the foundation of a child's character so that the child has a personality that aligns with the prevailing norms (Baiti, 2020; Putra, 2023; Supandi, 2019). Therefore, parents must play a role in building a quality family.

Family education is not only related to parenting patterns. In this case, in the book "Family Life Education: Working with Families Across the Lifespan" by Darling et al., it is explained that family education is an effort to equip families to develop skills and knowledge, which includes communication skills, knowledge of human development, decision-making abilities, and healthy intrapersonal relationships, which are taught to improve family well-being.

Time Management and Roles

Time management and roles become important issues in relation to family education, especially with the increase in women's (mothers') participation in the workforce. Working mothers often find themselves in difficult situations when trying to balance the roles of being a "good mother" and a "good worker" at the same time (Zhang & Rodrigue, 2023). Working mothers experience psychological pressure because they have to balance between the two, specifically between domestic matters (household) and their work (Clark et al., 2021).

Working mothers ultimately have dual roles that cause them difficulty in balancing them. On the other hand, every mother has the responsibility to allocate her limited time to various activities, taking into account the tasks, status, and roles she has (Kim & Hong, 2021). Therefore, it is often mentioned that the main problem for working mothers is time

management and the roles that must be divided between two important things for them, family and work.

Time management skills for mothers are related to the management and/or allocation of a mother's time to divide her time and priorities. These skills are very much needed by working mothers, as they must be able to make time to create a quality family environment for their children (Poduval & Poduval, 2009; Wardiyah et al., 2023). Time management for working mothers significantly affects how they manage their roles within the family. How a mother can divide her roles effectively between home and work. Therefore, good time management for mothers will significantly influence the management of the roles of working mothers, in which they will be able to allocate time to share their roles at work, with their family, and for themselves (Forbes et al., 2021; Poduval & Poduval, 2009). Adult women with dual roles have authentic experiences that can be used as a source of knowledge in family education, especially related to time management, role negotiation, and cooperation in the household (Heni et al., 2023).

Gender Equality in the Family: The Role of Fathers and Mothers

The shift in modern gender roles, with the increasing participation of women in education and the workforce, has changed family dynamics and demands more equal relationships. Adult women who are both workers, wives, and mothers face complex dynamics in dividing time and roles. It is mentioned that there is a very high gap between the roles of fathers and mothers who both work, resulting in an unequal distribution of household chores. Fathers tend to be involved in light household tasks such as playing or doing recreational activities with the children, whereas mothers are often involved in household chores that require more effort, time, and mental energy, such as preparing dinner and tidying up the house (Clark et al., 2021). In addition, the division of household chores puts pressure on the mother in managing her time (Kim & Hong, 2021). This shows how, in the end, a mother's dual role becomes a challenge for families today.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the experiences of working mothers in managing dual roles at home and at work. Data collection was conducted using interview techniques with three informants who were purposively selected based on the following criteria: 1) Married women; 2) Having children; 3) Actively working; and 4) Carrying out domestic roles. The data analysis carried out was thematic analysis with stages of preparing interview transcripts, understanding the interview results, coding, and grouping themes. The purpose of the analysis is to identify the experiences of working mothers and the strategies they use to maintain the quality of their family relationships. In addition to primary data, this study also uses secondary data obtained from literature studies to strengthen the analysis and explain the findings based on family education concepts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The basic identity profiles of the three informants are presented in **Table 1** as an overview of the research participants' characteristics.

Table 1. Research Informant Identity

| No | Name | Age | Status |
|----|------|-----|---------------------|
| 1 | SA | 45 | Working as a Trader |
| 2 | AS | 42 | Working as a Trader |
| 3 | AJ | 41 | Working as a Trader |

Source: Research 2025

The three selected informants are in the age range of 40-45 years, which is considered middle adulthood, generally characterized by significant family responsibilities and demands for stability in work. This position shows that the informants' experiences can provide a representative picture of the dynamics of working mothers in balancing family life and work. Therefore, the following findings will describe in detail each informant's subjective experiences in carrying out dual roles.

In broad terms, the three sources are working mothers who help support their families' economy and become independent women. In addition, all three also feel that being a working mother is not something that goes against social norms. Without restricting social pressure, these women can balance their roles as traders and homemakers. This condition shows that in certain social contexts, such as market environments and informal trade, there is a more open space for women to form life practices that harmonize career and family (Marina et al., 2025; Norma et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the sources did not deny that the multi-role activities they engaged in had an impact on physical fatigue and stress when there were problems in the family.

"Saya juga sering merasa lelah jika ada pekerjaan rumah yang menumpuk dan masalah dalam usaha secara bersamaan, jadi tidak ada waktu dengan keluarga,"
- AS

"Pekerjaan rumah dikerjakan bersama-sama, tetapi tidak bisa berbohong kalau biasanya saya juga kelelahan karena mengurus pekerjaan dan rumah secara bersamaan," - AJ

One important factor that helped the three sources was the support of their partners. This support is not always present in physical form, but it is very meaningful psychologically and emotionally. In this case, support from partners also reflects a culture of gender equality within the family. Unequal distribution of household tasks will put pressure on working mothers due to both mental and physical fatigue (Clark et al., 2021).

"Untuk pekerjaan rumah yang ringan sebagian besar saya kerjakan sendiri selagi saya bisa, tetapi biasanya juga dibantu suami meskipun kadang juga saya tetap disibukkan dengan dua kewajiban saya. Suami saya itu membantu pekerjaan

rumah yang mengharuskan menggunakan fisik dan dia selalu mendengarkan dan mendukung di saat saya merasa lelah dan stres saat memikirkan pekerjaan," - SA

"Suami saya sering menggantikan peran saya di dapur, misalnya saat saya malas masak biasanya suami saya yang memasak untuk seluruh anggota keluarga dan itu mengurangi sedikit pekerjaan saya," - AS

"Saya dan suami dari awal sudah sepakat untuk pekerjaan rumah agar dilakukan secara bersama agar hal ini tidak menjadi konflik berkepanjangan nantinya. Suami saya tidak pernah menuntut apa pun yang saya lakukan, terutama soal pekerjaan dan mengelola rumah," - AJ

Based on the analyzed interview results, thematically it focuses on three main components, namely time and role management, gender equality, and the main challenges of being a working mother. In brief, the interview results are described in the following table.

Table 2. Summary of Interview with the Source

| Component | SA | AS | AJ |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Time management and roles | The job is considered flexible, allowing for adjustment of roles between being a mother and a worker. | Choosing to work as a trader (trading from home) because of its high flexibility, allowing one to take care of the household, even while working. | Considering women's independence as a top priority to ensure dual roles are carried out well. However, time management feels difficult. |
| Gender Equality | Husbands often help with household chores, especially those that require physical effort. | The husband often helps with household chores when AS is unable to do the housework. | Homework is done together. |
| Challenges | The routine feels busy and exhausting. After working, a mother has to carry out her duties at home. It puts pressure on both mental and physical health due to insufficient rest. | Even though trading vegetables at home, the challenge faced is the blurring of clear boundaries between work and household. Although one can be close to their child, they feel unable to be emotionally present for their child. | Time management between working and being a mother is difficult to organize. There is no fair division of tasks among family members. |

Source: Research, 2025

Discussion

A mother's work experience in carrying out dual roles

The dual role experienced by working mothers often leads to physical and mental fatigue due to the overlapping domestic and public roles that must be carried out simultaneously or alternately. In addition, pressure also comes from job demands, environment, or family. If

experienced continuously without strategies and support, it can lead to a decline in the sufferer's productivity. The mental pressure felt can trigger a cynical view of the efforts made, feeling incapable and incompetent, which tends to lead to withdrawing from their surroundings (Agustin, 2023).

Some studies show that when working mothers face demands and pressures from professional work, it can trigger stress and burnout (Kiranawidhi, 2023; Maclean et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2021). However, in this study, the informants work in the informal sector, and the pressures and demands arising from work tend to be more flexible. The challenges faced do not come from the social environment or societal norms, but rather arise from physical burden, time pressure, and ongoing domestic role demands. Physical burden, overlapping time, and limited support are the main factors affecting life balance. This situation indicates that an adequate support system for working mothers is not yet available.

Support for working mothers affects the resolution of dual-role conflicts they face. Such support allows working mothers to make more balanced adjustments between the demands of work in the professional sphere and responsibilities in the household sphere. When the support system functions optimally, the psychological burden experienced can be reduced. In the closest sphere, a partner (husband) plays an important role in being the main support system for the working mother. Not only helping with the division of tasks in the household, the partner is expected to provide a sense of security, trust, and motivation when the working mother is experiencing emotional fatigue (Utami & Wijaya, 2018). The balance of roles between partners in household life also reflects gender equality. Forming partnerships and balanced relationships among family members can help create a prosperous and harmonious family (Azzam & Meidina, 2024). Thus, support for working mothers not only impacts the individual working mother herself, but also affects the overall quality of family life.

On the other hand, on a broader scale, within the community and government, they can also contribute by supporting working mothers. Support from extended family or the surrounding community can create a supportive social climate in reducing excessive pressure and expectations on working mothers, and can mutually share practical assistance in managing domestic and professional roles. Meanwhile, the government plays a strategic role in shaping social system structures that can fulfill the rights of female workers and provide continuous counseling and education to reduce the double burden, especially for working mothers.

Working Mothers' Strategy in Balancing Roles

Research findings indicate that informants develop different adaptive strategies for managing dual roles as mothers and workers, depending on the conditions, resources, and challenges they face. This confirms that dual-role management is contextual and requires continuous adjustment.

The US respondent chose a structural approach by organizing activity schedules more systematically, namely allocating morning time to work and afternoon time to family. This strategy reflects an effort to separate roles aimed at minimizing conflicts between the domestic and work domains. In addition, the US respondent implements open communication with family members to build awareness of the importance of social support and to create a balance of roles involved in fulfilling family responsibilities.

Unlike the US, SA's source emphasizes flexibility and multitasking ability as the main strategies. SA also involves his child in helping with simple activities that can be done. This happens because there is no equal division of tasks with the partner. However, performing multiple tasks simultaneously often leads to physical or mental fatigue, which can affect task completion.

Meanwhile, AJ's resource person prioritizes efficiency by making a daily priority list and seeking help from the immediate environment, such as extended family or neighbors, when urgent. He also instills the principle that not everything has to be done perfectly, as long as the main needs are met.

Management strategies for working mothers are urgently needed to support their physical and mental well-being while also sustaining individual performance, both in professional settings and in family life. However, working mothers should not force themselves to carry out all of their tasks and responsibilities. Delegating tasks to other family members will also reduce the perceived burden, making open communication with family an important aspect to maintain. In addition, working mothers also need to have time for themselves and time with their family without being haunted by their responsibilities. When role balance is achieved, satisfaction with the roles carried out will emerge, and work-family conflicts will be minimized (Rahmayati, 2021).

Integration of Experience with Family Education

Findings in the field reflect the experiences of working mothers, who ultimately have dual roles in different environments. The challenges and difficulties faced by working mothers are things that need to be studied in order to then develop lessons or policies that are able to help and support working mothers so they can continue to build a quality and prosperous family (Camilleri & Spiteri, 2021). Through family education designed with the integration of the experiences of working mothers, it can help and train mothers to improve time management skills as well as role management. This emphasizes the need for a curriculum that focuses on cooperation, assertive communication, and fairness in the division of roles.

The experiences of working mothers can serve as a foundation for the development of education. This is explained by Putri and Rachmawati in the book "Pengalaman perempuan dalam peran ganda dan implikasinya bagi pendidikan nila" that the experiences of women in dual roles can be used as contextual learning materials to strengthen value education in the curriculum. By relating real experiences to learning, education can become more responsive to the needs of the times (Prasetyo & Hamami, 2020). This study also outlines field findings and their integration into family education, which can be considered in the development of family training or education. The analysis results are shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3. Field Findings and Implications for Family Education Curriculum

| Field Findings (SA, AS, AJ) | Implications for Family Education |
|--|--|
| Tight time management: SA and AJ experience physical and mental fatigue from dividing their energy between work and household responsibilities. | Family education can include the topic of time management skills as part of the daily learning of modern families. |

| Field Findings (SA, AS, AJ) | Implications for Family Education |
|--|---|
| Overlapping domestic and public roles: The US is experiencing a blurring of boundaries between work and home as more people work from home. | Family education needs to raise the theme of strategies for managing dual roles based on family realities, in order to be more contextual with social dynamics. |
| Partner support: All three emphasized the importance of emotional and physical support from the husband to maintain balance. | Family education can incorporate the values of family collaboration and assertive communication as part of family-based character education. |
| Gender equality: AJ feels the support of her husband in sharing household chores fairly. | Family education can emphasize a gender-equality perspective in the division of domestic and public roles as a core value. |
| Adaptive strategy: SA and AS develop flexibility, multitasking, and open communication within the family. | Family education can integrate the values of family resilience and adaptability to build family strength in facing social dynamics. |

Source: Research 2025

Based on **Table 3**, there are at least five topics or issues that can be used as a material focus in family education. Training institutions or family counselors, such as the Family Learning Center (Puspaga), can develop training programs that emphasize the skills needed by working women to be able to perform their two roles, namely being a mother and an employee. Puspaga currently has outreach services that focus on providing guidance and information on family-related materials through various methods, such as seminars, workshops, and training.

Time management and role responsibilities are highlighted as among the most difficult challenges faced by mothers. According to them, without managerial skills, it would be difficult to accommodate both, leading to stress, because all these things require constant planning, high time management, resilience, partner support, and even time sacrifices (Camilleri & Spiteri, 2021). Seeing these challenges and difficulties, family education can present topics and themes related to time management and dual roles for a mother. It is also mentioned that the existence of work/life balance training for mothers can reduce the number of mothers who resign from their jobs (Henley et al., 2023).

In addition to time management and roles, field findings show a gap in the division of household tasks, which is also closely related to partner support. Essentially, family education is designed so that every member understands their role and function, which is greatly needed in building a quality and prosperous family (Herawati et al., 2020). Therefore, education must emphasize family collaboration and a gender equality perspective within the family. Family collaboration refers to the importance of open communication within the family. Low-quality communication within the family will cause deep suffering or conflict that can affect family relationships, including the grieving process when someone leaves the family (Feder et al., 2021; Gupta & Ganguly, 2020). Therefore, it is important to have communication training for families, so that the dual role of a mother can be alleviated. With good family communication, household tasks are likely to be more balanced, and it also fosters supportive relationships among family members.

Family education for mothers with dual roles is one effort to improve family quality. Basically, mothers have a major role in the growth and development of children (Mahmudah, 2023). On the other hand, it is also mentioned that working mothers become one of the motivators for children to develop social awareness, increase self-confidence, and motivate them to explore their dreams and aspirations (Kene & Nishad, 2021). Regardless of the negative and positive sides of a mother's dual role, family education must be able to help and support mothers to build a quality and prosperous family, even though they have dual roles, namely as a mother and as a worker.

CONCLUSION

Research indicates that the experiences of career women in dual roles as workers and homemakers are influenced by habitus shaped by family values, education, and social structure. Partner support has proven to be an important factor that enables the creation of role balance. At the same time, the main challenges largely stem from time management, physical fatigue, and overlap between work and domestic matters. Adaptive strategies such as flexibility, open communication, and setting priorities are key for the respondents in maintaining harmony between the public and domestic spheres. These findings confirm that role balance is determined not only by social norms but also by the existence of a support system and an individual's capacity to manage everyday life strategies.

Based on the research results, efforts are needed to include topics of time management and roles, gender equality, as well as household collaboration strategies in family education and social education materials for mothers, so that they are able to hold two roles simultaneously and build a quality and prosperous family. In addition, family empowerment programs that encourage fair domestic role sharing need to be strengthened so that women do not bear excessive double burdens. Future research is recommended to expand the socio-economic and cultural context so that the depiction of the dynamics of dual roles of career women can be more comprehensive and contribute to policies and curricula that are responsive to the needs of modern families.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author states that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article. The author emphasizes that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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