

Family Education in Working Mothers Families: Case Study of Mothers Who Work as Civil Servant

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Article Information

ABSTRACT

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Background: The role of women in the family has evolved, with more women working outside the home in response to economic and social demands. Consequently, women face dual roles, balancing domestic responsibilities with work demands. This double burden affects their informal educational responsibilities towards their children. As a result, both fathers and mothers spend more time at work and return home tired, reducing time available for educating their children. *Aim:* This study aims to explore the family education process in families with mothers who work as Civil Servants and to identify challenges in children's education. *Method:* This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The findings indicate that working mothers strive to be involved in their children's education despite time constraints, consistency in emotional interactions, and teaching moral values. *Result and Discussions:* Informants attempt to maximize quality time on weekends and interact before bedtime, though emotional involvement is often hindered by work demands. Care from third parties, such as grandparents or professional caregivers, provides emotional stability but may create inconsistencies in the values desired by parents. *Conclusion:* In conclusion, despite the challenges in family education for working mothers, effective time management strategies, open communication with caregivers, and being a good role model are essential for optimal child education.

Keywords: Education, Family Education, Children,

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INTRODUCTION

As time progresses and social dynamics evolve, the role of women within the family structure has undergone significant transformations. In many parts of the world, including Indonesia, more women are contributing economically by working outside the home. This shift often occurs in response to economic and social demands, as an increasing number of families face economic pressures and require additional income to meet their living needs. Consequently, women, as wives and mothers, are confronted with dual responsibilities—managing domestic roles at home while striving to meet the demands of employment outside the household.

This dynamic reflects a transformation in modern family patterns, where traditional concepts of gender roles are increasingly deconstructed. According to (A. Smith dan B. Johnson, 2019), in more advanced societies, a more inclusive perspective on gender roles has led to women being seen not only as household caretakers but also as equal partners in supporting the family economy. In line with this, the growing awareness of the importance of gender equality and these dual roles has encouraged many women to seek opportunities outside the home, either for personal career development or to meet the financial needs of their families.

However, this transformation has not occurred without challenges. According to (Brown, 2020), although women have gained greater access to the labor market, they often continue to face gender discrimination, difficulties in achieving work-life balance, and a lack of infrastructural support to accommodate their dual roles. As a result, many working women experience significant pressure in fulfilling their dual responsibilities, which include domestic duties, childcare, and professional work.

The double burden faced by women today inevitably has implications for their informal educational responsibilities toward their children. One reason is the longer time spent by both father and mother at work, returning home exhausted, which gradually reduces or nearly eliminates the time available to educate their children. In extreme cases, families where both parents work may encounter issues such as child abuse or problems with child development. There is a possibility that children may develop bad habits or associate with negative peer groups, which ultimately affects their character development.

Additionally, children may start arguing with family members over small matters, becoming rebellious and violent (Almani et al., 2012). The decline in the intensity of communication between working mothers and their children, especially during

quality time together, can disrupt the child's social abilities because children learn systematic and harmonious interactions through play, which ultimately affects their behavior and independence (Tong et al., 2009). Moreover, working mothers often return home physically exhausted and do not listen to their children's concerns, causing the children to feel neglected and seek attention from external sources. As a result, children may not feel close to their mothers.

One of the issues emerging today is the increasing prevalence of child abuse cases, whether perpetrated by the parents themselves, relatives, or caregivers (such as babysitters). Data from ((KPPPA), n.d.) shows that, as of the fourth month of 2024, the number of violence cases against women and children in Indonesia has already reached 5,193 cases.

According to the data, there were 3,610 victims aged 0-17 years. These cases encompass various forms of violence, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

These cases of child abuse have drawn significant public attention in Indonesia, raising deep concerns about the welfare and safety of children within the family environment. Various mass media outlets frequently report tragic incidents involving children who become victims of violence, both at home and in childcare facilities. Recently, news went viral about the child of a celebrity who was physically abused by their caregiver, resulting in bruises on the child's face. This case reflects a situation where both parents are heavily occupied with responsibilities outside the home, leading them to hire a caregiver to look after their children.

At the extreme, cases of child abuse are a harsh reality we can witness today. However, an equally important and deeper concern regarding children's well-being is the presence of both parents to support their child's growth and development-cognitively, affectively, psychomotorly, and psychologically. Family education plays a crucial role in a child's development. It is not only about providing academic lessons to children but also about shaping their character, values, and personality. (Erikson, 1693) emphasized that the family environment plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's identity and personality. The family is the first place where children begin to absorb social norms, moral values, and behaviors that will form the foundation of their personality.

In the context of family education, the role of parents is essential as models and facilitators of learning for their children. According to (Ginsburg, 1999), parents can provide positive examples, offer guidance, and create an environment that facilitates their children's learning at home. Through nurturing interactions and appropriate teaching, parents can help shape their children's character and personality, enabling them to grow into well-rounded individuals.

According to (Abdullah, 2003), family education encompasses all the efforts made by parents to assist in the personal development of their children, including habits and improvisation. Meanwhile, according to (Dewantara, n.d.), the family serves as the primary foundation for the early education

of every individual, particularly children. In this context, both parents-fathers and mothers-play a central role as the primary agents of learning in a child's life. They act as the primary teachers, guides, and mentors for their children in understanding values, norms, and essential skills needed to navigate life. Therefore, the concept of family education not only refers to a series of educational processes but also encompasses the concrete practices continuously carried out by parents. These practices aim to apply and integrate educational values deemed important in the family's daily life.

This study aims to observe the process of family education in families where the wife (mother) works as a civil servant (lecturer), based on the conception of family education that at least encompasses the aspects of imparting values and norms as well as skills to children (character education). Second, it focuses on building healthy relationships with children, which includes emotional formation and maintenance. Third, it emphasizes the importance of being a role model by providing teaching, guidance, and exemplary behavior. Additionally, this study seeks to identify the challenges faced in maintaining the role of family education for children. By gaining a deeper understanding of these dynamics, it is hoped that more effective solutions and interventions can be discovered to enhance the well-being of children in the context of modern families.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study research design. According to Stake (Creswell, 2012), case study research involves the field researcher investigating a specific event, occurrence, or human activity in detail. The cases are bounded by time and activity, and the researcher collects comprehensive information using various data collection procedures within a predetermined timeframe. This study aims to describe the findings related to the family education process in families with working mothers who are Civil Servant lecturers in educating their children, as well as to identify the challenges they face in maintaining their roles in family education for their children. The research was conducted at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) of Palangka Raya University. This location was chosen based on the reason that it has mothers who work while also having young children, and these mothers remain active in campus activities.

The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling, which means choosing informants based on specific considerations. These considerations included working for more than two years as a lecturer at FKIP Palangka Raya University and being a family member of a working mother. The researcher chose in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation as data collection methods. In-depth interviews were conducted with mothers of children who work as civil servants (ASN) at FKIP UPR, using a recording device, then transcribing and writing down the results. Meanwhile,

observation was done using regular observation, by observing interactions between parents and children. Documentation was carried out by documenting activities relevant to the research topic. Data analysis was performed using Creswell's analysis technique, which consists of six activities: organizing and preparing raw data for analysis, reading all data, coding data, describing themes, interrelating themes, and interpreting and making meaning of the themes. To verify the validity of the data, source and technique triangulation were used. The researcher compared the results of the interviews with the observations and compared the data from one informant to another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Family education in families with working mothers who are civil servant lecturers exhibits diverse characteristics. Each family has its own unique processes, which tend to differ, although there are some similarities in certain aspects.

Quality of Interaction

In the case of Family 1, the mother stated that despite her busy schedule at the university, she still allocates time for her child. She engages in daily activities such as preparing the child's needs, bathing, and feeding breakfast. The family also emphasizes the importance of quality time, which occurs not only on weekends but every day. This statement demonstrates Family 1's strong understanding of the importance of allocating time for their child, despite their work commitments. Similarly, in Family 2, the mother mentioned that quality time typically happens before bedtime when they share stories about the day's activities, pray together, bathe, have breakfast, and enjoy playtime with the father after school. Parental involvement in a child's life, both emotionally and physically, contributes to the child's social and academic development (Epstein, 2011). Although Family 2 entrusts their child to a caregiver, they consistently monitor the child's activities through video calls with the caregiver to ensure the child is engaged in positive activities.

The activities of Family 1 and Family 2, which involve participating in daily routines and utilizing every moment as an opportunity for interaction, demonstrate their commitment to maintaining the quality of interaction despite time challenges. Moreover, consistency in carrying out daily routines with children is also an important aspect, as consistent routines can support a child's emotional and social development (Rafikayati, 2019).

In Family 3, the informant stated that her child is cared for by the grandmother from Monday to Friday, while she and her husband work from morning until evening. On weekends, they spend time together with the child, engaging in activities such as swimming, going to the park, or shopping. She also encourages her child to try new activities to prevent boredom. Care provided by the grandmother can offer emotional stability and strong support for the child. Grandmothers often possess experience and wisdom in child-rearing, which can be beneficial for a child's development (Belsky, 1984). Additionally, a strong bond between the grandmother and grandchild can aid in fostering positive family connections.

However, there is a risk that the caregiving approach of the grandmother may not always align with the values or parenting methods preferred by the parents. Consistency is an essential aspect of parenting for a child's social and emotional development (Bandura, 1977). Family 3 needs to ensure that open communication with the grandmother regarding the values they wish to instill in the child is maintained.

Communication and Emotional Relationships

In Family 1, the mother often engages her child in conversation from the moment they wake up until bedtime. She emphasizes the importance of communication with her child, especially during the bedtime routine, where she offers advice using simple language. By actively talking with her child and using straightforward language when providing guidance, Family 1 not only fosters positive communication but also supports the child's language development.

Similarly, Family 2 makes an effort to manage their routine and ensure that there is allocated time for quality interactions with their child, whether it's during the bedtime routine, going out for meals on weekends, or visiting play areas. This approach is crucial for supporting the child's speaking skills, which are still developing. Narrative communication between parents and children can enhance language abilities and social skills. Children who are engaged in conversations rich in emotional context are more likely to understand their own feelings and those of others (Fivush et al., 2006). Similarly, Family 2 makes an effort to manage their routine and ensure that there is allocated time for quality interactions with their child, whether during the bedtime routine or by going out for meals or to play areas on weekends.

Quality interactions with parents are crucial for a child's emotional and social development (Fivush et al., 2006). Quality time, such as during the bedtime routine or on weekends, can help enhance a child's self-confidence and strengthen family bonds. As a working mother, it is essential to fulfill her responsibilities as a homemaker by dedicating extra time to care for, interact with, and communicate with her children. This approach addresses the child's need for time and affection, which may be lacking due to the mother's work commitments (Dewi & Putri, 2020).

Research on family education involving non-working mothers indicates that greater emotional involvement in a child's life can enhance intimacy and improve understanding of the child's needs (Risley, 1995). However, in the cases of Families 1 and 2, even though the mothers are working, they still manage to allocate sufficient time for emotional and physical interaction with their children. This suggests that emotional involvement is not solely dependent on the amount of time spent at home but also on the commitment and strategies employed by the parents.

While Family 1 demonstrates a commitment to emotionally engage with their child, there is a potential risk if this involvement is inconsistent. Research by (Fivush et al., 2006) indicates that consistent and high-quality interactions between

parents and children are vital for the development of language and social skills. If emotional engagement is disrupted by fatigue or stress and lacks consistency, it can diminish the effectiveness of communication and weaken the emotional bond that has been established.

Character Education

Character education involves teaching children moral and ethical values to shape positive behaviors (Lickona, 1992). This includes instruction on discipline, responsibility, and empathy. Research by (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004) demonstrates that effective character education can be facilitated through direct examples set by parents and discussions about moral values. Children who are taught these values tend to exhibit prosocial behaviors later in life.

In Family 1, the parents provide guidance to their child regarding good and bad behavior and actively instill values of discipline through daily routines, with the hope that these messages will resonate in the child's mind. Additionally, Family 1 emphasizes the importance of discipline by habituating the child to perform certain activities, such as wearing sandals when leaving the house, disposing of trash properly, and apologizing when mistakes are made. Through simple advice, Family 1 endeavors to instill values of discipline and responsibility in their child. This approach not only educates the child's character but also lays a strong moral foundation for their personal development in the future. Discipline may not seem important in early childhood when children have limited responsibilities. However, if this trait is instilled in children from a young age, it will prove to be highly valuable as they grow into adulthood (Nuraeni, 2016).

Meanwhile, Family 2, in terms of character education, instills religious and cultural values in their child through a more situational or incidental approach. This incidental approach allows for learning that is more relevant and easier for children to understand, as it directly relates to their everyday experiences. However, the lack of regular or scheduled instruction may result in a less consistent understanding of these values. Regular teaching of moral values can help children comprehend the consequences of their actions (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004).

In Family 3, values of discipline are instilled through consistent routines related to bedtime, waking up, playtime, bathing, and meals. The child is also taught religious practices by encouraging prayers before and after meals, as well as reading "Allahuaqbar". Teaching discipline and religiosity through daily routines is crucial for fostering positive behaviors in children. This is because clear routines help children feel secure and understand parental expectations (Aprilia et al., 2024). Family 3 intentionally teaches discipline and religiosity through the same daily routines.

Instilling character values and discipline must be balanced with providing children an understanding of the reasons behind these actions. This ensures that children do not merely follow

rules without grasping their meaning and rationale. The family education activities carried out by Family 1 demonstrate that despite the mother's busy schedule as a lecturer, she remains committed to actively participating in family education through effective optimization of the time available, maintaining good communication, and focusing on character education. Thus, Family 1 illustrates how a working mother can effectively fulfill her role in family education.

Life Skills and Self-Development (Talents)

(Elliot, 2008) assert that effective communication skills can help children resolve conflicts effectively and build positive social relationships. Teaching these skills early on is crucial for children's social development. Family 1 promotes communication skills by frequently engaging the child in conversation and responding to their questions. Conflict management skills are taught by Families 1 and 3 through specific situations, such as when a child desires something or makes a mistake, where the family provides understanding and encourages an apology when necessary. Family 1 also guides the child in situations that require negotiation, such as when the child cries after their gadget is taken away.

This situation indicates that Family 1 employs a proactive approach in teaching communication and conflict management skills to their child. By engaging the child in conversation and providing understanding during conflicts, the mother helps the child learn how to interact positively and resolve issues constructively. While this approach is beneficial, there is a risk that, if not handled carefully, the child may learn that crying is an effective way to get what they want. Research by Gresham et al. (2008) suggests that teaching conflict management should involve more constructive alternative strategies, such as negotiation or compromise. Family 1 could occasionally introduce a broader range of conflict management techniques, such as offering choices to the child or encouraging the child to express their feelings verbally. This would help the child learn how to communicate effectively and resolve problems without resorting to tears.

In terms of early detection and development of talents, Family 1 supports the child's interest in automotive subjects by purchasing toy cars and Lego sets to enhance creativity. The informant also attempts to teach drawing, even though the child does not particularly enjoy it. By providing toys that align with the child's interests and encouraging creative exploration, one of the informants from Family 1 is attentive to the child's self-development. Although the child may not like drawing, the family's effort to introduce this activity demonstrates their commitment to the child's holistic development. Children who are encouraged to explore various activities tend to be more confident in their abilities and can improve their motivation and achievements (Hattie, 2008).

A similar pattern regarding the development of children's interests is observed in Family 3, which supports the child's interest in visual arts by purchasing pencils,

sketchbooks, coloring books, and oil pastels. The child is also taught to draw and color. (Hattie, 2008) notes that parental support in exploring interests can enhance children's motivation and achievement. By providing art supplies and guiding their use, Family 3 helps the child positively explore their interests.

On one hand, supporting a child's interests is a positive aspect; however, forcing a child to engage in activities they do not enjoy can lead to frustration and rejection of those activities. Hattie's research (2009) indicates that intrinsic motivation is crucial for effective learning. If a child feels pressured to participate in something they dislike, it may diminish their motivation and interest.

In Family 2, regarding life skills and self-development, the approach tends to give children the freedom to play without emphasizing specific skills. The parents observe the child's interests during activities. This approach reflects an educational philosophy that values the freedom for children to explore their own interests. Research indicates that allowing children the freedom to play can enhance creativity and critical thinking skills (K. Hirsh Pasek, R.M. Golinkoff, N. Berkley, 2009). By letting children play according to their interests, they can learn through direct experience. However, providing too much freedom without guidance can lead to a lack of direction in developing essential skills. (Hattie, 2008) discusses this, stating that while freedom is important, parental supervision and guidance are also necessary to ensure that children achieve optimal development.

Role Model

Individuals learn through the observation of the behaviors of others, and children tend to imitate what they see or what their parents do (Bandura, 1977). The informant from Family 1 recognizes that their behavior as a parent serves as a model for their child. They strive to perform regular prayers in the presence of their child, enabling the child to emulate their behavior. Family 3 also teaches their child to be disciplined, religious, responsible, honest, and generous through direct example. Positive behavioral modeling by parents can influence the moral and social development of children. Children who observe their parents engaging in good behavior are more likely to imitate it (Bandura, 1986).

On the other hand, Family 2 recognizes that children tend to imitate the behaviors of their parents and caregivers. The informant from Family 2 acknowledges that the selection of a caregiver is an important factor, as the caregiver will inevitably become a role model for the child due to the significant amount of time the child spends with them, from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Recognizing the importance of being a role model is a wise step. Children indeed learn a great deal from what they observe in their surroundings (Bandura, 1977). By choosing a caregiver who possesses a good understanding of religious values, they can serve as a positive role model and influence the child's behavior and attitudes positively. However, any

inconsistency between the behaviors of parents and caregivers could confuse the child. Research indicates that consistency in parental behavior is crucial for social learning (Bandura, 1986). Family 2 needs to ensure that all caregivers also understand the values they wish to instill to avoid confusion for the child.

CONCLUSION

Based on an in-depth analysis of interview data with the three informants who are working mothers, it can be concluded that although they strive to be involved in their children's education, there are several significant challenges they face, particularly related to time constraints and consistency in emotional interactions. Consistent emotional involvement is crucial for the social and emotional development of children; however, it is often hindered by the demands of work that consume their time and attention. Although all three informants make an effort to utilize quality time on weekends, the limited interactions during weekdays may diminish emotional closeness and the teaching of moral values that children should ideally receive directly.

Moreover, caregiving by third parties, such as grandparents or professional caregivers, can provide emotional stability and additional support for the child. However, there is a risk that the caregiving approach taken by third parties may not always align with the values and parenting methods desired by the parents. This inconsistency can confuse the child and impact their social and emotional development. Therefore, it is essential for parents to establish open communication with caregivers regarding the educational values they wish to instill in their children.

In this context, the role of parents as role models becomes crucial. Children tend to imitate the behavior of their parents and caregivers; thus, providing a positive example in behavior and moral values is essential for the social learning of children. The informants demonstrate awareness of this by striving to set an example through their daily actions. However, challenges remain when positive interactions do not occur consistently.

Therefore, to enhance the effectiveness of parenting and support the holistic development of their children, working mothers need to implement effective time management strategies, ensure consistent emotional engagement despite time constraints, and create an environment where moral values can be taught routinely. By taking these steps, it is hoped that working mothers can overcome the challenges in family education and provide optimal support for their children's development. This will not only strengthen the relationship between parents and children but also help children grow into emotionally and socially balanced individuals.

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