

A Phenomenological Study on the Dynamics of Work-Family Balance in Dual-career Mothers toward Family Well-being

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Abstract

Role balance is essential for dual-career mothers to perform optimally in both work and family domains. The purpose of this study was to understand how dual-career mothers with children achieved work-family balance to promote family well-being. This study used a qualitative approach employing a phenomenological research design. The sample for this study was selected through purposive technique consisting of four mothers who have dual-careers, children, and are not in a long-distance relationship with their husbands. The data analysis technique used is interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The results indicated that there were five components that supported work-family balance among dual-career mothers, namely dual role balance, work-family balance motivation, family support, dual-career impact, and family well-being. A positive and supportive family environment played a major role in contributing to mothers' success in achieving a balance between work and family. This study contributes to a better understanding of how dual-career mothers can manage role demands, with potential implications for enhancing family functioning and well-being.

Keywords: balance, dual-career, family, motivation, support, well-being, work

Abstrak

Keseimbangan peran sangat penting bagi ibu yang memiliki karier ganda agar dapat berkinerja optimal baik di tempat kerja maupun dalam kehidupan keluarga. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk memahami bagaimana ibu dengan dual karir yang memiliki anak dapat mencapai keseimbangan pekerjaan dengan keluarga dalam mencapai kesejahteraan keluarga. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian fenomenologi. Sampel penelitian ini diambil melalui teknik purposive, terhadap empat orang ibu yang memiliki dual karir, memiliki anak, dan sedang tidak menjalani hubungan jarak jauh dengan suami. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah *interpretational phenomenological analysis* (IPA). Hasil penelitian menemukan terdapat lima komponen yang mendukung keseimbangan kerja-keluarga pada ibu dual karir yaitu keseimbangan peran ganda, motivasi *work-family balance*, dukungan keluarga, dampak dual karir, dan kesejahteraan keluarga. Lingkungan keluarga yang positif dan suportif memiliki peran utama dalam menyumbang keberhasilan akan ibu dalam meraih keseimbangan antara pekerjaan dan keluarga. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang bagaimana ibu dengan dua karier dapat mengelola tuntutan peran, dengan implikasi potensial untuk meningkatkan fungsi dan kesejahteraan keluarga.

Kata kunci: *dual-career*, dukungan, keluarga, keseimbangan, kesejahteraan, motivasi, pekerjaan

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Introduction

Transition from patriarchal norms in collectivist societies toward greater gender equality has expanded opportunities for women to access higher education and participate in the workforce. Chakraborty et al., (2018) declare women's interest in higher education supports the achievement of an adequate career path. In the Indonesian context, particularly among the Betawi ethnic group, 72.8% of women pursue higher education with the aim of securing a better future, reflecting a growing awareness of the value of education (Putri et al., 2024). Women's career opportunities in Indonesia have continued to expand, as reflected in the 2023 data from the Central Statistics Agency, which reports a female labor force participation rate of 54.52%, marking a consistent increase over the past five years (Central Statistics Agency, 2023). These developments have transformed workforce demographics, marked by a rising proportion of women participating in careers. This trend reflects a transition from single-income to dual-income household models, particularly among women who choose to marry and start a family (Molina, 2021).

Women with careers who have achieved financial and psychological stability often choose to continue their life trajectory through marriage. During emerging adulthood, individuals commonly prioritize career development while also navigating relational roles such as marriage, parenting, and caregiving (Mehta & LaRiviere, 2023). For career women, marriage introduces dual roles balancing professional responsibilities with domestic obligations (Sarfaraz et al., 2024). Their motivation to remain in the workforce includes economic contribution, self-actualization, knowledge application, and the pursuit of personal goals. At the same time, they fulfill significant domestic roles as wives and mothers, including caregiving, child-rearing, and managing household well-being (Fajriyati et al., 2022). Thus, for career women, marriage entails navigating complex dual roles that require balancing professional aspirations with substantial domestic responsibilities, supported by both personal motivation and relational commitment.

The many obligations as both housewives and workers for women are at risk of conflict. High work demands, limited social support, and low self-efficacy contribute to emotional exhaustion, which in turn negatively affects their work performance (Meyer et al., 2021). The dual roles undertaken by women often cause conflict if there is an imbalance between the two. This results in work-family conflict, which is a form of inter-role conflict where role pressures from the work and family domains conflict with each other (Evani et al., 2024). Work-family conflict is driven by overlapping responsibilities between work and domestic domains, excessive job demands, irregular working hours, and the depletion of personal resources. An imbalance of those factors may compromise the sustainability of family life (Adams & Golsch, 2023; Rhéaume, 2022). Therefore, a balance is needed in carrying out the dual role experienced by a mother.

Mothers' dual roles require balancing work responsibilities and family care, known as work-family balance. According to the theory of Greenhaus et al. (2003), this balance involves equitable time allocation, psychological involvement, and satisfaction between work and family roles (Evani et al., 2024). The process includes personal competence as input and satisfaction as output. Women pursue careers motivated by internal factors like self-actualization and achievement, as well as external factors such as financial

needs and social recognition (Kim, 2020). A balance between inputs and outputs results in high satisfaction across both roles, while an imbalance leads to low satisfaction. Maintaining this balance is essential for the well-being and effectiveness of mothers in both domains.

Couples who have married and formed a household have a noble goal, namely to form a family well-being. Living in collectivist cultures, marriage can be seen as a means of uniting two families in a sacred bond and the path to prosperity (Kus Ambrož et al., 2021). One of the efforts in realizing family well-being is the balance of roles among family members. Balanced family interactions with work can have important implications for child care and development, couple harmony, and family well-being relationships (Holmes et al., 2020). One of the protective factors of work-family balance is the support of extended family members for the decision to undergo a dual role by a mother (Sarfaraz, 2021). In addition, the husband's support for his wife, who has a double job by being able to act as both a husband and a child, will help the wife achieve balance. The balance between work and family in mothers will lead to a positive view of their efforts in the welfare of themselves, their husbands, and their children.

Theoretically, work-family conflict will weaken the self-efficacy of a mother because the belief in the ability to carry out an action is not achieved due to conflict (Adams & Golsch, 2023). High intensity of work-family conflict can lead to working mothers' dissatisfaction and anxiety in their work because they feel unable to meet the demands of the job (Syifa et al., 2023). The negative impact caused by the imbalance between work and family has a very high level of risk. Limited time to maintain personal well-being due to the dominance of work roles can trigger emotional exhaustion, which can lead to depression, poor performance, and suicidal tendencies. (Meyer et al., 2021). It is important to have research that highlights the dynamics of working mothers to have multiple jobs at once to take effective steps that can be taken in maintaining family balance towards well-being.

Previous studies has focused on quantitative research, in addition to focusing only on mothers who have one main job with already spend more than 40 – 50 hours at work. The results of research conducted by Sarfaraz et al (2024) show the high prevalence of work-household conflict in married women, especially those with two or more children, who are prone to experiencing negative relationships at work with their families. Research conducted by Hosain (2024) shows that the ability to manage time in terms of priorities by distributing time for work, family, health, vacation, and childcare will result in a balanced life. Research conducted by Made and Mayatika (2024) showed that communication proved effective in overcoming household conflicts in achieving a balance between work and family. Research by Hosain (2024) identifies research limitations that open up opportunities for further study on dual-career couples and may encourage policymakers to support families with children. However, no studies have specifically explored the dynamics of mothers with dual-careers or their efforts to achieve family well-being.

The purpose of this study is to explore the real experiences of mothers in balancing work and family. In addition, this study aims to identify effective strategies, role meanings, and responsibilities in their dual roles as workers and housewives. This study is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge, particularly in qualitative

studies on the dynamics of work-family balance among mothers with dual-careers who strive to balance their professional and family roles. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring the real-life experiences of mothers with dual-careers in managing the balance between work and family, the meanings they assign to their roles, as well as the strategies and factors that support or hinder them in achieving that balance.

Methods

Participants

This research uses a qualitative approach with a type of phenomenology and use interpretative phenomenological analysis. This study focuses on using phenomenology to explore in-depth information about the dynamics (Becker et al., 2022; Creswell & D., 2023) of work-family balance in dual-career mothers directly from the perspective of participants who experience this phenomenon. Data collection of this study was conducted for three months, namely September-November 2024, in Yogyakarta. The research participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique where the researcher determines the special identity that matches the research objectives according to the criteria built so that it is expected to fulfill the research hypothesis. Participants in this study are mothers who have more than one job (can be in the form of positions, organizational involvement, and side jobs). Another characteristic is a mother who has children and is not in a long-distance marriage relationship with her husband.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) does not mandate a fixed sample size. For studies seeking to examine inter-individual similarities and differences, a sample of 3 to 6 participants is commonly recommended (La Kahija, 2017). Accordingly, this study employed a sample of four participants. Data collection in this study was carried out by semi-structured interviews offline with three participants who live in Yogyakarta and online with one participant outside Yogyakarta. Offline data collection enables a more nuanced and immersive exploration of participants' lived experiences, whereas online modalities may introduce methodological limitations, including connectivity disruptions and restricted time availability (Smith & Fieldsend, 2021). This study does not require formal approval; participation is voluntary, personal data is kept confidential, and participants may withdraw at any time. The study upholds the principles of voluntariness, privacy, and confidentiality.

Measurement

The source of data for this study is information obtained directly from research participants through interviews with open-ended questions. Interview guidelines were made based on the aim to explore the experiences and dynamics of participants in undergoing dual roles while working and being a housewife. The interview questions were developed to be deeper based on three research questions, namely how mothers balance dual roles and how working mothers interpret work-family balance, as well as efforts in realizing family well-being. The interview guidelines that will be used in this study have gone through a review process from the supervisor by conducting content-based validity related to the suitability of the questions to be used in the interview and the representation of the work-family balance component. Before the interview process

began, the researcher ensured that the interviewees were informed about the purpose, duration, confidentiality of data and identity, as well as other relevant information through an informed consent sheet. Data collection for this study was conducted over a period of three months, September-November 2024 in Yogyakarta, with an interview duration of one to two hours. The interviews were conducted by the researcher and recorded using a voice recorder or recorded using zoom.

Analysis

The data analysis technique used is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which is the process of interpreting how participants as people who experience certain events directly interpret their experiences or called double hermeneutic where there are two interpretations that occur, namely the participants' interpretation of their experiences and then continued by the researcher's interpretation of their participants (La Kahija, 2017). This technique was chosen because it is considered in accordance with the research objectives. After all IPA seeks to explore how individuals interpret important experiences in their lives. There are a series of stages in carrying out data analysis using the IPA technique proposed by La Kahija (2017), namely reading transcripts repeatedly, making initial notes or exploratory comments, formulating emergent themes, formulating superordinate themes, finding relationships between themes, and looking for patterns between themes.

Findings

In general, the findings of this study discuss the dynamics of participants' experiences in living life with dual-careers and married life. The description of the experiences experienced by the participants is listed in the main themes which include (1) strategies in balancing roles, (2) motivation in undergoing work and being a housewife or work-family balance, (3) how the role of family support includes husband support and family relationships, (4) the impact of undergoing dual-careers, and (5) efforts in achieving family well-being. The five superordinate themes are summarized in Table 1 and serve as the main topics in the results and discussion of this study.

Table 1. Parent themes and superordinate themes

Parent Themes	Superordinate Themes
Dual role balance	Parenting strategy Achieving work-family balance Job management Conflict management
Work-family balance motivation	Work motivation Efforts to achieve family well-being Children as a priority
Family support	The role of the husband support Relationship with family Family support

Table 1. Parent themes and superordinate themes (Continue)

Parent Themes	Superordinate Themes
Impact of dual-careers	Balancing responsibilities Workload
Family well-being	The challenge of balancing roles Quality time with family Hope The meaning of work-family balance

Efforts to Balance the Role of Worker and Housewife

The main thing that each participant did and experienced was that in carrying out their role as workers, participants revealed that they still tried to prioritize their family life, especially their children. This makes participants try to do activity and time management so that they can be optimal at work and be present to fulfill their obligations as housewives. Time management here is very necessary for participants because of their busy activities with dual-careers at the same time.

"And I'm really committed to myself and my husband, if for example we meet our child, then we should spend at least 30 minutes to focus on him, to invite him to play in our current time. In the past, we sometimes played with him, we played with our cellphones. Now because we have very little time, we are running a new business, and we have to think about his life, so yes, we commit here. So the time for me to be a housewife and as a working mother is probably around 75-85 working, yes the rest is a housewife." (DA)

Participant DA said that her efforts to maintain work balance with family are committed to her husband to focus on everything that is lived, such as focusing on work and focusing when with children. Participant DA has just opened a new business, namely a "bake-in" cake business which requires a lot of time to be able to focus on developing her business, so there is not much time to be with family, therefore participants try to provide quality time with children and family when they are at home.

"For example, it's more about the time when I'm already finished at school, then when I get home I have to do my work. Sometimes my children become more caper like that, Ma'am-Mama. Because maybe they feel like they don't have enough time with their moms. So if I'm really free, I try to still be able to invite them to play." (MD)

Having two young children means that both children are still very attached to their parents, especially their mother. Participant MD's busy schedule at school coupled with her busy schedule of tutoring at home, makes her two children miss their closeness with their mother. This makes MD participants strive to provide quality time with their children without interrupting their work.

"When it comes to how to divide the time, I think I first got used to it, the second I found a rhythm. Surely everything when it is done at the beginning, there will

definitely be adaptation, the adaptation process. But when it comes to dividing the time, I think I already have my own rhythm, which is thank God, it's impossible if I can do it alone." (FA)

Participant FA seems more enjoyable in living his life by having a dual role because he has gone through a lot of adaptation processes so that he finds the right rhythm in order to be able to carry out work with the household in a balanced manner.

"Even though the work on campus must be brought home, for me it doesn't matter. Because it is one way to fulfill the responsibilities of campus work. As long as I do the work at home without disturbing my activities at home." (SR)

The results of the answers of all participants have their own ways to divide activities and time in order to be able to balance their roles as workers and the role of housewives.

Work-Family Balance Motivation

Motivation to undergo dual roles as well as dual-careers is needed by the four participants. Motivation is able to encourage participants to remain enthusiastic in living their lives as workers and housewives.

"It's true and like Alhamdulillah, I'm probably not tired because I have to support or meet other people's needs, so I'm really tired because it's for myself in the future, so maybe it's more like okay, this is my risk because I already have a plan, so how do I realize the plan in this way now." (AD)

Participant AD is motivated in doing her job even though she does not get demands from her husband because participants strive for a prosperous life in the future.

"But I live it happily because that's what it is, again this is something that maybe I have been dreaming of, I have a pretty good career which is my dream according to my passion, my dream and my parents too, then I can give children to my husband, give grandchildren to my parents, so here it's like a lot of things that I should be grateful for." (MD)

Being a teacher while being able to work at home with the same profession is the participant's dream so that when living it participants feel happy and grateful.

"Because in my opinion, I find more meaning in life when I can be useful. One of them is by working. Because there is another option not to work, which is to open a practice, but here I am not yet a psychologist" (FA).

A benefit from the work done is the biggest motivation experienced by participants FA, namely with the work undertaken, participants can provide benefits and actualization of knowledge to other people or parties.

"Yes, my motivation is to complete all roles or responsibilities. The responsibility was earlier. Responsibility is part of me being useful to others. Actually, that is the motivation to work, which is to benefit others." (SR)

Family Support

All participants expressed that family support such as parents and husbands greatly influenced their success in carrying out dual roles. For participant AD, family support was very helpful in living life, especially in taking care of AD's child when the participant was working.

"This is inseparable from all the support from the people around me, especially my family, I can manage my time like this, so I don't feel overwhelmed, I don't feel really tired, why do I keep working like this, I don't think about it like that." (AD)

In addition to the support of the extended family, participants MD expressed that the role of husband's support, cooperation from their husbands, and good relationships with their husbands greatly helped the participants in carrying out their roles as dual-career workers and housewives.

"But, eee after I went through it, with the current situation, I feel it's not hard. Because, my husband, thank God, is very supportive, with my work. So, eee I don't feel that it's one-sided." (MD)

"Yes, it's definitely not ideal, right? But it's not always. Again, it's communication and support from your partner. Mutual understanding between partners is the key to balance, in my opinion, for mothers who, or wives who work." (FA)

"Oh, of course, because all this time, the relationship, I mean, we support each other. Because we support each other in the family, almost all family matters are resolved well." (SR)

It is undeniable that being a dual-career mother and a housewife is very difficult, but with the support of family and husband, the participants are able to share roles and work, especially household activities with their families so that participants do not feel burdened and are able to carry out their roles well.

Impact of Dual-career

Doing two jobs at once has consequences in the form of impacts on participants and their families. Participant AD, who just had a toddler, felt the impact of her busy work as a pharmacist and had just opened a business, so she had less time to pay attention to her child

"So, in the past few months, he was often sick, had diarrhea, suddenly had a cough, a runny nose, and so on. So, I felt guilty there. Maybe like, I'm so busy, there's nothing for my child, let alone for myself, right?" (AD)

"Yes, that's for sure, Sis. I definitely feel it. When we're already working at school, then we're still at home, I definitely feel that my time with my family will be reduced" (MD)

"No, there are definitely times when it's not ideal. For example, it turns out that I have to work overtime, or there are lots of activities, or certain meetings, that will also take up more or less time for me, my child, and my husband like that." (FA)

"Some lectures are not optimal, for example I can't attend because of conflict. Actually, this is, so it's not a conflict between family and work, but between one job and another." (SR)

Based on the results of interviews with four participants, it was found that each participant had their own obstacles and consequences in carrying out dual roles and also with dual-careers at the same time. The three participants stated that the impact of dual-careers had an effect on reduced time with family, while for SR participants it was more about clashing work schedules so that they were less than optimal.

Family Well-Being

The last important point based on the research findings is the effort to achieve family well-being. The dynamics of living a dual role with dual-careers are so complex that the participants strive so that their hard work in the future will help realize their family's welfare.

"My hope for the future for my family, Bismillah, is that we will continue to be together until we don't know when we will be, and I hope that my husband and I can educate them to be strong children, patient children, pious children, and have strong principles because today's social life is what I really worry about, so no matter what we do, we take care of them, no matter what we teach them, yes, anything can happen, hopefully Allah will always protect my child and us wherever we are, my prayer is that my husband and I can continue to facilitate our children well. So they can grow up to be happy children." (AD)

"My way of ensuring the welfare of my children is by providing the best facilities for them, yes, maybe in terms of time I may be lacking but I try for them, to be able to get a better education than I did, if possible the mother has a Master's degree, the child has a Doctorate degree." (MD)

"It's okay, we are working hard now, but earlier we agreed on the goal that we will not pursue this for long, so later the goal is for us to return to our village, we study our religion, we practice the knowledge, it will definitely be more beneficial there" (FA)

“But that I work and then get financial rewards from my work, and then it has a positive impact on my family, it is certain. It will definitely have a positive impact on family well-being and it also makes me feel comfortable too.” (SR)

The hope for welfare is something that is unintentionally and intentionally pursued by the participants. Considering that the participants did not receive demands from their husbands to work, it was a personal motivation to realize the meaning of life and the well-being of their lives and their families.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that dual-career mothers actively experience and navigate the complexities of work-family balance. Work-family balance is conceptualized as an individual's effort to harmonize occupational and familial roles. The analysis revealed five key components characterizing the participants' experiences dual role balance, motivation for maintaining work-family balance, perceived family support, the impact of dual-careers, and family well-being. These five components represent a novel contribution to the literature, extending beyond the traditional dimensions commonly referenced in earlier frameworks. Specifically, while Greenhaus et al. (2003) identify work-family balance through time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance, the current findings suggest a broader and more contextually nuanced understanding. Moreover, this study complements and expands prior research that has highlighted additional factors such as self-adjustment, parenting strategies, and achievement balance (Evani et al., 2024), couple communication (Made & Mayatika, 2024), and marital satisfaction (Husna & Karyani, 2022). Each participant has a unique experience of experiencing these five components in carrying out their roles.

The busyness experienced by the four participants did not limit them in their efforts to maintain a balance between work and household affairs. Some of the efforts made by the participants were time management, work management, and sharing parenting roles with husband and family. These findings are in line with the research of Wijayanto and Fauziah (2020) which stated that participants in carrying out roles in family and work have strategies, namely by managing time, asking for help from others, shortening the physical distance of the role domain and communication strategies. In addition, participants try to manage stress that is prone to occur, such as clashes between one job and another or conflicts between work and family. Effective stress management interventions are critical to enabling working mothers to maintain equilibrium between career and family responsibilities (Ikpeama, 2024). The results of research by Syafhil and Herawati (2024) show that the most common coping strategy carried out by working mothers is positive reappraisal or coping strategies that focus on emotions by changing into a better person, rediscovering what is important in life, and worshiping and praying. This makes participants able to carry out their work optimally without neglecting the needs of their families.

The ability to have a dual-career and as a housewife cannot be separated from motivation. Participants expressed that the profession they are currently pursuing is

something that is a goal and ideal that they want to achieve, besides that by working, they feel the meaning of life and are able to provide benefits to others. Research by Krisnauli et al. (2024) shows that working mothers or so-called mompreneurs have high job satisfaction as evidenced by the satisfaction of being able to help the family, help family income, and family well-being. Participants also feel that they can enjoy every role they play, indicating the active participation of participants in each role. In line with the meaning of work-family balance expressed by Greenhaus et al. (2012) work-family balance is the overall assessment of the level of satisfaction and effectiveness of individuals in carrying out roles in the realm of work and family that are in accordance with their life values at a certain point in time (Evani et al., 2024).

These components focus on the dynamics of work-family balance as seen from how the support of other parties such as partners helps to achieve balance for working mothers. Similar research on the importance of the role of family, friends, neighbors, superiors, and colleagues in supporting working professionals, especially working women (Hosain, 2024). Various forms of social support whether through employer flexibility, coworker empathy, or direct family assistance are crucial in minimizing the negative effects of role overload (Wiens et al., 2023). Their findings reinforce the notion that when mothers perceive a robust support system, their ability to manage work and family responsibilities improves markedly. Participants felt that the ability to balance household and work roles would not be possible without support from their closest family. Support can be in the form of practical assistance, such as taking care of children or housework, as well as emotional support, such as providing encouragement and understanding that can make mothers feel comfortable and less stressed (Khairunnisa, 2025).

Participants expressed that their process of living life as a mother with a dual role with dual-careers cannot be separated from the support of their husband and family. In line with the research conducted by Fajriyati et al (2022) efforts that have been made by mothers with dual roles include asking for help from people closest to them such as husbands or family members, creating active communication with caregivers while working, managing emotions and thinking positively, and not mixing work and family. Similar research also suggests that husbands and wives who cooperate in sharing roles and making decisions by discussing together will increase positive family interactions (Angraini et al., 2024). For participants, husband's support, such as division of work, parenting roles, and approval of the husband when the participant is going to work greatly motivates the participants and makes them not too burdened when doing it. This is in line with the research of Rachmawati and Masykur (2017), where the support given by the husband has a big effect on participants to become more comfortable, calm, and not feel alone, in facing difficult situations.

The workload to the job title carried out by the participants, they are still mothers who have obligations and roles in the household. Several participants such as MD, FA, and SR still take time to do housework. This is in line with the research of Wijayanto and Fauziah (2020) which states that even though they work, participants still have duties as housewives such as preparing food, maintaining the house and managing family finances. The index of mental burden associated with managing family relationships and functions is strongly associated with mental health, and mothers' greater exposure to

stressors, making it important to address the caregiving dimension as a critical component in the process of balancing work and household obligations (Fuller et al., 2024). Apart from the participants who have household assistants or ART, participants AD and SR still try to be able to prepare food and take care of their children well. They feel happier, calmer, and more satisfied with their lives when they can maintain a good balance between work and family.

In accordance with the purpose of the study, namely regarding family well-being, the participants expressed that their hard work had a great influence on family well-being, both for the participants themselves, their children, their husbands, and their extended families. There are differences in the characteristics of single-earner families and dual-earner families because they can affect family well-being (Angraini et al., 2024). Well-maintained work-family balance leads to a range of positive outcomes, including role enrichment and overall satisfaction in both spheres (Ji & Jung, 2021). The findings of the five components in this study are able to provide additional scientific treasures in the efforts and experiences of dual-career mothers who try to balance work with their families.

This study is limited by its focus on a small, context-specific group of participants and the use of single-session interviews. While appropriate for Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), these factors may constrain the breadth of experiences captured. Future studies may benefit from multiple interview waves or broader participant variation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Work-family balance among dual-career mothers depends not only on personal motivation but significantly on social support from spouses and family. Such support mitigates role strain and facilitates effective participation in both work and family domains. A positive and supportive family environment enables mothers to pursue career aspirations while actively fulfilling domestic roles. Although mothers may spend more time at work, the quality of engagement in both roles remains crucial. Thus, social support is fundamental to sustaining dual responsibilities and reducing work-family conflict.

Recommendation

Dual-career mothers face complex dynamics in balancing professional and domestic roles. One critical factor influencing their ability to manage these demands is support from their spouse. One critical factor influencing their ability to manage these demands is the support they receive from their partners. Husbands' involvement not only lightens their wives' burdens but also reflects the quality of role negotiation within the family system. Exploring the husband's perspective is crucial for understanding work-family balance holistically, including the emotional, behavioural, and structural adjustments required from both partners. Future research should explore how husbands contribute to and experience the process of supporting mothers with dual roles, as their participation is often underrepresented in current literature.

Practically, companies and governments are encouraged to adopt family responsive policies, such as flexible schedules, paternity leave, and employee assistance programmes. Concurrently, family and marriage institutions should promote co-parenting education and couple-based interventions to encourage shared responsibility and mutual support, ultimately contributing to greater family well-being.

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