

Impact of domestic task involvement toward parental stress on dual earner couples

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Abstract

Purpose: The prevalence of dual-earner couples in Indonesia, particularly in urban areas, has led to an increase in their roles both at work and in the family. This situation often results in inappropriate domestic task involvement, which in turn affects the stress levels of these couples. Understanding the impact of domestic task involvement on parental stress is crucial for the fields of family studies, psychology, and sociology.

Method: The research included 237 respondents obtained using purposive sampling techniques, and the results were analyzed with quantitative methods with criteria for early adulthood, working married couples, having children aged at least six years, and being domiciled in Jabodetabek. Data was collected through a survey using the instruments Subject's Involvement in Household Chores and Partner's Involvement in Household Chores for the independent variable and Parental Stress Scale for the dependent variable. Data was analyzed using quantitative methods through multiple regression analysis to test the impact of domestic task involvement on parental stress.

Result: The results show that domestic task involvement has a significantly negative impact of 3.4% on low levels of parental stress. The multiple regression test shows the calculated significance level of $0.017 < 0.05$. Subject Involvement and Partner Involvement simultaneously have a negative influence on parental stress.

Conclusion: The study underscores the pivotal role of collaboration between husband and wife in managing domestic tasks, which can significantly reduce parental stress. These findings not only contribute to the academic discourse but also suggest practical strategies for supporting dual-earner couples in Indonesia.

Keywords: domestic task involvement; dual-earner couples; family; parental stress

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of dual-earner couples or couples who work together is standard in Indonesian society. Both partners who have the same role in earning income can help the family's economic needs. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia has impacted limiting social activities. Most activities must be carried out from within the home, including school activities and productive work, most of which move to use online technology (Asriani et al., 2021). This condition certainly makes the family have to adapt. Both husbands and wives in the family must think strategically to obtain additional income sources to fulfill the family's needs (Nayati & Putri, 2021). This condition has caused dual-earner couples to increase until the post-pandemic period, especially in urban areas such as Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi).

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Dual-earner couples are vulnerable to stress due to the double burden the couple has, either taking care of the household or working in the office. If couples do not divide time well, they can experience stress because they are equally important. When work in the office has been done at home, it will interfere with parents caring for children or doing work assignments. Likewise, family problems can disturb the mind and make parents unable to focus on carrying out their work at the office. Apart from that, hustle culture also has a widespread impact on people who live in urban areas. This culture often makes people lose track of time and ignore physical and mental health to pursue work targets (Iskandar & Rachmawati, 2022). If it has been done excessively, this can undoubtedly harm child care. Parents will become more focused on themselves and neglect time with their children. As a result, children's development can be disrupted, and they may have a tenuous relationship with their parents.

Inappropriate involvement in domestic tasks can cause parental stress, especially for dual-earner couples. Patriarchal culture in Indonesian society has caused differences in behavior, status, and authority between men and women, becoming a gender hierarchy (Zuhri & Amalia, 2022). This often gives the role of completing household tasks and caring for children to the mother. Mothers are instinctively expected to be able to carry out their duties as wives by managing household chores and as parents for their children by nurturing and looking after the children. However, the role of fathers is not less important for children's development. Fathers not only engage in different types of activities that help children learn and grow, but they also, as do mothers, provide emotional support, discipline their children, and offer guidance and support. That represents the quantity and the quality of fathering (Cabrera, 2019). The division of tasks given to mothers can cause parental stress because mothers have a double burden, working at the office and at home.

The dual-earner couples' roles can provide particular challenges for couples, such as difficulty balancing their roles at work and home. A balanced distribution of household tasks involvement needs to be done to create a good relationship between dual-earner couples. Couples could learn to focus on what really needs to be done in the home and then try to equitably divide these tasks so that no one person is adversely affected by an overload of tasks (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2008).

From the explanation given, the hypothesis of this research is: Domestic task involvement significantly impacts parental stress on dual-earner couples.

METHODS

This research used domestic task involvement (subject and partner involvement) as the independent variable and parental stress as the dependent variable. The number of participants in this research was 237 respondents who were early adults (20–40 years old), were working, had a partner who both worked, had children aged at least 6 years and over, and lived in Jabodetabek. The instruments used in this research were adapted from English to Indonesian and were for domestic task involvement and parental stress. Researchers did the forward and backward translations and then synthesized the most suitable translation in Indonesian. The readability test was also conducted with 5 respondents to align the public's understanding of each questionnaire item. The domestic task involvement instrument consists of the Subject Involvement on Household Chores Scale and the Perception of Partner Involvement on Household Chores Scale from Cerrato and Cifre (2018) to measure participant involvement and perceptions of their partners in domestic tasks. Reliability tested through SPSS. The reliability

value of the Subject's Involvement on Household Chores instrument is 0.734, which indicates that the reliability of the instrument is high. The reliability value of the Perception of Partner's Involvement on Household Chores instrument is 0.773, which indicates that the reliability of the instrument is high because it is more than 0.7.

To measure parental stress, researchers used the Parental Stress Scale designed by Berry and Jones (1995). The parental stress questionnaire is used to calculate the stress level when parents do parenting for their children. The reliability of the Parental Stress scale is in the high category with score 0.705. The majority of statement items also have quite high, with corrected item correlation from 0.206 to 0.819. However, items number 2, 3 and 4 have validity scores below 0.2. This indicates that the validity of the three items is low. Therefore, these items cannot be included in descriptive statistical analysis tests and hypothesis testing. Researchers used quantitative methods in this research. This research data collection used a unique purposive sampling technique, which involved selecting a specific group of respondents, namely dual-earner couples in the Jabodetabek area. The data obtained was processed first using prerequisite tests, then continued with descriptive statistical analysis to identify participant demographic data and the general characteristics of each research variable. Before testing the hypothesis, there were assumption tests that carried out first using SPSS, consist of normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity test. Then data was analyzed through multiple regression analysis to measure how much influence the independent variable had on the dependent variable simultaneously.

RESULT

This research involved 237 respondents, with 146 women and 91 men. There were 98 respondents aged between 20-30 years old and 139 respondents in the age range 31-40 years old. Most respondents are domiciled in Jakarta, with 162 respondents, 29 in Bekasi, 18 in Depok, 16 in Tangerang, and 12 in Bogor. Meanwhile, the occupations of respondents were private employees (101 respondents), civil service employees (100 respondents), entrepreneurs (22 respondents), specialized professions (13 respondents), and state-owned enterprises (BUMN) employees (1 respondent).

Table 1
Result of Descriptive Analysis (N = 237)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Subject involvement	24	49	37.90	5.297
Partner involvement	25	49	37.04	5.121
Parental stress	17	36	26.01	3.847

The independent variable in this research is Domestic Task Involvement, which is divided into Subject Involvement (SI) and Partner Involvement (PI), while the dependent variable is Parental Stress (PS). The result of the descriptive analysis can be seen in Table 1. Based on the results of categorization norms, all respondents experienced low levels of parental stress. Respondents' household chores involvement (SI) was at a high level at 91%, followed by a low level at 9%. Respondents' perception of their partner on household chores involvement (PI) mainly at a high level of 90%, followed by a low level of 10%.

Table 2
Result of Hypothesis Test with Multiple Regression Analysis

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.184	.034	.026	3.797

The result of the hypothesis test of Subject Involvement and Partner Involvement toward Parental Stress can be seen in Table 2. The coefficient of determination (R Square) of Subject Involvement and Partner Involvement as independent variables is 0.034, which means that the influence of the Independent Variable on Parental Stress is 3.4%. From the Multiple Regression Test, it is known that the calculated F value = 4.118 with a significance level of $0.017 < 0.05$, so the regression model can be used to predict the participation variable. The regression coefficient of Subject Involvement and Partner Involvement were negative (-), so the direction of influence of the two independent variables on Parental Stress is negative. Subject Involvement and Partner Involvement simultaneously have a negative influence on parental stress. It can be said that H_a is accepted. Domestic task involvement significantly impacts parental stress on dual-earner couples.

DISCUSSION

Domestic Task Involvement has a significantly negative impact of 3.4% on Parental Stress in dual-earner couples. Domestic task involvement in this research is divided into two parts: the subject's involvement in household chores (SI) and the subject's perception of partner involvement in household chores (PI). It means that the higher the involvement of subjects and their partners in domestic tasks, the lower the stress level experienced by dual-earner couples. Based on the results of the categorization norms of subject involvement, most respondents were involved in household work and taking care of children at a high level, 91%. Also, the perception of the respondent's partner's involvement in household work and caring for children is at a high level of 90%. As for the percentage obtained on average, the difference in domestic task involvement between respondents and their partners is low, only 1%. This result is in contrast to the research by Tamara, Nizar, and Ardi (2023) that a dual role in working and doing domestic tasks can also cause stress, which results in mental disorders. The low gap between the subjects and their partner's involvement in household chores also showed that both husbands and wives in dual-earner couples have striven for equitable distribution of domestic tasks. This condition enables a decrease in the level of parental stress. It is in line with the research by Amalia, Abidin, and Lubis (2022) that those who experience role conflict because of household tasks become easily vulnerable to caregiving stress. That also showed that collaboration on household chores between husband and wife who both work can reduce parental stress.

The small influence of Domestic Task Involvement shows that other factors lead to Parental Stress. Based on research conducted by Fitriani, Gina, and Perdhana (2020), parental stress can also be caused by economic status, caregiving assistance, and psychological health. This also agrees with research by Dewi (2019), which shows that the child's condition, social support, economic status, and psychological support can influence the emergence of parental stress. Parents' failure to manage their stress can be a factor in children developing behavioral problems (Kristikanti, Noer, & Pebriani, 2023). Therefore, parents can try several ways to avoid parental stress. Dual-

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earner couples can plan and carry out activities with their partner so that time between work and family can remain balanced. Proper collaboration in taking care of children and doing household chores between husband and wife can create a comfortable and harmonious atmosphere in the family. This condition also can avoid parental stress. Parents can do several activities to strengthen the bonding with children, such as group sports, yoga, attending children's events at school, baking and then having picnics together, going to the zoo, doing sports together, and accompanying children when studying. This can be done in free time to optimize the emotional relationship between father, mother, and child. Harmonious relationships can minimize the emergence of parental stress in dual-earner couple families.

CONCLUSION

Domestic Task Involvement has a significant negative impact on Parental Stress in dual-earner couples. Domestic task involvement in this research is divided into two parts: the subject's involvement in household chores (SI) and the subject's perception of partner involvement in household chores (PI). Increasing individual involvement in taking care of the household influences to decrease parental stress. This means that for dual-earner couples in Jabodetabek, parents will be more peaceful if they directly participate in household chores and raising children. The collaboration of husband and wife in domestic tasks also has an essential role in reducing parental stress. Thus, parental stress can be caused by other factors, such as economic status, caregiving assistance, social support, the child's condition, or the psychological health of the parents, which can be explored more in further research. This research can be a fundamental basis for creating campaigns that support collaboration in dual-earner couples to have equal involvement in household chores jointly and taking care of children.

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