THE DUAL ROLE OF SINGLE PARENT: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract
This study aims to determine the multiple roles and constraints faced by single parents of women in the midst of their families. This study used qualitative research methods. Research subjects were taken using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected through observation techniques, interviews and documentation. The theory used is role theory with the supporting theory of AGIL (Adaptation, Goal, Integration, Latency). It was concluded that the role attached to a mother, namely the domestic role and the role attached to a father, namely the public role, has different challenges and implementation. A single-parent woman carries out both roles simultaneously, there is a division of labor among other family members and some are not. There are several forms of maintenance carried out by a single-parent woman in the midst of her family, which will require a time-consuming process. This is done in order to support the current situation and minimize constraints and conflicts in the family. There are several obstacles faced, most of the obstacles are related to meeting family needs, and giving affection and attention. The concept of AGIL in research is associated with the concept of roles and constraints in carrying out these dual roles.

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INTRODUCTION

Family is the smallest unit within society, consisting of a household head and the members who reside together, sharing emotional dependencies. Families can be categorized into nuclear families and extended families (A. Wahid & Halilurrahman, 2019).Conflict and issues within the family are commonplace, particularly in cases of the loss of one spouse or single parenthood (Yusnita & Sartika, 2021). A single mother is a woman who has been abandoned by her husband or life partner due to separation, divorce, or death and has chosen to raise her children on her own. Family is the first and main environment of children (Noviana, 2018).

Data from PEKKA (Women-Headed Family Empowerment Program) in 2005 in Indonesia indicates that there were 40 individuals with the status of single mothers. They face a dual role, such as providing for the family, which is typically carried out by men. The inability to fulfill either of these roles can create inequality. Women single parents often face challenges such as difficulties in meeting the family's needs and limitations in the types of work they can undertake, unlike men. Being a single mother within a household is undoubtedly not easy. As single parents, they bear a heavier burden. The single-parent family's livelihood pattern must be fulfilled and a strategy is needed to implement it (Susanti & Hayat, 2022).

On one hand, they must provide for the family's livelihood, and on the other, they must give attention to their children (Simanullang et al., 2022). Single mothers will do everything in their power to ensure their children's needs are met (Susanti & Hayat, 2022). Conditions like these result in modifications to social capital, and roles, and several changes that occur within them. Based on the data received by the researcher, Labuhbaru Barat Subdistrict has a population of 15,143 people, with a total of 4,133 households (Source: Labuhbaru Barat Subdistrict Data, 2021). Among the population, there are 180 women who no longer have life partners. This can be attributed to several factors, including divorce, death, infidelity, or even the birth of a child without a legally recognized marriage bond.

Parents are the main and first educators for their children. Children are born and live in a family environment, the first people the child knows in the family are their parents (Apriani et al., 2022). Female single parents, in addition to shouldering the tasks and responsibilities traditionally associated with husbands and fathers in a family, also strive to prove that they are capable of educating and fulfilling their children's aspirations with dedication. They aim to raise successful, work-respecting, socially adept, and independent children. Children often join their mothers in household chores during their leisure time. These female single parents persistently pursue this goal and attempt to change societal perceptions of their status (Astina, 2019). In a family, the roles of men and women have long been traditionally distinguished. Women take care of the home, including giving birth, caring for children, cooking, and providing nurturing, while men are responsible for providing for the family through hunting (in the past) or working (today). Work and household duties should not be in conflict and should not cause strife within the family, as both are equally important (Holijah, 2020).

In society, there is often a prevailing belief that women tend to possess qualities such as nurturing, discipline, and are less suited to be the head of a household. Consequently, tasks related to traditional femininity are frequently placed upon women's shoulders (Zahra, 2019). This results in women requiring an extended amount of time to manage domestic
roles, including child-rearing (Motherhood), thus limiting their ability to work outside the home. Dual roles often present a challenge for women, especially when they are compelled to work outside the home due to economic pressures, such as when their partners pass away or the family's income is insufficient to meet their needs (Ramadhani, 2016). The phenomenon of women working outside the home is becoming increasingly common in Indonesian society.

Michelle describes the dual role as cultural dualism, involving the separation of roles between the domestic and public spheres. The domestic role encompasses household management, providing care to the family, meeting the family's needs, and educating children both informally and formally. Meanwhile, the public role involves employment, decision-making within the household, and child protection. Often, a married woman takes on both of these roles, especially when the head of the family cannot meet the family's needs or is absent from the family due to reasons such as divorce or death.

A woman, especially a wife, often has roles that involve domestic duties and responsibilities within the family. However, in today's context, many women work outside the home and take on roles that were traditionally carried out by men (Jalil & Tanjung, 2020). Managing two roles or having a dual role is not an easy task and requires careful time management and balance. In this research, we will explore how women in dual roles, especially female single parents, manage and allocate their time to meet their family's needs. Additionally, we will investigate the challenges they face in carrying out these dual roles within the family.

**METHODS**

The method employed by the researcher is qualitative, which is an approach or inquiry aimed at exploring and understanding a central phenomenon by conducting interviews with participants using broad and general questions. The specific qualitative approach to be used is descriptive qualitative, wherein the researcher endeavors to delve into and comprehend the social foundations of single female parents in meeting their family's current needs, understand the dual role undertaken by a single female parent, and identify the challenges faced in fulfilling this role within the family.

The location chosen for delving into this phenomenon is a subdistrict in Pekanbaru, specifically Labuhbaru Barat Subdistrict, Pekanbaru. The subjects of the research will be individuals or groups who will then be designated as objects in the study. The researcher will select subjects who are reliable and meet the criteria established by the researcher. The subjects in this study consist of 5 single female parents. The subject sampling technique in this research is a nonprobability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling. There are criteria for selecting subjects, including single female parents who are willing to be interviewed, single female parents due to divorce or death, having been a single female parent for a minimum of 2 years, aged between 35 and 60 years, having at least 3 dependents, and still having children who are attending school.

Data is divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data are obtained from key informants and collected directly from the field during the research process. This data consists of information related to the process of meeting their family's needs, along with the dual roles they undertake. Additionally, it serves the purpose of understanding the extent of obstacles faced by single female parents in maintaining their
families. Secondary data, on the other hand, are obtained from documentation of the research and come from data collected by previous researchers who have studied this phenomenon. Some secondary data may also originate from information provided by Labuhbaru Barat Subdistrict. Secondary data is used to support and complement the primary data, thus creating accurate and detailed information regarding the phenomenon. And there are three important data collection techniques in qualitative research: observation, structured interviews, documentation, and a combination of these three elements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Paul B. Horton and Robert L. Horton, a role is an expected behavior associated with specific social statuses. It can be observed in the community, such as how a man is expected to behave in society, such as engaging in physically demanding work or providing for the family. Roles are also linked to the presence of clear norms within society, so individuals will fulfill their roles in accordance with prevailing norms. Roles signify function, adaptation, and a process. When someone experiences changes in their life situation, it will undoubtedly affect the role they assume. There are several characteristics related to roles, including the presence of social relationships within a community that involve dynamics and actions guided by prevailing norms. Additionally, roles are associated with reinforcing an individual's social status. Values, norms, and knowledge can unite a group or community and activate control and regulatory systems, thereby preserving community life.

Roles within the family are categorized into two main types: public roles and domestic roles (Hidayati, 2015). Domestic roles refer to activities carried out within the household related to daily household chores. These activities include child-rearing, providing care, managing family needs, and all tasks of a domestic nature. Indicators of domestic roles include child-rearing, household chores, and family interactions. Typically, these roles are fulfilled by women. On the other hand, public roles encompass all activities performed outside the home with the aim of generating income to meet the family's needs. In the social structure, these roles are typically carried out by men. Thus, from a social structure perspective, it is often the case that women handle all matters related to the household, while men work to earn money to meet the family's needs. Indicators within the realm of public roles for men include providing for the family, working outside the home, and interacting with the external community (U. Wahid & Lancia, 2018).

When a mother within a family experiences the loss of her life partner, it can have a significant impact. This change places a much heavier burden on these mothers. Female single parents will assume their domestic roles as usual while also taking on the public roles that were previously carried out by a husband or father in the family. This undoubtedly brings about a significant change, and it's undeniable that an imbalance may occur if they are unable to fulfill both roles simultaneously and effectively.

A Female single parent will simultaneously fulfill domestic roles and public roles within the family. This requires effective time management and activity coordination to ensure that everything runs smoothly. As is known, initially, they only take care of the family, and suddenly they have to enter the workforce without any prior experience or knowledge of the working world. The single female parent being studied has limited education and capabilities. Thus, when they transition into the public role spontaneously and without any plan, they will
find it much more challenging to secure opportunities in the formal sector and may shift to the informal sector. This informal sector may involve working with others or starting their own businesses.

The existence of these dual roles has both positive and negative impacts within the family. The positive impact is evident when single female parents exert more effort in their work to achieve their desired goals. Managing dual roles opens up opportunities for advancement, fosters competitiveness, and teaches patience. On the other hand, the negative impact can be observed when the subjects struggle to balance their time, resulting in more time spent on income-generating activities than on household needs. This requires a concerted effort to ensure that both roles run smoothly. Family roles are related to the functions within the family, and the concept of roles is adjusted according to the family's functions. The dual role that a single female parent must assume can be referred to as "motherhood."

This research focuses on single female parents who have become so due to the loss of their partners through death. Death is an unwelcome event for everyone, as everyone wishes for their loved ones to always be there, accompanying them in life's journey. However, destiny is something that cannot be avoided, much like a single parent losing their spouse due to death. With the occurrence of such a loss, a single female parent will feel surprised and spontaneously respond to the situation they are facing. Especially when their spouse was still alive, these mothers did not have employment and served as homemakers. As a result, they must accept their fate and raise their children with the strength they possess. A single parent plays a crucial role in fostering communication within the family and building a strong, peaceful, and secure family unit.

The role of women in the perspective of Talcott Parsons' AGIL theory can be understood within the framework of AGIL, which stands for Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, and Latency. This theory explains that society is a social system consisting of various interrelated and interdependent elements. Society is viewed as an integrated system with different but interconnected functions, leading to consensus, social order, and both internal and external changes. The AGIL theory provides a systematic framework for understanding the social needs of a society, which are required to maintain social life in a stable manner. There are four principles inherent in AGIL, which are:

- Adaptation is a necessary aspect that any system must undergo in response to the prevailing situation. It involves the ability to balance and adapt to the existing environment. Adaptation requires society to confront its environment and even make changes to it (Ritzer & Goodman, 2011). Adaptation involves a system of interactions among individuals and between individuals and their environment. Its purpose is to create continuity and harmony within a social system, in line with agreed-upon objectives. In the context of the dual role a single female parent must shoulder, adaptation becomes crucial when faced with differences in circumstances and situations that necessitate adjustments to ensure the smooth functioning of the family system. The connection between adaptation and the public role of a single female parent can be observed when they adjust to their family's income and expenses. This typically involves reducing the quantity of needs, prioritizing basic necessities. Furthermore, adaptation related to domestic roles can be seen when a single parent organizes household tasks, either by distributing the workload among family members.
or managing everything independently. It's also evident when single female parents manage their time between work and caring for their children.

b Goal Attainment involves a system's ability to establish desired objectives and the efforts needed to achieve these objectives. The goals in a social system are shared or agreed-upon objectives realized through interactions. Therefore, in a social system, the community must be able to restrain individual desires and prioritize shared objectives to shape a collective personality when striving for those goals. The existence of established goals will lead to making choices that align with the expected future. In the context of a single female parent's public role, this can be observed when they set goals to ensure the happiness of their children and desire to fulfill their children's needs, even though it can be incredibly challenging when working hard alone. As for the connection between goals and domestic roles, it can be seen when single female parents aim to satisfy the emotional needs of their family members and promote positive interactions.

c Integration means that a social system must manage its relationships with its components to function effectively. Integration can be achieved through socialization, which has the power to maintain social control and family cohesion. With integration, conflicts that could disrupt the social system can be minimized. Integration is the component that connects the other three components: adaptation, goals, and pattern maintenance. It is related to norms and rules. In a family context, integration is seen when a single female parent assumes the role of the head of the family, enforces norms or rules that must be followed by all family members.

d Pattern Maintenance (Latency) means that every social system must maintain and improve both motivation and cultural patterns to achieve its goals. Pattern maintenance refers to the values and norms embraced by each member of the social system. This principle plays a strong role in maintaining social character and social facts within society or other social systems. The fundamental values and norms agreed upon, in line with the current situation, must be upheld and implemented. In the context of single female parents, even though they are solely responsible for raising and caring for their children, they are expected to continue raising their children as if they still had a partner. Single female parents are expected not to forget the fundamental values within their family, and they play a role in continuing and overseeing the implementation of family patterns. Single female parents must also be able to formulate and determine the direction of their family life. In terms of domestic roles, this can be observed when single female parents strive to teach their family members to be self-reliant in household tasks. In doing so, they become accustomed to household chores and develop a greater appreciation for each other through mutual assistance. In relation to their public role, single female parents are seen following the work ethic that their deceased spouse had in providing for their family's needs.

Challenges in Fulfilling the Dual Role of Female Single Parent

Society is not devoid of issues, conflicts, and constraints. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, a "kendala" refers to an obstacle or hindrance that restricts, obstructs, or prevents the achievement of objectives. Challenges or issues can arise due to personal or external factors. When someone finds themselves in a different situation than before and struggles to adapt, it's highly likely they will encounter a challenge that needs to be
addressed. This is similar to the challenges or issues faced by single mothers, which arise from the burden of managing their family life alone. Family life can be less burdensome and problematic when it's shared with a life partner. However, it becomes more challenging when issues suddenly need to be addressed alone, whether due to divorce, separation, or the death of a partner.

These challenges are faced when a single mother is unable to fulfill her dual role simultaneously. As a result, some roles may not be executed effectively. The challenges or issues that may occur in the life of a single mother can include difficulties in meeting the family's living expenses. This can happen due to various factors, such as limited job opportunities, a lack of necessary skills, or limited social support. Other challenges involve maintaining the role of providing love and time to family members, as single mothers often spend more time working to meet their family's needs. Additionally, managing finances and expenditures to support the family can pose difficulties, especially as the number of children increases over time, requiring larger expenses. These challenges can stem from both internal and external sources and can lead to family functions not operating as smoothly as intended, often requiring adjustments within the family.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that the dual role of single mothers in Kelurahan Labuhbaru Barat involves domestic tasks such as laundry, cooking, and housekeeping. They continue to provide love and attention to their children by assisting them in learning and imparting norms and religious values. Despite juggling these dual roles, they effectively manage their time to take care of their families. On the other hand, their public role entails seeking livelihood opportunities to meet their family's needs. They rely on jobs in the informal sector or run their businesses, with many shouldering the financial burden independently to avoid conflicts, misunderstandings, and indebtedness. Female Single Parent often encounter challenges when trying to substitute for the paternal role in economic matters. The solution lies in finding additional income sources that do not interfere with their primary employment. They also face difficulties in providing paternal affection and care to their family members. The remedy is to strengthen family communication so that family members do not feel the absence of a paternal figure.

REFERENCES


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