



**Tripled troubles on financial, social, and sexual needs of female conflicts
with three time shifts working at garment industries in Indonesia**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the problems of financial, social, and sexual aspects of working females in labour force with the three-time shift system in Indonesia. Working females, as a matter of, are responsible for both household and working duties from which they are highly potential to face various problems. This case study interviewed (either in group or individual) and observed 150 randomly selected respondents of working females from garment industries in Surakarta and Yogyakarta Indonesia. Data triangulation technique of observation and interview were to firm the trustworthiness. The data were analysed interactively as suggested by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings showed that the majority of the respondents participated in the labour force due to their family financial problem. Though the financial problem was reduced, being a working female in three-time shift system brought about the other problems, such as social and sexual problems. The females could fulfil the family financial needs by sacrificing the social and sexual fulfilments of the family because they had no time and physical energy anymore. These problems were commonly found from the respondents, although it was found several variables that vary the level of the problems from each individual and group.

Keywords: Working females; three-time shifts; financial, social, and sexual conflicts.

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui permasalahan pekerja perempuan dalam angkatan kerja dengan sistem tiga shift, ditinjau dari aspek finansial, sosial, dan seksual; Karena perempuan pekerja di Indonesia memiliki tanggung jawab rumah tangga dan pekerjaan yang sangat berpotensi memunculkan berbagai masalah. Studi kasus ini mewawancarai (baik secara berkelompok maupun individual) dan mengobservasi terhadap 150 responden wanita pekerja yang dipilih secara acak dari industri garmen di Surakarta dan Yogyakarta Indonesia. Peneliti menggunakan wawancara dan observasi sebagai teknik triangulasi data untuk memperkuat keabsahan data penelitian. Data dianalisis secara interaktif seperti yang dikemukakan oleh Miles dan Huberman: reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas sampel berpartisipasi dalam angkatan kerja untuk menyelesaikan masalah keuangan keluarga mereka. Masalah tersebut terselesaikan dengan menjadi wanita yang bekerja dalam sistem shift tiga kali walaupun memunculkan masalah lain seperti masalah sosial dan seksual. Kecukupan kebutuhan finansial keluarga mengorbankan pemenuhan sosial dan seksual keluarga. Permasalahan tersebut umumnya ditemukan dari responden, meskipun juga ditemukan beberapa variabel yang tingkat permasalahannya berbeda-beda dari masing-masing individu dan kelompok responden.

Kata Kunci: Wanita bekerja; shift tiga kali; masalah keuangan, sosial, dan seksual.

1. INTRODUCTION

Family is the smallest group in society, which dynamically and constantly changes over time. Family includes parents, children, and/or other blood or bloodless relatives within it who altogether forge a behavioural pattern that assigns each member obeys their own rule within it (Budayova, 2020). Family is influential to its members through the behavioural patterns and family interaction because individuals acquire and learn knowledge as well as develop attitude, positive and/or negative, prominent for their lives (Hatahet & Alqudah, 2016). This influence can affect: 1) the members' physical and psychological health, 2) emotion and ego development, 3) adaptation skill, 4) as well as their well-beingness like the level of intimacy, commitment, and fairness. However, once the stability of the family and the marriage is endangered either from external or internal factor, their well-beingness is threatened (Budayova, 2020) and if there is no commitment to preserve their family and to find the solutions together over their problems, their family will be broken and their functions and roles will potentially mislead.

Budayova' (2021) underlines four types of family seen from the harmony among the members of the family and one additional type. The types are: 1) Harmonious Family that is a family in which all of their needs are fulfilled; 2) Consolidated Family, a family in which all of the basic needs are fulfilled and there are barely no contradiction in terms of raising the children; 3) Disharmonious Family, a family with a conflict which causes a tense and unenjoyable feeling for both the parents and the children; 4) Supplemented Family, a divorced

family with one or both parents got a new partner and the children got new parent; 5) Single Parent Family, a family with only one parent, usually mother.

Each family faces various different problems. However, it is believed that one of the major problems faced deals with financial. Financial problem occurs when a family cannot afford the needs. There are no power and strength to provide the daily basic needs covering food, basic healthcare, clothing, access to water and sanitation, housing, education, electricity, and roads. Based on several studies, financial problem within family often begets many problems that decrease the quality of life (Tavakoli-Fard, 2016), such as psychological distress of the parents and behavioural misbalance of the children. The social and sexual needs can be neglected for the sake of financial ones. However, though there is a standard, each family has different basic needs that depend on various issues.

For a family that faces financial problems, having the women to work, as women now are equal to men in society on many levels (Rathore et al., 2012), is seen as a solution. When the women work, it is expected that the finance is secured (KPPPA, 2019). The government policy of responsive gender program mobilizes the females to have the same chance as the male's, including in work force, public access, equal participation (Ulfa, at.el., 2022). In Indonesia, according to Soeharto, Kuncoro, and Prahara (2021), there are 51% of women participate in workforce and 70.96% of them are married women. This Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP) number is quite high in a patriarchal country like Indonesia (Susanto, 2015). Susanto underlines that in a patriarchal culture, working women bear dual responsibilities, in the household and in the workplace (Marcinkus & Hamilton, 2006), and they often get family conflicts, though it is generally affected by the labour supply, either they choose to work more and earn more or work less and earn less (Schaner & Das, 2016). However, despite the potential problems, according to Ravindranath et al. (2021), the trends of female to participate in labour force is increasing.

To have a work-life balance, there should be flexible working hours (Galea, et al., 2014). However, due to the low education level, not all women have choices. They are forced to work at garment industries with three times working shifts in where the education level is not the main concern. As females have no choices, flexible-work arrangement cannot be achieved since garment industries usually apply shift works. There are various types of shift work systems, system that organizes working hours that is different from the traditional system and one of them is three-shift system which commonly lasts for eight hours. It starts from 6.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m., 2.30 p.m. to 11.30 p.m., and 11.30 p.m. to 7.30 a.m. Due to the three-shift system, the women should adjust her schedule to the working hours. However, as the females have many duties as a wife and a mother, it is too difficult to adjust the schedule and achieve the work-life balance. Consequently, conflicts begin to arise. The conflicts may deal with both family and work conflicts. It is believed that conflicts are the consequences of the inability to measure the role in the family and the role in the workplace. When it comes to being a worker because of financial problem, working females may have more tendency to survive the position in the workplace so that they may neglect the family responsibilities. As a consequence, social and sexual conflicts are inevitable.

Gender inequalities between men and women have existed for a long time and are caused by a variety of factors including socio-cultural factors, religious conditions, politics, and the state (Inayatillah & Mellyan, 2022). Females, as wives, socially and culturally take

care the children and households, even when they work outside in garment industries with three-time shift system. Females have to deal with anything the company wants her to do, including the time she should work when they put more effort to the work due to the financial problem. At this point, it is difficult to socially interact with others. Interaction is defined as the transaction between two elements who change information, or even goods and services (Saffer, 2010). In order to build a good social interaction, one should repeatedly interact with others by joining certain activities. Unfortunately, when a female should work based on the shift, she may not be able to maintain a good social interaction as she cannot join the activities. Even if she manages to join the activities, there is a possibility for her to sacrifice her work either that is related with the office work or the housework. Consequently, there will be other conflicts.

Moreover, a three-shift working system becomes one of job stress that impacts on the working females' sexual life with their husbands (Jahangirimehr, et al., 2017) or even loss of sexual desire due to work and home interference. Being a worker, a female has duties to: work, carry out the housework, take care of the children, as well as take care of the husband. Having much workload, a working female has limited time that consequently makes it difficult to carry out all the roles well (Rahman, 2018); and, it surely risks the marriage, since there will be limited time to interact and communicate with the husband, especially relating to sexual intercourses. Whereas, according to Allsop (2017), sex in marriage has benefits as sexual satisfaction nurtures, emotional intimacy and deepens one's faith. It is even found in research that satisfying and fulfilling sexual relationship leads to happy marriage. Referring to the above statements, generally as a wife working in three shifts, it is highly possible that the husband cannot have a sex whenever he wants. Even if there is a time when both can meet, the wife is too tired to have a sex because of the office work and the housework. Consequently, husband-wife conflict that deals with sexual satisfaction emerges.

In summary, though being a worker is seen as the solution to the family financial problem, however, there brings about conflicts that may be faced, either social or sexual conflict, afterwards. These conflicts triggered by the limited time and physical energy of the females. Therefore, the researchers aim to clarify the tripled troubles that married female workers face especially those who work in a garment industry around Surakarta and Yogyakarta where three-shift system is applied with the regional minimum wage. The first policy of minimum wage was promoted in 1990 and had undergone numerous changes. Different regional has different standards of the minimum wage. For those, especially a woman who has low education level, there is no choice to work at other sectors that offer more flexible working hour and better wage.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several related studies were conducted related to female workers' roles, gender gap in employment, women's role conflicts, and mothers' role conflicts. In 2010, Sason conducted a study entitled *Peran Ganda Ibu Rumah Tangga Yang Bekerja Sebagai Tukang Amplas Kerajinan Ukir Kayu* "Double Role of Wives Working as Sandpapering Workers". It was found that working wives wanted to improve the economic welfare, the social status, as well as their family education. However, it was found that they could improve the economic welfare, have better social status as being a worker was seen as more prestigious than being a

housewife. However, they faced family conflict because they had less time and energy to do household chores as well as take care of their family. A study on *Ketidakadilan Jender yang Dialami Pekerja Perempuan di Daerah Pariwisata* "Gender Unfairness in Tourism Industry Employees" conducted by I Made Wiratha was conducted in 2015. This study focused on how women experienced discrimination when they worked in tourism industries. It was still believed that tourism industries needed men more than women as men were seen capable to work in public sectors. Moreover, it was believed that women should work in the industries where education and skill were not taken into account. In the same year, Pricilia Ifanda Putri conducted a study that concerned on *Konflik Peran pada Perempuan Ngemping di Kecamatan Limpung, Kabupaten Batang, Jawa Tengah* "Gender Role Conflicts of Ngemping Limpung Batang Cnetr Java". The researcher examined how women prioritized their roles, how they managed their time and adapt to different roles, and how the family and the society supported them. As they got the support they needed, working women in Batang did not experience any serious conflict. Rahmaharyati et al. in 2017 studied double roles of woman labour, entitled *Peran Ganda Buruh Perempuan Sektor Industri Dalam Keluarga* "Double Roles of Female Workers in Home Industries" and showed that female workers spent much of their time to pursue the production target. They felt stressful and even experienced health problems. Besides having conflicts that dealt with themselves, family conflicts arouse due to the lack of communication and the inability to do the family role well.

The related studies focused on the conflicts faced by women working on woodcraft and tourism industry while other two focused more on how women prioritized their roles rather than on the industries they worked. Different from the other related studies, this study concerned with different industry which is garment industry in three shifts working system. Moreover, three-shift system and minimum regional wage are also taken into account as the women who choose to work on garment industry usually those who have low educational level so that they have no choice to have flexible working hour. The researcher also specifies the provision the minimum financial needs, consequently, bring about the other social and sexual conflicts of the family.

3. METHOD

This was a qualitative study that presents data related to social phenomena since the data are people's account in natural setting so that it cannot be numerically explained. By applying a qualitative study, a researcher examined concept in a systematic but flexible way (Hancock et al., 2009). This qualitative study was specifically considered as a case study, a study where a specific case in a real life context is deeply examined. It does not matter if the study is analytically or holistically conducted, it just places the specific or case the focus. As the focus is the case, the researcher may study individual or multiple cases.

In this study, the participants were 150 randomly females working at three-shift garment industries in Surakarta and Yogyakarta Indonesia. Random respondents helped a researcher to negate bias in selecting the participants of the study. Moreover, the subjects of the study represented the larger group as the researcher had no power to manipulate those who contributed the data. The researcher collected the data from different data collection methods that were interview and observation. The data collected from one method could supplement the data collected from other methods and even confirmed and highlighted them so better

description of the case under the study was well justified. The trustworthiness of the data was ensured by the involvement of data triangulation to confirm the data saturation. The collected data were then analysed through interactive qualitative data analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994). The data were first research objective-focused, simplified, abstracted, and transformed to sort the relevant data as well as discard the irrelevant one. The sorted data were then displayed in an organized and systematic manner that led to the conclusion drawing.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The wives work because there open many textile industries that recruited more the females than the males because of having lower salary and easier managed as well as they have no enough earns for their daily family need. This is said that as follow.

The availabilities of many new industries which need hundreds of workers make wives interested in working in them to support the family income. This is conditioned also by the husbands' low wage as heads of the family who are responsible for having enough income in covering the daily needs. Working in textile industries as good choice for us because it doesn't need a high special skills and competence as well as high formal education.

The wives have conflicts in having the extra work time in night time shifts when they can work in that time due the family reasons. They will be doubly punished financially from the wage if they leave the extra works, usually as nigh shifts besides to get the permits of days off are very difficult depending on the presence of the other workers of the same unit or job. Extra time works bring about new problems finacially and socially, as said by the respondents below.

To have leave permits are long difficult process and it should be submitted a week before. When we leave the works without permits, we will be fined twice higher than our normal pay, example when we earn Rp. 50.000,00 we will be fined Rp. 100.000,00. This rule makes us rarely take the working leaves and pushes us for working all the day always.

The findings show that financial problem was the main reason why females work, while age, experience, and education level barriers are the reason why they can only work in garment industries, where three-shift system is applied with minimum regional wage. Although it is claimed that being workers improve their economic welfare, the minimum regional wage is not worth the other following conflicts. Moreover, the three-shifting system worsens the conflicts themselves. Three-shift workers, compared to day worker, tend to face unfavourable condition that leads to conflicts. The conflicts deal with social and sexual relationships of the family.

The first is that local social interaction is needed to maintain the social relationship norms. By being able to socially interact with the community, the need of love, self-esteem and success are fulfilled (Kitishat & al-Freihat, 2015). In order to interact, one should make a time to join social activities. Three-shift female workers find it difficult to adjust their working hours with the social activities. Even if they can make the time, they prefer to spend the free time to be with their family. If they cannot join the social activities and togetherness,

others start gossiping them. Consequently, instead of trying to join the activities, they isolate themselves from the society, as stated below that.

The social activity and bond like helping neighbour, reception, Arisan (regular social gathering whose members contribute to and take turns at winning a number of money form the members), visiting the sick neighbour, and the like cannot be executed when they work at the same time of the rolling shifts, then, finally they will bullied and isolated socially. These social conflicts will not happen when they stay at the same social circumstances that consist of the same workers in the textile industries.

This will not be a conflict if the community is homogenous as most of the females work at industries where three-shift system is applied, that why, they rent a single room for the no-kid families. But when they have a baby they start a new conflict.

The second is that the sexual conflicts differ based on the husbands' job. There are four classifications of the problems based on the husbands' working status: unemployed, out of town for work, labour, and odd-job worker. When the husbands are unemployed, sexual conflicts do not emerge as they have more free time to communicate, interact, and have sex. However, financial security seems difficult to achieve as the one who earn money is only the wife. For the wives whose husbands are out of town to work, the finance is secured as both works. Conversely, it is difficult for them to have sexual satisfaction. The husbands rarely come home while their wives having night time shifts for a few days or even can only spend limited time of their day off with the family. As the husbands should travel out of town and the wives work, they feel tired to even have sex.

My husband and me meet once a month when we take the work leave and, some time, fortunately once a week. We can have sexual relationship when I am not in menstruation. Sometimes we cannot do this when one of us is extremely tired and I get the night time shift from evening to morning. In this condition sometimes we don't do the sex, rarely, only once a month and sometimes we don't do at all more than a month.

Sexual intimacy is one of several aspects besides cognitive and emotional intimacy that couple should nurture (Nam et al., 2019). Without maintaining sexual intimacy, more conflicts tend to emerge and leading to the doubled conflicts.

The third deals the situation where both are labours. Even though the income is higher when both are working, they must not have the same working hour. When the one is working, another one should get off work to take care of the children. As a consequence, they may not be able to spend the time together. It is found that they have sex only once a week when they have the same day off, but this condition comes rarely. Adults' physical and mental health is affected by lively and pleasing sex lives (DeLamater, 2012).

Some of my friends and I whose husbands working at the same textile industries have the husband-wife sexual relationship once a week when we are having the same shift or having days off. It will be more difficult when one of us working at the night shift in which we cannot meet at home for the same time. My husband comes home when I am going for work, and vice versa. When I work at night shift, I spend my day time for

sleeping, due to being tired, not fit, and finally cannot give sexual services for my husband.

The last situation happens to those whose husbands are odd-job (incidental) workers who do various kinds of unspecialized jobs that need little training. Being an odd-job worker, the husbands have no certain amount of income since it depends on whether other people need the incidental help or not. Thus dual-earner households, where the husbands are an odd-job worker, still faces financial problem. The time to do the odd-jobs is quite flexible they can maintain the communication and interaction with the wives so that they find it easy to spend the time together to have sexual relationship. They said that “*So it is possible for husband and wife meet and interact together to have sexual relationship because my husband has high time flexibility staying at home and I am working only around eight hours*”.

5. CONCLUSION

By participating in labour force, females are able to support the financial problems of the family which means they can solve one problem form the family. However, in solving financial problem, actually they have other needs, especially in a factory with three shift work, by which they find difficulty in managing the time for the family and for the work. It is already hard for them to balance their household responsibilities and their work, and now they have to deal with the new surfacing conflicts, social and sexual. The former problem is around their difficulties in keeping the pace with the society due to the lack of time to socialize. However, if the working women live in a working environment, they do not face this problem. Meanwhile, the latter, it deals with the sexual lives with their husbands, which generally they find it hard to fulfil it well due to their responsibilities in the working environment.

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