

An Overview of Emotional Exhaustion In Single Working Mothers

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: <i>Emotional exhaustion, Parenting challenges, Mental awareness</i>	<p><i>The problem in this study is that single mothers become workers and carry out multiple roles. This study aims to determine the background of emotional exhaustion in single mothers. The subjects in this study were mothers who were still actively working who had been divorced from their husbands and had at least one child. This research method is descriptive in the form of phenomenology. Data collection methods used are observation and interviews. Data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation and conclusions. The conclusions in this study are (1) single mothers experience physical exhaustion due to carrying out dual roles both as workers in the office and as parents to their children, (2) single mothers have problems controlling emotions, especially related to the upbringing of their children, and (3) single mothers try to overcome their sadness to maintain their mental awareness in carrying out their role as parents for their children.</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

Emotional exhaustion continues to be a significant occupational health and work productivity issue as more cases emerge, requiring serious attention from leaders. Maslach and Jackson (as cited in Miranda, 2013) argue that emotional exhaustion is a condition that reflects a response to chronic work-related stress, involving three dimensions: physical, mental, and emotional. A person experiencing emotional exhaustion often displays psychosomatic symptoms (e.g., weakness and insomnia), emotional problems (e.g., anxiety and depression), relational issues (e.g., hostility, apathy, and distrust), and behavioral challenges (e.g., aggression, irritability, and isolation) (Adriaenssens et al., 2015).

According to the Basic Health Research Data (Risikesdas, 2013), approximately 14 million Indonesians, or 6% of the population, suffer from emotional disorders characterized by symptoms of depression and anxiety. Additionally, around 400,000 people in Indonesia are diagnosed with schizophrenia. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) recorded a total of 812 suicides in 2015.

On the international front, data from a study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) showed that 40% of workers reported experiencing high levels of workplace stress. Furthermore, a survey conducted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) revealed that 26% of employees reported frequent or significant work-related stress.

The role of women as equal partners with men is not a new concept. It has been acknowledged by the Indonesian government, as reflected in foundational documents like Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the State Policy Guidelines. Women have the same opportunities as men to participate in the nation's development across various fields, including economics, social issues, and culture. However, challenges remain, particularly regarding the division of roles and status between men and women.

Mardiana (2005) highlights that the division of tasks and status between men and women has been evident throughout history, both in Indonesia and other countries. Traditionally, men have been responsible for providing for the family, while women have stayed at home, performing household duties. This clear distinction in roles has contributed to women's limited mobility and opportunities.

A report released by (Women, 2020) revealed that women are more likely to experience emotional exhaustion, with 57% reporting high levels of stress and anxiety compared to 48% of men. For working mothers, their roles expand to include those of workers, mothers, teachers, and housekeepers. Women are likely to feel stressed when their work interferes with their personal or family lives, often exacerbated by a lack of recognition or appreciation in the workplace.

Individual factors also contribute to emotional exhaustion, including high idealism, perfectionism, excessive commitment, and demographic factors like age, occupation, and gender. (Munandar, 2001) notes that gender differences often manifest in the workplace, with women experiencing emotional and social challenges distinct from those faced by men. Research by (Windayanti & Prawasti, 2007) supports this, finding gender differences in emotional dimensions and depersonalization that contribute to work fatigue. (Sihotang, 2004) also discovered that women are more prone to emotional exhaustion compared to men, likely due to the frequency with which women experience emotional challenges. Considering the existing phenomena in Berau Regency and the varied results from previous research, this study aims to investigate emotional exhaustion in working single mothers.

METHOD

The research in this study uses a qualitative approach, with subjects selected through purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research problem. This method ensures that participants provide in-depth insights related to the study. Data collection involved observation and interviews. The observations were conducted in the participants' natural environments to capture their behaviors and interactions, while the interviews explored their experiences, thoughts, and emotions in greater detail through semi-structured questions.

For data analysis, the process followed three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involved sorting and categorizing the information gathered into relevant themes. These themes were then presented in a structured format, highlighting key findings. The final step involved drawing conclusions based on the insights gained, ensuring that the analysis accurately reflected the participants' experiences.

This approach ensured that the research process remained focused on obtaining detailed and meaningful data that directly addressed the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prior to the research process, researchers carried out various stages of preparation. The preparatory stage of this research starts from the researcher collecting data, the researcher first asks permission from the subject via the WhatsApp application. The researcher then continued to improve the interview guidelines which would later be used for the process of collecting interview data on the four subjects who had been selected according to the characteristics of the subject by the researcher. After completing the interview guidelines, the researcher then conducted offline interviews at each subject's home. Researchers use interview guidelines as a reference for conducting interviews when extracting data on subjects through direct interviews. Interviews have been conducted with four subjects directly.

Observation Results

Subject Sw

Aspect	Indicator	Information
Condition Internal Subject	Condition Physique	Subject SW appears well and physically healthy
	Expression Face	During the interview process, subject SW looked relaxed and smiled a lot when answering questions.
	Expression Eye	Subject SW when answering each question focused his eyes on the observer, but occasionally looked in another direction.
	Movement Body	Subject SW occasionally looked down to think about the answer and then was seen moving towards the observer with the subject's hands clasped together.

	Expression Emotion	The SW subject appeared friendly and during the interview process, the subject was happy to explain in depth.
	Current expression speak and answer question	Subject SW spoke fluently and relaxedly during the interview process and the subject smiled a lot.
External Conditions (Environment subject and setting the place interview)	Room Condition moment interview	The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cold because it is raining outside the house.

Subject H

Aspect	Indicator	Information
Condition Internal Subject	Condition Physique	Subject H appears well and physically healthy.
	Expression Face	During the interview process, subject H appeared good at answering questions with a flat expression.
	Expression Eye	Subject H, when answering each question, sometimes looked at the observer but also often looked down.
	Movement Body	Subject H sat quite relaxed during the interview with an upright body and minimal hand movement when answering questions.
	Expression Emotion	Subject H appeared kind but quite enthusiastic in the interview process.
	Current expression speak and answer questions	Subject H speaks sufficiently when answering questions, sometimes briefly and sometimes at length, with a flat expression.
External Conditions (Environment subject and setting the place interview)	Room Condition moment interview	The room is not too large, and the conditions in the room are quite cool with a fan in the room.
	The atmosphere at the moment interview	The atmosphere seemed quite calm and the subject seemed enthusiastic when interviewed.

HS Subject

Aspect	Indicator	Information
Condition Internal Subject	Condition Physique	HS subjects appear well and are physically healthy.
	Expression Face	During the interview process, subject HS looked relaxed and at ease in answering questions.
	Expression Eye	Subject HS when answering each question, the direction of his eyes was focused on the observer.

Movement Body	Subject HS sat quite still during the interview leaning back with his hands sometimes clenched into fists.				
Expression Emotion	HS subject looks humorous and relaxed				
Current expression speak and answer questions	Subject HS speaks very clearly and firmly when answering questions.				
External Conditions (Environment subject and setting the place interview)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Room conditions moment interview</td> <td>The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cool with air conditioning in the room.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The atmosphere at the moment interview</td> <td>The atmosphere seemed quite relaxed and there was a little joking between the observer and the subject.</td> </tr> </table>	Room conditions moment interview	The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cool with air conditioning in the room.	The atmosphere at the moment interview	The atmosphere seemed quite relaxed and there was a little joking between the observer and the subject.
Room conditions moment interview	The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cool with air conditioning in the room.				
The atmosphere at the moment interview	The atmosphere seemed quite relaxed and there was a little joking between the observer and the subject.				

Subject N

Aspect	Indicator	Information				
Condition Internal	Condition Physique	Subject N appears well and physically healthy				
Subject	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Expression Face</td> <td>During the interview process, subject N looked relaxed.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expression Eye</td> <td>Subject N when answering each question, the direction of his eyes was focused on the observer.</td> </tr> </table>	Expression Face	During the interview process, subject N looked relaxed.	Expression Eye	Subject N when answering each question, the direction of his eyes was focused on the observer.	
Expression Face	During the interview process, subject N looked relaxed.					
Expression Eye	Subject N when answering each question, the direction of his eyes was focused on the observer.					
	Movement Body	Subject N sat quite quietly and occasionally laughed out loud				
	Expression Emotion	Subject looks humorous and relaxed				
	Current expression speak and answer questions	Subject N answered the question firmly				
External Conditions (Environment subject and setting the place interview)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Room Condition moment interview</td> <td>The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cool with a fan.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The atmosphere at the moment interview</td> <td>The atmosphere seemed quite relaxed and there was a little joking between the observer and the subject.</td> </tr> </table>	Room Condition moment interview	The room is quite spacious, and the indoor conditions are quite cool with a fan.	The atmosphere at the moment interview	The atmosphere seemed quite relaxed and there was a little joking between the observer and the subject.	
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Interview Results

The interview results are described based on three aspects of emotional exhaustion, namely physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion and mental exhaustion.

Physical Exhaustion

In this aspect, based on the interview results, it was found that subjects SW, HS and N showed physical fatigue in their daily lives.

- The influence of work on home life is a lot. Maybe more because this job is not a fixed job (not one with fixed hours when the work is finished) so it makes me have to burden the needs at home to my daughter especially, because I am rarely at home so she has to help her younger sibling, maybe help study, cook food, clean the house, etc. Even though sometimes I am at home, but still the problem of helping her younger sibling to do assignments is she who understands better than me. Even at one time when I was guarding someone's stall, I had to take my children because I couldn't bear to be left alone at home and luckily the stall was in front of the owner's house, so my children could be more at home, maybe also rest after school. (SW, 05-14-2022)
- Yes, if asked physically, of course it is more tiring, usually working with my husband and now I have to work alone (Subject HS, May 15, 2022).

- Once, sir, like yesterday when Eid was coming, I worked overtime to recap my stuff until 10 pm, usually I go home at 6 pm. I felt sad because I couldn't accompany my child to the night of takbiran because when I got home my child was already asleep (Subject N, 05-15-2022).

Emotional Exhaustion

In this aspect, based on the interview results, it was found that subjects SW, H, HS and N felt emotional exhaustion which was often felt in their daily lives, such as:

- I often lose concentration, for example when dropping off my children at school, I should have turned but I missed it so I ended up having to turn back. What is the impact? I don't think there is any impact whatsoever because it seems like it can still be overcome quickly and easily.

And what causes me to lose concentration is probably because I am too distracted by the tiredness that I feel, especially when on the road it's hot, there are traffic jams so it's like everything just goes on (Subject SW, 05-14-2022).

- Feeling bored has certainly been felt by everyone, especially me as a single mother who has a rotating routine every day. Sometimes I also feel the need for a place to complain but I am confused about where to tell it so I end up keeping it to myself. Because if I want to find a new partner, honestly I'm not ready yet, but I feel like I need someone to be a place to tell my tiredness (Subject H, 05-15-2022).
- Of course, it's boring because you have to work from Monday to Sunday / no holidays unless there is something important, you feel like taking a vacation once in a while or not thinking or doing work to rest (Subject HS, 05-15-2022).
- Boredom is definitely there, especially since I have worked for 5 years in that shop. I also sometimes want to just stay at home and take care of my child, always be there for him when he comes home from school and always take him to and from school, but because I work, my parents take care of him and pick him up from school (Subject N, 05-15-2022).

Mental Emotional Exhaustion

In this aspect, based on the interview results, it was found that each subject showed an attitude of being able to control emotional fatigue mentally, such as:

- My life has become more meaningful, obviously, because I am in control and I know what to do and where to take my life and my children. Because when I was still with my ex-husband, you could say that my life was a "ship" without direction, it could even be said to be sinking, so I really wasn't prosperous, both emotionally and financially. (Subject SW, 05-15-2022).
- Of course, you must have a strong mentality, and must have good health and time management so that work can be controlled. (Subject HS, 05-15-2022).
- There are a lot of negative comments, sir, many say that I am unable to support my child's life because I am a single mother, but I just turn a deaf ear to them, sir, because I am the one living my life, not other people. (Subject N, 05-15-2022).

Discussion

This study discusses emotional exhaustion in single mothers in Berau Regency. Each of the single mothers interviewed and observed having their own problems and ways of coping. In this study where the researcher's findings show that there is physical emotional exhaustion, carrying out the role of a single mother means carrying out multiple roles, so the findings in this study show that single mothers have a tendency to always experience physical emotional exhaustion because of their function and role as a mother and father for their child.

Emotional exhaustion is a condition where the weakening of positive feelings has a tendency to not be able to appreciate the feelings of others in the workplace. If these negative emotions are not resolved, they will have a lasting impact on the home environment (Maslach, 1978). When people experience emotional exhaustion which is a characteristic impact of burnout, where individuals do not have positive feelings, sympathy, or respect for others. Emotional exhaustion is similar to physical fatigue, illness, and psychosomatic symptoms.

The results of (Hasanah & Widuri, 2014) show that single mothers experience various types of emotions, including negative emotions such as depression, stress, silence, crying, sadness, and suppressed anger, while they

are more likely to experience patience, honesty, acceptance, resignation, and happiness. also experience positive emotions such as: seeing children happy.

Factors that influence the use of emotion regulation include individual differences, cognitive factors, stressors, circumstances before the death of the husband, social and family circumstances, and religion. (Hasanah & Widuri, 2014) Emotions experienced by working mothers include emotions of sadness, anxiety, anger, longing, acceptance and hope felt almost entirely by the subject. The process of emotion regulation used by the subject includes situation selection, situation change, attention spreading, cognitive change, response change.

The researcher found that mentally single mothers also have not been able to organize their hearts so that sometimes they are lacking in work and drag on in sadness. Single mothers also lack the mental organization to stay healthy and are always reminded that children really need their mother's role. Being a single mother is not easy in carrying out the role, in addition to earning a living single mother must also educate their children.

In the researcher's findings, it was found that for single mothers financial problems are still the main problem so that the focus on educating children is not carried out properly. For mentality in the findings of this study that single mothers are still protracted in their sadness, especially the problems of life that they live everyday. Not to mention that being a working single mother is sometimes faced with a negative stigma from the surrounding community, so it is quite complicated to carry out this role. And it usually does have a mental impact.

This leads to physical exhaustion such as headaches, sleep disturbances, loss of stamina, and high blood pressure, as well as emotional exhaustion experienced by individuals. They experience confusion in making decisions, feel unhappy, and lose confidence.

Women are more emotional and use emotions more often, while men are more rational and use logic (Santrock et al., 2002). This is supported by the findings of Kailani (2008) entitled "Emotional maturity in young married men and women". The results of this study indicate that men are more emotionally mature than women. Women who are less emotionally mature than men are expected to be better able to regulate their emotions to reduce tension, avoid stress, and function well in their environment. The results of Salovey's research in Minnesota (2000) show that positive emotional states can promote healthy perceptions and beliefs.

As well as research by (Ahsyari, 2014) examining the emotional state of single mothers where the results showed that there were three causes of divorce: financial problems, communication, family, infidelity, and domestic violence, effects on physical, psychological, emotional and social problems, changes in self-image, and the difficulty of realizing a father figure.

The topic of this study, emotional exhaustion, describes the emotional overload and fatigue caused by work. It is expressed both in physical fatigue and in mental feelings and pent-up emotions. suggests that the best "core meaning" is in the physical and psychological deterioration that characterizes emotional exhaustion. Burnout itself, which causes emotional exhaustion, remains a significant issue in business engagements, including quality and organizational issues that demand constant innovation and high performance standards from all employees.

An intact family ideally consists of father, mother and child (Gerungan, 2010), but for single mothers it only consists of mother and child. The reality today is that many families have only a single parent (single mother). Research shows that the number of single-parent families is increasing, either due to divorce or the death of one partner (Gerungan, 2010).

(Maslach & Jackson, 1981) describe emotional exhaustion as a feeling of emotional overload, draining emotional resources that are depleted due to contact with others, always preceded by the common symptom of the onset of anxiety every time to try to start working. Historically, most research on emotional burnout has been led by (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) three-element conceptualization of burnout (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

Emotion regulation is the process of expressing emotions in the right way and under the right conditions. Paradigms used to study human emotion regulation examine the effects of emotional inhibition on controlled responses to emotional stimuli and/or subsequent behavior (Quirk and Beer, 2006). Emotions in mothers are triggered by various things, one of which is the child .

For mothers who accompany their children at home, managing emotions well is very important for children to develop a better understanding of their own body processes and development. According to Bocknek (Pratisti, 2012), a mother's emotional life is when facing her child. A mother's emotional life consists of two parts: passive emotional life and positive emotional life. Pressure and depression, child rejection, inappropriate treatment, or other negative attitudes are forms of negative emotional life, while positive emotional life includes warmth and control, positive support, the child's emotional response, and an easier perception of style.

Shovel and Enzmann (in Houkes, Janssen, deJonge & Bakker, 2003) conducted an extensive literature review on burnout and found that emotional exhaustion was associated with workload, time pressure, rewards for work done, and social support. by factors such as lack of especially in the home environment.

Women's participation in public sector work results in women taking on multiple roles. The roles that working women have to play are domestic roles and public service roles. The dual roles taken can be stressful. One of the impacts of this dual role is burnout.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations that have been conducted, data was obtained regarding the description of emotional exhaustion of single mothers in Berau Regency. Single mothers experience physical exhaustion due to carrying out dual roles as office workers and as parents for their children. In addition, they also face difficulties in controlling emotions, especially in parenting. Nevertheless, single mothers try to overcome their sadness in order to maintain their mental awareness in carrying out their role as parents.

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