

**GENDER EGALITARIANISM IN THE HOUSEHOLD
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF
MALE SPOUSAL SUPPORT IN JABODETABEK****Zulfah Azrah^{1*}, Maria Jacinta Arquisola²**

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze how the male spouses perceive gender equality and support the work-life balance of their female working spouses during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method with a data collection method is an interview. The data from this study was collected from 13 male spouse interviewees whose wives work, have at least one child, and are domicile in Jabodetabek. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that (1) Gender equality occurs in households from access, control, participation, and benefit has been realized in the interviewees' household life. (2) Factors such as financial factors, spousal support, and work pressure affect the work-life balance of female working spouses during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results of this study can be used for male spousal to improve the perception of gender equality in the household from several aspects such as access, control, participation, benefit, and supporting work-life balance of female working spouses by paying attention to several aspects such as time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance to achieve a work-life balance of the female working spouses.

Keywords: Gender equality, work-life balance, female working spouses, Covid-19 pandemic, male spouses.

1. Introduction

Times have made the role in domestic life begin to shift from a traditional marriage to an egalitarian marriage. Traditional marriage involves a strict division of duties between male and female spouses, where the male spouses are the head of the family who earns a living, and the female spouses are in charge of serving their male spouses and taking care of the children. The statement examined a gender bias between men and women, which positions women more to play a role in the domestic sector. Meanwhile, egalitarian marriage involves an equal relationship between male and female spouses regarding the distribution of power and authority (Berk, 2012).

Nowadays, many women have higher education and choose to work as career women. Furthermore, the recent report from the Central Bureau of Statistics (2021) shows an increase in the percentage of formal female workers from 34.65% in 2020 to 36.20% in 2021. It shows that the role of women has begun to develop in the public sector. In addition, 63.7% of workers who work from home are women, while 61% are men, with a majority age range of 25-29 years as much as 28.6% (Ramadani, 2020).

However, the division of household chores between spouses is generally felt to be less balanced. Female spouses who also play a role in helping to earn a living for the family still have a double burden with household chores that are still imposed on them. The male spouses have less time to do household chores than the female spouses. During the Covid-19 pandemic, significant changes have impacted many companies' productivity. As a result, the working population in August 2021 was 131.05 million people, an increase of 2.60 million people from August 2020. 77.91 million people (59.45 percent) worked in informal activities. The number of commuter workers in August 2021 was 7.34 million (Mohammad, 2020).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indonesian government issued several policies, including the policy of Large-Scale Social Restrictions, Working from Home (WFH), and Remote Learning. These policies have various impacts on women, especially in the family and as career women. The National Commission on Violence Against Women conducted an online survey. This survey was followed by 2,285 respondents, dominated by women from Java, aged 31-50 years, bachelor's degree graduates/equivalent, with an income of 2-5 million rupiah, married, have children, and worked full time in the formal sector.

The survey results show that the number of women who experienced additional domestic work time of more than three (3) hours during Covid-19 is four times more than the other gender. It is most likely due to additional household chores and accompanying children to study at home. The WFH policy also forces women to learn online technology for their children. As a result, one (1) in three (3) female respondents stated that increased household chores lead to increased stress levels. Emerging facts suggest that women are more severely affected by this development in this situation. (Adams-Prassl et.al, 2020; Collins et.al, 2020; Cowan 2020; Farre et al. 2020).

According to Liswandi (2020), company/superior support and family support are essential in helping married women workers balance their work and personal life. There is a negative influence of the husband's support on dual role conflict. The higher the husband's social support, it will be followed by the lower the female working spousal dual role conflict (Nugrha & Kustanti, 2018). On the other hand, when women's families can support them, the conflict will be reduced, and their performance will improve (Amin & Agustina, 2020).

Based on this, this research aims to analyze how the perception of male spousal related to gender equality and support the work-life balance of their female working spouses in Indonesian households during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.1 Problem Statement

Currently, the role of women is expanding, not only in taking care of the three domestic areas of the household; mattresses, wells, and kitchens (Putri & Lestari, 2015). Women are more egalitarian than men in every measure of attitudes to gender roles. In addition, only 33% of men are egalitarian, compared to 48% of women. Nevertheless, in line with the popularity of the female spouses as secondary earners, the men showed less-flexible attitudes towards egalitarian sharing of domestic responsibilities and men's leadership in the family (Linawati, 2008). As a result, female spouses will suffer more from family interference at work because their higher participation in the family will take more time, energy, and dedication from their work. In terms of power, patriarchal culture makes the position of men in the family have a higher level than women. This assumption can lead to gender inequality in a relationship (National Commission on Violence Against Women, 2021).

Women's and family welfare issues are typically kept out of the public sphere, resulting in these issues being pushed to the back burner. Domestic abuse issues, reproductive health issues, and women's household responsibilities are examples of topics that are not considered critical enough to be discussed in public areas. Several issues are considered taboo and should not be discussed in public. As a result of this situation, it is nearly impossible to provide appropriate advocacy when there are numerous issues affecting women. Arquisola et al. (2020) argue that due to the interest in feminism over the past decades from (Oey-Gardiner, 2002 Robinson, 2009), there has been equal interest in the role of men in feminist studies because most of the perception of male roles is subsumes under more extensive gender studies featuring women.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender Egalitarianism

Gender egalitarianism is a critical component of achieving gender equality since it promotes equitable work and family obligations among spouses and improves women's prospects, political engagement, and labor market outcomes (Corrigall & Konrad, 2007). Gender egalitarianism, according to Davis and Greenstein (2009), is a philosophical system that promotes equal rights, roles, and responsibilities for men and women while rejecting the premise that men and women have fundamentally distinct roles.

Theoretically, it is argued that structural and cultural developments such as higher education levels, lower religiousness, higher employment of women, lower birth rates, and women's movements are driving support for gender egalitarianism (Pampel, 2011; Shorrocks, 2016). The previous research has mainly

compared levels of support for gender egalitarianism over time and across different birth cohorts (so-called period and cohort effects, respectively) (Kraaykamp, 2012; Thijs et al., 2017).

2.2 Gender Equality

The concept of gender equality is indeed very complicated and controversial. According to Suryani (2010:8), gender equality is defined as equality of conditions and status to obtain opportunities and enjoy their rights as human beings. So that they can play a role and participate in the development, politics, economics, social culture, education, and national defense and security and equality in enjoying the results of this development. Gender equality means the realization of equal conditions for women and men to obtain opportunities and their rights as human beings so that they can play a role and take part in development, politics, economy, social, culture, education, defense, and security in enjoying the results of such development (Sulistiyowati, 2020).

In Indonesia, some commendable efforts have been made to implement the necessary mechanisms for eliminating gender discrimination to ensure gender equality and human dignity. The National Gender Policy, which replaces and strengthens the previous National Women's Policy, specifically addresses the issue of gender inequality in Indonesia. However, the history of development policies in Indonesia seems to be a sluggish attitude toward gender variables.

There are four forms of gender equality (Puspitawati, 2012; Henni, 2013). First, access. The ability to fully use resources to contribute effectively and productively (socially, economics and politics). The second point is controlled. Women and men have equal authority over how family resources are used. Participation in the third point to consider, women and men are equally involved in the democratic utilization of family resources decision-making process. Finally, benefit. All family activities must provide equal benefits to all members of the family. Gender equality, according to Mufidah (2008), is an equal access, participation, control, and rewards for men and women in life activities within the family, community, nation, and state.

2.2.1 *The Form of Gender Equality in the Family*

According to (Puspitawati, 2012; Henni, 2013), the form of gender equality in the family is as the following:

1. Access refers to how active and productive (socially, economically, and politically) men and women are in society, including access to resources, services, labor and employment, information and benefits, as well as participation in the formulation, decision-making, and planning of family activities in both the domestic and public spheres—for example, assuming sufficient family resources and providing equal opportunity for both genders to complete their education based on their interests and abilities.
2. Participation is defined as husband and wife participating equally in the democratic use of family resources decision-making process, and children are involved if necessary.
3. Control is equal control over the use of family resources by men and women. In the family's name, a husband and wife can own property.
4. Benefits are all family activities that should benefit all family members equally.

2.2.2 *The Goal of Gender Equality*

According to Valentina (2013), the goal of gender equality is to realize gender justice in the fulfillment of human rights; implement temporary special measures to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality in all areas of life; organize efforts to fulfill women's rights to the protection of reproductive health; eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; eliminate prejudices, customs, and other practices based on the deficient or superiority of one of the sexes or the stereotypical roles of women and men. From several kinds of research, the researcher views gender equality as an essential aspect of life worthy of being upheld. It contains justice for men and women in living life so that it can reduce or eliminate gender inequality in a society and can make one side, both women and men oppressed.

2.3 Work-life Balance

Work-Life Balance is a form of individual satisfaction in achieving work-life balance (Hutcheson, 2012). Tasnim et al. (2017) stated that Work-Life Balance is a condition in which a person can share roles and feel satisfaction in these roles, which can be seen in the low level of work-family conflict and the high level of work-family facilitation and work-family enrichment. The term work-family balance has taken the place of

work-life balance (Hudson Resourcing, 2005). This transition includes work-life balance not only for children and families but also for unpaid or non-professional obligations, affecting a variety of workforces, including men, women, singles, parents, and dual-career families. Vasumathi (2018) defined work-life balance as a sufficient level of involvement or between numerous responsibilities in a person's life.

Work-life balance is defined by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) as the achievement of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared by role-related partners in the work and family domains. According to Bundhun (2009), women and men have distinct perspectives of what constitutes life in balance. Women tend to spend more time with their families, while men tend to spend more time pursuing personal gain. The balance between work and life is not about evenly dividing work and personal time, but about creating a harmony that reflects each individual's priorities.

2.3.1 Aspects of Work-Life Balance

Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2002) define three aspects of a work-life balance, including:

1. **Time Balance**
That is the balance of the amount of time individuals spend fulfilling the demands of roles in work and family. In this case, the balance of time that employees have determines the amount of time that employees allocate to their work and personal lives with their families. Therefore, employees will not be burdened by work that can reduce their time gathering with family. On the other hand, employees can still complete their work professionally without the demands of their families taking up their time.
2. **Involvement Balance**
In this case, an involvement balance will be achieved when employees can be physically and emotionally involved in their work-family.
3. **Satisfaction Balance**
That is the balance of individual satisfaction with the demands of roles in work and family. In this case, employee satisfaction will arise if the employee considers that what he has done is quite good and can accommodate work and family needs.

2.4 Research Gap

Looking at the previous studies (Table 2.1) there are several researchers done on gender equality and work-life balance. However, the previous studies were conducted in locations in Indonesia different from Jabodetabek and only focused on the female spousal's perspective.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

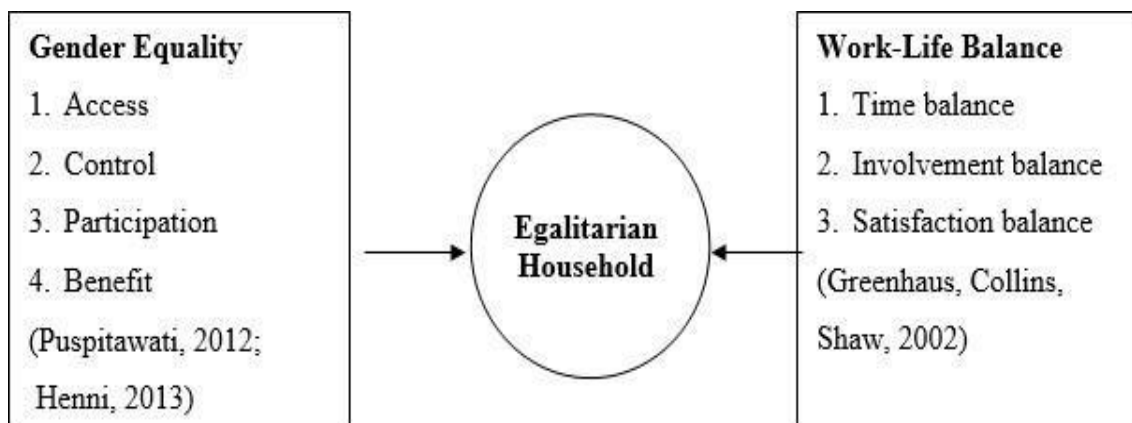


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework
Source: Adjusted by researcher, 2022

3. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research is often presented non-numerically in narration, pictures, and artifacts (Bailey, 2014; Maxwell & Reybold, 2015). The data collection technique uses a structured interview. The qualitative approach is chosen because the researcher wants to know all the information regarding the description of male spouses' support for gender equality and working-life balance in Indonesian households. All information will not be obtained optimally if it only relies on a written scale without direct questions and answers from research participants. It is as stated by Poerwandari (2007) that one of the crucial goals of qualitative research is to obtain a comprehensive and complete understanding of the phenomenon under study. Most aspects of human psychology are also challenging to reduce in the form of elements and numbers, so they will be more 'ethical' and contextual when examined in a natural setting.

3.1 Data Collection

The data source is the subject where the data is obtained. The primary data sources in qualitative research are words and actions. The rest are additional data such as documents and others. The source of data used in this study is primary data sources. Primary data sources are data taken directly by researchers from the source without any intermediary by digging the source directly through the interviewee. The primary data source of this research is male spouses aged 25-40 years old who are domiciled in Jabodetabek.

3.2 Data Collection Techniques

In this research, data collection is carried out as follows:

Interview

According to Lexy (2000), an interview is a conversation between two people, the interviewer and the interviewee, in which the interviewee answers questions. Structured interviews and unstructured interviews are the two types of interviews. Structured interviews, according to Lexy (2000), are interviews in which the interviewer prepares his concerns and questions ahead of time.

In this case, the researcher uses structured interviews. This structure is a simple way to keep the conversation focused on the main point (dyah, 2014). In conducting interviews, researchers used the help of interview guidelines to facilitate and focus on the questions to be asked.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

Purposive and snowball sampling approaches are used in this study. According to Sugiyono (2012), purposive sampling is a data-sampling strategy that considers specific factors. Snowball sampling is a method of sampling data sources that are modest but grow in size over time. The sample in this research must match the following criteria:

1. Male
2. Married
3. Ages 25-40 years old
4. Have at least one child
5. Wife is working as a private employee or running a non-based home business
6. Domiciled in Jabodetabek

In this study, 13 interviewees were chosen because each couple has a different level of household problems, such as the number of children and the economic status of the wife, which can affect the husband's perspective related to the topic in this study. Meanwhile, Qualitative research does not recognize the existence of a minimum sample size. Generally, qualitative research uses a small sample size. Even in some instances, only one informant is used. At least two conditions must be met in determining the number of informants, namely adequacy and suitability (Martha & Kresno, 2016).

3.4 Data Verification

In this research, the researcher used data source triangulation. Source triangulation is a technique to test the credibility of the data. This technique is done by checking the data obtained from various sources (Sugiyono, 2012). Triangulation of data sources in this study means getting data from the same sources with different unique characteristics such as the wife's age, location, and economic status.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The process of sorting data sequences and organizing them into patterns, classifications, and fundamental units of description is known as data analysis. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2000), data analysis entails organizing data, categorizing it into manageable pieces, synthesizing it, looking for and identifying patterns, determining what is most relevant and what is being examined, and deciding what may be shared with the public. Thematic analysis approaches will be used in this study as a data analysis technique. Thematic analysis, according to Arnold (2006), is a method for detecting, interpreting, and reporting themes in data. As a result, this strategy can arrange and characterize data in great depth to analyze different elements of the research issue. According to Poerwandari (2009), the thematic analysis is a coding procedure that might result in a list of themes, models of complicated themes, indications connected to the topic, or items between the above combinations.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Result

4.1.1 How do male spouses perceive gender equality in Indonesian households?

The male interviewees in this study perceive gender equality in the Indonesian household to be a factor in access to education, control of financial resources, participation in the household, and benefit. Each of these factors is discussed below:

Access to Education and Work

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

- 1) All of the interviewees believe that women need to be well educated because they will be a teacher to their children.
- 2) All of the interviewees are allowed their wives to work.

Nowadays, many women have good access to education and choose to work as career women in the future. Access to education is an essential thing in life. It can help a person in achieving his dreams and goals in life. In the past, a response made access to education for women difficult and even hampered. As the times progressed, the old view of the response began to shift towards an egalitarian direction that having access to a good education is everyone's right. All interviewees do not agree with the notion. Some of the interviewees gave the reason because the notion is an old-fashioned and less advanced view. Furthermore, the rest gave the reason because they are the first teachers for their children in the future. Therefore, a woman needs to have broad knowledge and to think to become a good teacher for her children in the future.

However, having access to education without having access to take advantage of that education results is not a good thing to experience. A woman was born into a family with an open view of access to education for her. Nevertheless, when they get married and start a new life as a wife, some of them may not get access to develop or take advantage of the results of their previous education. It is because there is still a patriarchal view that assumes that husbands are responsible as breadwinners while wives are responsible for caring for housework and children. However, in this interview, the researcher found that all male spouse interviewees allowed their wives to work. The main factor that became the reason for them to allow their wives to work was the financial factor. As many as ten (10) interviewees said they allowed their wives to work to help meet the family's financial needs. Furthermore, according to the interviewees, one of the reasons why many male spouses allowed their wives to work was the Covid-19 pandemic that has had a significant impact on the economy.

Control of Financial Resources

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

- 1) All interviewees believe that their wives can contribute to helping the financial needs to meet the household needs.

In the past, people believed that only the husband was responsible for earning a living, and the wife took care of all household chores and children. However, as time progressed, this thought began to shift towards egalitarianism. Nowadays, many male spouses believe that the wives can contribute to work to achieve prosperity and fulfill the family's financial needs. Especially in the Covid-19 pandemic situation, which is choking the community economically, many people are trying to survive this pandemic.

In the households, when wives are allowed to work, the financial resources in the family increase to two sources from husband and wife. The researchers found that all interviewees were very open about financial decisions made in their households. They involved their wives in financial discussions and even allowed them to contribute financially to meet family needs and achieve family welfare.

Participation in the Household

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

- 1) The interviewees believe that the household chores are not only done by female spouses because it is related to gender inequality in the household.
- 2) The interviewees do not mind helping with housework to lighten the wife's work.

Participation in the household is one aspect that determines whether gender equality has been created in a family. In patriarchal culture, we know that the wife is fully responsible for household chores and children, while the husband is responsible for providing for the family. It, as time progresses, has also begun to shift towards egalitarianism. The results of interviews in this research found that all interviewees had an open mind regarding the division of tasks at home and helped do homework to ease the wife's duties at home. They participate in completing the household chores and taking care of children.

Benefits of Allowing Wife to Work

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

- 1) There were nine (9) interviewees who concurred that the benefits of allowing and supporting female spouses are to help the financial needs of the household, and two (2) interviewees concurred to avoid the female spouses from boredom at home. In contrast, two (2) interviewees concurred about developing skills and knowledge.

From the results of this research interview, the researcher found that several benefits can be felt by the female spouses and all family members due to the male spouses allowing their wives to work. One of which as many as nine (9) interviewees said that this could help the financial needs of the household. In addition, another benefit is to avoid the female spouses from boredom, which as many as two (2) interviewees said in their response. The Covid-19 pandemic situation, which limits mobility, for example, due to the lockdown, of course, makes a person have to reduce activities outside the home to prevent the spread of the pandemic. However, for some people staying at home all day is a disaster because it can make it easy to feel bored or stressed. It was understood by the interviewees and became one reason for them to allow his wife to work. In another response, two (2) interviewees hoped that allowing their wives to work could be an opportunity for them to continue to socialize well even during the pandemic and develop their skills and potential.

4.1.2 How do male spouses perceive their roles in supporting work-life balance for their female spouses in an egalitarian way?

The male interviewees in this study perceive their role in supporting work-life balance for the female working spouses through aspects of time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Each of these aspects in this research is found below:

Time Balance

Based on the interviews the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

There were ten (10) interviewees who stated that they and their wives don't have enough time to accompany children to study remote learning or playing due to work pressure during the Covid-19 pandemic. There were only three (3) interviewees who stated that they and their wives have enough time for family. The term double burden for female working spouses is often felt by them. Not leaving their nature to be a wife and mother requires them to be innovative in dividing their time to take care of household needs, children, and work. Therefore, this becomes one of the factors for them to become stressed because they need to do two roles simultaneously. The interviewees can also understand how a double burden is for a wife. It is as obtained from the results of interviews in this study. The researchers found that ten (10) of the interviewees gave the opinion that work pressure often makes wives have little time for family, especially children, such as accompanying remote learning children or relaxing with children. For this reason, spending time with family on weekends is the primary key for interviewees to support their wives in achieving their work-life balance.

Involvement Balance

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

1) The interviewees believe support is essential to maintaining a work-life balance. Therefore, nine (9) interviewees stated moral or material support. In contrast, four (4) interviewees stated that helping with household chores and taking care of children can help to achieve the working-life balance of their working wives.

Another aspect of work-life balance is involvement balance. In the context of marriage, it means how the husband positions himself as a support system to achieve psychological balance for his wife in carrying out her responsibilities as a housewife and a worker. Then from the results of the interviews conducted in this study, the researcher found that the male spouses tried to be a sound support system and, as much as possible, helped with homework so that they could lighten their workload at home. A total of four (4) interviewees said that helping their wives with household chores and taking care of children or even helping them finish their work is one of the forms of support they provide to help their wives achieve their work-life balance.

One interviewee said that helping his wife with household chores and taking care of the children are the two things he always does. The division of tasks at home is one form of support for his wife. In addition, now that his two elementary school children are doing distance learning, the division of tasks to accompany them to school is also a form of his support to ease his wife's work at home.

In addition, nine (9) interviewees believe that the support system provided in the form of morals and material is also critical to maintaining the work-life balance of the wives. The wives are more likely to feel loved and cared. It can help relieve fatigue and tiredness after a long day at work. It can help his wife vent all her feelings that day. As a husband, there must be a desire to show that they want always to be there when his wife needs them. It, of course, can also create a good relationship for husband and wife.

Satisfaction Balance

Based on the interviews, the following themes were generated during the data analysis:

- 1) From the interview results, it can be concluded that several factors become challenges and obstacles in achieving work-life balance.
- 2) Based on the results of interviews, as many as ten (10) interviewees said that the work pressure due to the Covid-19 pandemic was a challenge for them and their wives in achieving work-life balance. Nevertheless, four (4) of them also said that work pressure was a barrier to achieving work-life balance. Life balance.
- 3) Based on the interview results, three (3) other interviewees said that the remote learning policy was challenging for them and their wives in achieving work-life balance.

Satisfaction balance refers to the number of satisfaction levels of an individual with his work activities and outside work. In this research, the satisfaction balance for female working spouses in the family context means the satisfaction balance of their wives from the male spouses' perspective. In general, several factors that can affect work-life balance are personality characteristics, family characteristics, and job characteristics. However, from the interviews, it was found that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is currently affecting the satisfaction balance aspect of the work-life balance. Most people feel the policies implemented by the government to prevent the spread of Covid-19. For example, the WFH policy causes working hours to be longer than usual. Regular working hours are no more than 7 hours per day for six regular working days per week or 8 hours per day for five standard working days per week, although the interviewees believe that work pressure is increasing due to the WFH policy. In addition, remote learning is another factor that affects the aspect of satisfaction balance in work-life balance. As many as three (3) interviewees said that remote learning is challenging for the interviewees and their wives in achieving work-life balance. According to one interviewee, accompanying children for remote learning is one challenge for achieving a work-life balance because it drains their energy and time.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 How do male spouses perceive gender equality in Indonesian households?

The perception of male interviewees in this study regarding gender equality in Indonesian households to be a factor in access to education, control of financial resources, participation in the household, and benefit. Each of these factors is discussed below:

Access to Education and Work

Based on the result of the study, the researcher found that gender equality in the context of access to education and work in the interviewees' household life has been realized. It can be seen from how all interviewees state that they disagree with the notion, which illustrates that women are powerless and cannot develop. Better access to work also provides opportunities for women to contribute to productive economic activities. In the traditional marriage, the husband tends to be in charge of providing for his wife and family while the wife is responsible for caring for the house and children. Along with the times and a more modern lifestyle, there is a shift in gender roles from traditional to more egalitarian, which means that men and women are the same in all domains. It is as expressed by Hamzani (2010) that currently, it is not only dealing with domestic areas of the household, mattresses, walls, and kitchens. Women work in the economic sector and can increase family income.

In developing their potential and abilities, women do not intend to be superior to men. Some of the reasons that motivate women to enter the world of work are education, avoiding boredom, tranquility, and entertainment (Huzaemah, 2010:63). However, driven by the Covid-19 pandemic also makes motivation, especially for housewives to help workers meet household needs financially. The economic conditions due to the Covid-19 pandemic are felt insufficient if only the husband works. Thus, husbands allow their wives to participate in making a living to meet household needs without reducing the dignity of a husband as the head of the household.

Based on the research results, gender equality research has seen the absence of discrimination or exclusion of women to work so that men and women have access, control over development, participation, and equal and fair benefits. There are no differences between men and women regarding work due to marriage. The only difference is the type of work tailored to their respective natures.

Control of Financial Resources

Based on the study's results, the researcher realized that gender equality controls financial resources in the interviewees' household life. It is found that from the interviewees, there is no assumption that the husband has higher rights than the wife in decision-making, especially regarding financial resources. The male spouse interviewees always involve their wives in financial decisions. In domestic life, husband and wife must work together to achieve wealth in the family even though the husband is the head of the family. It is necessary to involve the wife when making any decisions. It can be said that the husband has positioned his wife as a cooperative partner, including in family decision making by being invited to discuss various kinds of problems that occur and talk about light things (Herlian & Daulay, 2008; Dewi, 2011), especially if the decision concerns the interests of the family in the future.

Participation in the Household

Based on the results of the research, it is found that gender equality in the context of participation in the interviewees' household life has been realized. Taking care of the household chores is not only the obligation of the wives but also cooperation between husbands and wives. Both can do the household chores if they have time. In addition to work, usually, women still have responsibilities as a housewife. Doing housework is often considered a wife's duty, while the husband's duty is as a breadwinner. Even though the husband is obligated to help his wife's duties, especially in terms of taking care of the household and educating children (Huzaemah, 2010:73). Male spouses with a modern gender role view are willing to accept greater responsibility in household activities (Supriyantini, 2002). Thus, both spouses agree to share roles and daily tasks, are responsible for their respective roles and duties, and maintain mutual commitments (Puspitawati, 2010).

Based on the discussion above, the researcher can conclude that helping with household tasks can help ease the task of a working housewife so that there is no double burden commonly experienced by working women. For husbands who help ease the burden on their wives in completing household chores, it will make them happier because they do not feel burdened by their work as housewives. Furthermore, pleasing and making the wife happy is one of the husband's obligations to his wife.

Benefit of Allowing Wife to Work

Based on the research, it is found that the benefits of allowing the wife to work have direct implications for the wife in terms of improving their knowledge and skills. It is also beneficial to help the contribution of the male spouses to provide for the household needs. In addition, it can overcome the boredom of female

spouses who have to stay at home all day. Men and women have the potential to achieve achievement as human beings (Nasaruddin:199, 259). In the context of marriage, it means that women also have the potential to achieve achievements outside the household, such as working as human beings. The financial contribution made by a woman with two dual roles is also an achievement she can do.

4.3.2 How do male spouses perceive their roles in supporting work-life balance for their female spouses in an egalitarian way?

The male interviewees in this study perceive their roles in supporting work-life balance for their female spouses in an egalitarian way to be a factor in time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Each of these factors is discussed below:

Time Balance

This aspect refers to the balance of time individuals spend fulfilling the demands of roles in work and family life. The research found that having a double role at work and family life often makes it difficult to divide time between family and work. The demands of work require the wives to work more than usual due to policies caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the WFH policy.

Based on the research, it was found that 8 of the interviewees stated that their wives do not have enough time to spend with their families, such as accompanying their children to study online or playing due to work pressure. Therefore, they utilize the weekends to spend with their family.

Involvement Balance

Based on the results of the research, it is found that the support given by the male spouse interviewees to their wives is in the form of moral and material support such as good relationships with family, trust, and funds. The support obtained from the husband will help the wives to meet the work-life balance. The support that comes from the husbands, either directly or indirectly, plays an important role in maintaining the psychological state of the wives. Spousal social support contributed 28.3% to reducing or reducing the level of work-family conflict experienced by female working spouses (Utami and Wijaya, 2018).

Poulose & Sudarsan (2014) describe four main factors that affect work-life balance. These factors are divided into individual factors, organizational factors, societal factors, and other factors. One of the social factors that affect the work-life balance described above is the husband's support for married women workers. A husband is one of the main supporters of his wife in the category of personal social support (Murphy, Gordon, & Berry, 2007). The husband's social support can also make the wife's mind calm and happy so that the wife can more easily adjust to the family environment and work environment (Yanita & Zamralita, 2001).

Satisfaction Balance

Based on the research results, the researcher found that it is not easy to achieve a work-life balance. Several internal and external factors have become challenges to achieving work-life balance for working housewives, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic—internal factors such as poor time management, poor communication, and relationships with family. In addition, external factors are felt, for example, due to the emergence of new policies that can affect work-life balance, such as working from home and remote learning. In addition, the work pressure and the demands of the family are also challenges. It shall make it difficult for the female working spouses to achieve a work-life balance. The higher the dual role conflict experienced by working women, the higher the fear of success experienced (Lestari, 2017). Individuals with high work-family balance will have low-stress levels when carrying out their roles and have a high quality of life (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw 2003).

Based on the discussion above, we know that balancing between career and home life is not an easy thing. For this reason, the husband's cooperation is needed to take part in taking care of the household and being essential support.

5. Conclusion and Implications

5.1 Conclusion

Gender equality occurs in households. When viewed from access, it can be said that gender equality has been realized. In the context of access, this can be seen because all of the interviewees who are male spouses

stated that women should be well educated to be able to be a teacher for their children. While the reasons for the male spouses to allow their wives to contribute to meeting household needs by working are to help with household finances, avoid boredom, and develop the knowledge and skills of the female working spouses.

Based on the analysis and discussion of the research results, it can be concluded that all statements and opinions of male spouses who were interviewees in this study very fully support their wives working at work. It can be seen from how they try to be a sound support system, either by providing moral and material support or helping to ease his wife's work by doing housework or taking care of children. Therefore, there are some factors that the male spousal interviewees think of as a challenge and barrier for their wives to achieve work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic that was encountered in this study financial factors, remote learning, and work pressure.

The financial factor was proven by the reason the interviewee allowed his wife to work was to fulfill household financial needs. Remote learning is evidenced by interviewees mentioning these factors as challenges and barriers. Becoming an impromptu teacher while carrying out other responsibilities makes it very draining of energy and time.

The work pressure factor is evidenced by the statement that work pressure is one of the challenges and obstacles mentioned by the male spouses, so there is an imbalance of time for the family.

5.2 Implications

5.2.1 Practical Implication

Based on the results of this study, the implications can be stated theoretically and practically as follows: The results of this study can be used to improve the perception of gender equality in the household from several aspects such as access, control, participation, and benefit. Furthermore, supporting the work-life balance of female working spouses by paying attention to several aspects such as time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance to achieve a work-life balance for the female working spouses.

5.2.2 Managerial Implication

For spousal parties whose female spouses want to be involved in economic sector activities, especially non-based home business:

1. The results of this study can be used as literature to understand the dual career of housewives from experience.
2. Various results and discussions revealed in the real experiences of interviewees are expected to increase awareness about gender egalitarianism because it affects the work performance and work-life balance of female working spouses.
3. Various obstacles revealed in this research can also be used as a consideration. In the hope, that some various strengths and weaknesses can be identified, and improvements can be made to create a good work-life balance for the female working spouses because it dramatically affects their work performance.

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