



# Indonesian Journal of Community and Special Needs Education



Journal homepage: <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/IJCSNE/>

## Levels of Mental Resistance of Young Mothers from Urban Poor Families in The Face of Economic Difficulties

Anne Hafina\*

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

\*Correspondence: E-mail: [annehafina@upi.edu](mailto:annehafina@upi.edu)

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the levels of mental resistance of young mothers from urban poor families in the face of economic difficulties. In general, due to protracted economic difficulties, many events make this nation concerned. There are incidents of parents selling their babies, husbands who forcefully sell their wives, and there are also incidents of killing children because they cannot fulfill their needs. In these incidents, it is of course women and children who are the victims. Then, several questions arise: (i) what is the mental resilience of young mothers in facing the current economic difficulties? (ii) Are gender relations between husband and wife in the household not running normally? (iii) This is where research is important so that we can measure the mental strength of housewives in the face of today's difficult life.

© 2023 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Submitted/Received 10 Apr 2023

First Revised 09 May 2023

Accepted 02 Jul 2023

First Available online 03 Jul 2023

Publication Date 01 Sep 2023

#### Keyword:

Mental resilience,

Poor families,

Young mothers.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Economic hardship and high unemployment have raised the issue of gender equality in the face of injustice (Pranathi & Kamraju, 2024). In many studies, it is mentioned that along with the difficulties of life, women and children are always the targets or the victimized party (Glushchenko, 2023). The important question is how mentally resilient housewives, especially young mothers, are in facing the economic crisis in their families. How is the cooperation between poor family couples in facing economic difficulties?

This research takes the case of Bandung City and Indramayu City. Where Bandung is a growing metropolitan city and Indramayu on the other hand, is a city known as a supplier of prostitutes and in this area, the divorce rate is relatively high (Nurdini & Hadianto, 2018). The following research questions were asked:

- (i) How is the division of labor between husband and wife among urban poor families in meeting difficult economic needs?
- (ii) What is the perception of young mothers among urban poor families towards the role of their sons and daughters in obtaining employment in the public sector?
- (iii) How is the mental resilience of young mothers among urban poor families facing economic difficulties?
- (iv) What factors underlie the mental strengths and weaknesses of young mothers among urban poor families facing economic hardship?

In general, this study aims to reveal the resilience of young mothers in facing economic hardship. In more detail, it aims to:

- (i) To find out the pattern of husband-wife task sharing among urban poor families facing economic difficulties.
- (ii) Describe the perceptions of young mothers among urban poor families towards their sons and daughters concerning the world of work in the public sector.
- (iii) To determine the level of mental resilience of young mothers among urban poor families facing economic hardship.
- (iv) To identify factors that can strengthen and/or weaken the mental resilience of young mothers among urban poor families facing economic hardship.

This research is expected to be an input for women activists in dealing with violence against women among poor families in urban areas, and useful for people who intend to improve relations between women and men in the struggle for gender equality in poor families.

## 2. METHODS

This research was conducted with a descriptive approach and gender perspective, a point of view that sees the harmony of the relationship between the roles of men (husbands) and women (wives). The dependent variable in this study is the level of mental resilience of young mothers from urban poor families while the independent variables to be studied include the level of education of young mothers, length of the marriage, number of children, husband's occupation, husband's income, family background, and living environment.

The population of this study is young mothers living in poverty in Bandung City and Indramayu City. Sampling was conducted using a stratified random sampling technique. The data collected consisted of secondary and primary data. Secondary data were collected through documentation and literature studies, while primary data were collected by distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews with respondents. The way of interpreting and summarizing the research results is done by drawing a knot from the entire concept context of each data analysis.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Gender Relations in The Household

Under normal circumstances, the relationship between husband and wife will remain harmonious even in an environment that is not democratic and does not recognize the concept of gender equality (Brown, 2022). However, for poor families, the rules of marriage seem paradoxical (Yüksel & Ergöçmen, 2014). On the one hand, marriage is considered a human stage that symbolizes maturity and sanity (Gavhar, 2023). On the other hand, the tasks imposed on this institution are often so entangling that they threaten the sanity and maturity of the individuals involved (Rikel, 2020).

#### 3.2. Mental Resilience

A person's mental resilience can be interpreted as a state of mental health, in general, mental health is a full and harmonious function of the whole personality (Arpentieva *et al.*, 2022). The characteristics of mental health that affect mental resilience include feeling that other people like them, having a sense of humor, being able to sleep well, feeling that they have freedom, feeling part of society, feeling well treated at home and by others, looking calm, fresh, not showing fatigue, feeling satisfied with their economic status, believing in themselves, and liking other people (Minghat *et al.*, 2023).

#### 3.3. Gender Equality in the Family

Gender equality also includes the elimination of discrimination and injustice, both against men and women (Gupta *et al.*, 2019). The nurture school views that differences between men and women are essentially the result of socio-cultural construction that results in different roles and tasks (Aprilia *et al.*, 2023). This difference causes women to always be left behind and neglected in their roles and contributions to family life, society, nation, and state (Cohen & Hartmann, 2023). While the flow of nature (natural) accepts the differences in biological nature naturally between men and women. The biological differences indicate that the two types are given different roles and tasks (Iannuzzi *et al.*, 2023).

Another case with a compromised understanding is known as balance which emphasizes the concept of partnership and harmony in the relationship between men and women (Young *et al.*, 2023). This view does not contradict men and women, because both must work together in partnership and harmony in family life, society, nation, and state (Gupta *et al.*, 2019).

#### 3.4. Discussion

In urban poor families in both Indramayu and Bandung, the role of earning a living in the family is still mostly done by men as the head of the family. In Indramayu, most of the husband's income is handed over to his wife, and the husband does not participate in managing the family finances. This condition is different from the poor families in Bandung, where 60% of the husbands do not leave their income to their wives and some of them participate in managing the family finances. The habit of a family in managing family needs can occur due to habitual factors or an agreement between husband and wife (Kilty *et al.*, 2023). This habit is not a problem as long as everything is within the corridor for the benefit of the family. Problems arise when there are parties who go out of the norm and use it for pleasure or personal interests and can even disrupt family life (Damirovich, 2021). As shown by respondents in the city of Bandung, they are poor and have more than one wife and a gambling habit.

The poor financial condition of most poor families requires the role of other members besides the husband/father to provide for the wife/mother and children (Aarntzen *et al.*, 2023). Most mothers in Indramayu City and Bandung City have prepared themselves to work outside the home. The most common activity chosen by them is to work outside the home and some intend and carry out selling activities. This response is a good potential in a family where the wife prepares her role to help or earn a living for the family. This shows that women, in this case, young mothers, do not just stand idly by or throw up their hands to always demand and ask their husbands, but have the strength and readiness to carry out activities outside of their duties as housewives in meeting the family's financial needs. This indicator illustrates that young mothers have psychological strength and can maintain their mentality to continue living their lives despite being poor. This potential must be appreciated by looking at the work in the family needs to be interpreted as work that is not limited by strong barriers that limit each other and can even become material for discriminating the role itself. Within the limits of role shifts in fathers and mothers that are intended to maintain and sustain family life as long as they pay attention to ethics, norms and even religious rules can be seen as a joint effort in maintaining family life.

The basics of ethics, norms, and religion in a family can be maintained and grow well due to a conducive environment (Luk *et al.*, 2018). The results of this study illustrate that the role of the mosque in the form of recitation is very fencing behavior and activities carried out by mothers and significantly directs their thoughts, emotions, and actions despite living in poverty. Their actions are maintained from impulsive desires or impulses that can damage their family order. Recitation at the mosque can be believed to be an activity that can maintain the mental strength of poor young mothers so that they can act rationally and have the energy to try to contribute to the family according to their abilities.

According to the young mothers of poor families in both Indramayu City and Bandung City, most of them choose their daughters sooner to help with family finances, because there are more and easier job opportunities for women, and women are seen as more understanding of family needs. Meanwhile, for men, the possible job opportunities are manual laborers, construction workers, restaurant waiters, and odd jobs. Therefore, the family considers the older age for men to be able to work because the work requires strength that can only be possessed by men in their late teens.

The mental resilience of young mothers in poor families to stay with the family and try to continue to maintain family life draws strength from the environment in which they live. The contributions given by the environment, both material and non-material, provide strength and mental resilience. For families who live amid a large family, emotional support from parents and other relatives is very meaningful for the survival of a family. Parents and siblings become a place to express their concerns and complaints. Meanwhile, the surrounding neighbors are not perceived to provide meaningful support. The lack of attention from neighbors may be because they are also in the same situation, making it difficult to help others.

Spiritual guidance in the form of recitations attended by the women was felt to be very supportive of their mental resilience and helpful in dealing with economic difficulties. Likewise, the existence of the PKK, which provides savings and loan services, can ease the burden a little, as can the assistance have provided by the government and the private sector in the form of necessities, and scholarships for children's schools. However, there are still families who are trapped by the services of mobile banks or loan sharks.

The spirit of maintaining family life in mothers as part of their mental resilience is always alive with hopes for a more decent life and always trying according to their abilities, being

responsible for the survival of children even though they have to work far from their families such as out of town.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research resulted in four conclusions, namely 1) that the division of tasks between husbands and wives in poor families facing economic difficulties is not a planned division of tasks but rather due to economic living conditions that force mothers to do for the family, 2) children are perceived as assets that can help family finances, especially girls because they are seen as more opportunities to get a job, 3) the level of mental resilience of young mothers in poor families is reflected in their daily psychological conditions. Feelings of anxiety about the uncertainty of life in the future are balanced with high hopes for children who will be able to help ease the family's economic burden, and 4) factors that can strengthen the mental resilience of young mothers in urban poor families consist of internal factors, namely responsibility for the survival of their children and external factors in the form of assistance from close relatives, recitation groups, and PKK organizations that provide moral and material support.

Based on the above conclusions, this study suggests that there should be a movement that initiates the (poor) community in favor of girls' education because girls have been perceived as assets that can help family difficulties. Furthermore, the role of the family/families, recitation groups, and community organizations needs to be maintained and continuously developed to help strengthen the mental resilience of young mothers in facing the difficulties of family life.

#### 5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

#### 6. REFERENCES

- Aarntzen, L., Derks, B., van Steenbergen, E., and van der Lippe, T. (2023). When work–family guilt becomes a women's issue: Internalized gender stereotypes predict high guilt in working mothers but low guilt in working fathers. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 62(1), 12-29.
- Aprilia, V., Silalahi, R. B., Halizah, N., and Ivanna, J. (2023). Perspektif masyarakat tentang budaya patriarki terhadap kesetaraan gender di kota medan. *INOVASI: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengembangan Pendidikan*, 1(3), 34-43.
- Arpentieva, M. R., Minghat, A. D., and Kassymova, G. K. (2022). Mental stress education: The changes in the life and conditions of patients. *Indonesian Journal of Community and Special Needs Education*, 2(2), 111-118.
- Brown, S. L. (2022). Union and family formation during young adulthood: Insights from the add health. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 71(6), S32-S39.
- Cohen, B. M., and Hartmann, R. (2023). The 'feminisation' of psychiatric discourse: A marxist analysis of women's roles in neoliberal society. *Journal of Sociology*, 59(2), 349-364.

- Damirovich, M. R., Ibragimjanovich, T. I., and Ugli, K. N. K. (2021). The role of family, community and education in the development of patriotic spirit in youth. *JournalNX*, 7(1), 311-314.
- Gavhar, K. (2023). Socio-psychological features of relations in a young family. *Web of Scientist: International Scientific Research Journal*, 4(1), 217-221.
- Glushchenko, V. V. (2023). The scientific and practical significance of the paradigm of the development of scientific support of the 10th technological order in the world economy. *ASEAN Journal of Science and Engineering Education*, 3(3), 245-264.
- Gupta, G. R., Oomman, N., Grown, C., Conn, K., Hawkes, S., Shawar, Y. R., Shiffman, J., Buse, K., Mehra, R., Bah, C. A., Heise, L., Greene, M., Weber, A. M., Heymann, J., Hay, K., Raj, A., Henru, S., Klugman, J., and Darmstadt, G. L. (2019). Gender equality and gender norms: framing the opportunities for health. *The Lancet*, 393(10190), 2550-2562.
- Iannuzzi, V., Bacalini, M. G., Franceschi, C., and Giuliani, C. (2023). The role of genetics and epigenetics in sex differences in human survival. *Genus*, 79(1), 1.
- Kilty, C., Cahill, S., Foley, T., and Fox, S. (2023). Young onset dementia: implications for employment and finances. *Dementia*, 22(1), 68-84.
- Luk, T. T., Wang, M. P., Leung, L. T., Chen, J., Wu, Y., Lam, T. H., and Ho, S. Y. (2018). Perceived family relationship quality and use of poly-tobacco products during early and late adolescence. *Addictive Behaviors*, 85, 38-42.
- Minghat, A.D., Arpentieva, M.R., and Kassymova, G.K. (2023). Anticipation and understanding of events and mental stresses as the effect of changes and transformations in human and social life: An education perspective. *ASEAN Journal of Community and Special Needs Education*, 2(1), 27-34.
- Nurdini, A., and Hadianto, N.F. (2018). Conformity of vertical public housing's performance with resilience agenda in Bandung metropolitan area. *Indonesian Journal of Science and Technology*, 3(1), 53-63.
- Pranathi, O., and Kamraju, M. (2024). Exploring the influence of gender in political campaigns: a comparative study from community service perspective. *ASEAN Journal of Community Service and Education*, 3(1), 1-10
- Rikel, A. M. (2020). Perception of social maturity criteria, self-perception and value orientations among Russian millennials. *RUDN Journal of Psychology and Pedagogics*, 17(3), 491-503.
- Young, M., Milkie, M. A., and Schieman, S. (2023). Mother–father parity in work–family conflict? the importance of selection effects and nonresponse bias. *Social Forces*, 101(3), 1171-1198.
- Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, İ., and Ergöçmen, B. A. (2014). Early marriage: Trends in Turkey, 1978-2008. *Journal of Family Issues*, 35(12), 1707-1724.