

## “Kepala Putik” on Women: Perspectives and Challenges in Balancing the Dual Role as Mother and Worker in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The dual roles carried out by Indonesian women as both mothers and workers have increasingly garnered attention amidst dynamic social and economic changes. This article explores the concept of “Kepala Putik” as a perspective accompanied by the stigma faced by Indonesian women in fulfilling these dual roles. The research utilizes a qualitative method with a literature study approach. The primary data sources stem from a comprehensive review of relevant literature, including scholarly articles, books, and reports related to the dual roles of women in Indonesia. This study highlights the increasing participation of women in the workforce in Indonesia, focusing on a literature analysis to understand the social perspectives and challenges faced by women in balancing these dual roles. The uniqueness of this research lies in its emphasis on the specific concept of “Kepala Putik” and how this stigma uniquely affects Indonesian women. The findings of this study reveal the complexity of stereotypes and social norms related to women who choose to work while continuing to fulfil their roles as mothers.

**Keywords:** dual role; challenges; *kepala putik*; perspectives; women

**Abstrak:** Peran ganda yang dijalankan oleh perempuan Indonesia sebagai ibu dan pekerja merupakan fenomena yang semakin mendapat perhatian di tengah perubahan sosial dan ekonomi yang dinamis. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi konsep “Kepala Putik” sebagai pandangan yang disertai stigma yang dihadapi perempuan Indonesia dalam menjalankan peran ganda tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi literatur. Sumber data utama berasal dari tinjauan menyeluruh terhadap literatur yang relevan, termasuk artikel ilmiah, buku, dan laporan terkait peran ganda perempuan di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menyoroti semakin meningkatnya partisipasi perempuan dalam angkatan kerja di Indonesia, dengan fokus pada analisis literatur untuk memahami perspektif sosial dan hambatan-hambatan yang dihadapi perempuan dalam menjalankan peran ganda tersebut. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada penekanan terhadap konsep spesifik “Kepala Putik” dan bagaimana stigma ini secara unik memengaruhi perempuan Indonesia. Hasil dari studi ini menunjukkan kompleksitas stereotip dan norma sosial terkait perempuan yang memilih untuk bekerja sambil tetap menjalankan peran sebagai ibu.

**Kata Kunci:** peran ganda; tantangan; kepala putik; perspektif; perempuan

## A. Introduction

In the era of rapid social and economic development in Indonesia, the role of women is evolving and expanding into the workforce. This phenomenon reflects the dynamic changes in society, where many women strive to balance the dual roles of being mothers and workers. Despite the increasing participation of women in the workforce, associated stigmas and barriers remain crucial issues affecting career development and work-life balance for women. The term "*Kepala Putik*" used in the title reflects societal views on women attempting to manage these dual roles. This stigma often creates additional pressure for women trying to juggle responsibilities as mothers with workplace expectations. This research aims to explore societal perspectives on "*Kepala Putik*" and identify the barriers faced by women in managing their dual roles.<sup>1</sup>

The economic development and globalization have opened doors for more women to participate in the workforce. However, despite increased opportunities, gender stereotypes and traditional social norms still influence societal perceptions of women attempting to balance dual roles. "*Kepala Putik*" reflects the complexity of views and expectations encountered by women in their efforts to embrace the roles of both mother and worker. In the Indonesian context, traditional values often still view women as central figures in caregiving and family support roles, creating additional pressure for women choosing to pursue professional careers. Therefore, further exploration is needed to understand how these perceptions affect women's daily lives, including aspects such as career advancement, career decisions, and psychological well-being.<sup>2</sup>

By gaining a deeper understanding of the "*Kepala Putik*" stigma and encountered barriers, this research aims to provide a basis for cultural improvement and policy changes that support women. By giving a voice to

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<sup>1</sup> Nicky Stephani, "Juggling Identities: Komik Bunda's Representation of 'Good' Working Mothers during the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 2 (2023): 338–53, <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2023-3902-19>.

<sup>2</sup> Desi Anggraini and Sari Rahma Fitri, "Multiple Role Conflict of Working Mothers and Attitude of Exclusive Breast Milking in the New Neighborhood of the Bamboo Field, Medan Tuntungan District," *International Journal of Clinical Inventions and Medical Science* 4, no. 1 (2022): 17–23, <https://doi.org/10.36079/lamintang.ijcims-0401.307>.

women's experiences in these dual roles, it is hoped to pave the way for a more inclusive society and organizations where women can grow and thrive without being limited by gender stereotypes and stigma.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, this research underscores the importance of understanding the impact of dual roles on women's career development and family well-being comprehensively. Facing the double pressure of work demands and family responsibilities, women often have to make challenging decisions that can affect their long-term careers and personal lives. Efforts are needed to create a work environment that balances work and personal life.<sup>4</sup>

This research can serve as a foundation for formulating more inclusive policies at the corporate and governmental levels. Companies may consider initiatives such as flexible working hours, support for childcare, and promoting a work culture that supports women in dual roles. Governments can also consider policy measures that support women in their careers, such as education and training opportunities, as well as social campaigns to alleviate the stigma associated with "Kepala Putik." Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that the dual role of women is not just an individual issue but a social and economic issue related to national development.<sup>5</sup> The full engagement of women in the workforce has great potential to enhance economic productivity and their contribution to sustainable development. Therefore, addressing the stigma of "Kepala Putik" and related dual role barriers not only benefits women themselves but also society as a whole.

This research also highlights the urgency of a collaborative approach involving the government, companies, and society in addressing these challenges. The government can provide incentives and policies that support the dual role balance, while companies can implement practices supporting work-life balance. Public understanding and support are crucial to changing

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<sup>3</sup> Dede Waslia and Ranti Widiyanti, "The Role of Posyandu Community Health Workers in Improving the Health of Mothers and Children," in *The 4th International Seminar on Global Health (ISGH4)*, 2022, 269–276, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kme.v2i2.11090>.

<sup>4</sup> Maisaroh Choirotunnisa, "Labor Polemics and a Comparison of Indonesian Labor Policies," *Progress in Social Development* 4, no. 1 (2023): 7–19, <https://doi.org/10.30872/psd.v4i1.49>.

<sup>5</sup> Ni Putu Trisca Wisuda Putri and Robertus Landung Eko Prihatmoko, "Gambaran Stres Kerja yang Disebabkan oleh Peran Ganda Serta Hubungan antara Work-Family Conflict dan Work-Family Balance pada Ibu Bali Bekerja," *Suksma: Jurnal Psikologi Universitas Sanata Dharma* 3, no. 1 (2022): 21–45, <https://doi.org/10.24071/suksma.v3i1.4454>.

norms and expectations that may hinder women's progress. Further research can be directed towards exploring practical solutions applicable across various sectors and societal layers.<sup>6</sup> Developing practical guidelines or best models to support women in dual roles can be the next constructive step. This will not only help reduce stigma but also provide clear direction for individuals and organizations to create an inclusive environment that supports the growth of all its members.

Fariza's research on the experiences of Indonesian working mothers during the COVID-19 pandemic reveals how the global health crisis has exacerbated the dual burden faced by women. Fariza shows that the pandemic has increased pressure on working mothers with heightened work demands, lack of social support, and challenges in balancing work and household responsibilities. These findings are relevant to your research as they highlight how health emergencies can worsen gender inequalities and affect the balance of dual roles that women face. This provides important context on how extraordinary conditions can amplify the challenges women face in maintaining work-family balance.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, Radius, Arin, and Maulida examine gender relations during the pandemic era in Indonesia, focusing specifically on the negotiation and resistance of urban women workers working from home (WFH). This study illustrates how women have tried to negotiate their roles both at work and at home in the context of WFH. The research shows various strategies employed by women to address the challenges of working from home while still fulfilling domestic responsibilities, including setting up home workspaces and managing expectations from employers and family members. This is closely related to your research as it depicts the dynamics faced by women in balancing their dual roles during the pandemic and identifies how they cope with these challenges in both social and professional contexts.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Sandrotua Bali, Ming Chou Liu, and Huei Hsuan Lin, "Pursuing Higher Education Careers and the Process of Migration among Indonesian Female Migrant Workers in Taiwan," *Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS)* 4, no. 2 (2019): 302–17, <https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol4iss2pp302-317>.

<sup>7</sup> Fariza Yuniar Rakhmawati, "Experience of Indonesian Working Mothers during Covid-19 Pandemic," *Jurnal Kajian Peradaban Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 62–68, <https://doi.org/10.47076/jkpi.v5i1.128>.

<sup>8</sup> Radius Setiyawan, Arin Setiyowati, and Maulida Maulida, "Gender Relations during Pandemic Era in Indonesia: Negotiation and Resistance of Urban Woman Workers at Work From

The objective of this research is to investigate societal perspectives on women attempting to balance the dual roles of being mothers and workers, with a focus on the concept of "*Kepala Putik*" reflecting social stigma. Through a literature study approach, this research aims to identify the barriers faced by women in their dual roles in the Indonesian context. Additionally, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of this stigma on women's career development, psychological well-being, and family dynamics. By detailing societal views and practical barriers faced by women, this research is expected to provide a basis for policy recommendations and community initiatives supporting women in achieving a balance between their roles as mothers and workers.

## B. Methods

This research method is based on a literature review approach with the aim of gaining in-depth understanding of societal perspectives and barriers faced by women in balancing dual roles as mothers and workers in Indonesia. The literature study provides a framework for detailing the concept of "*Kepala Putik*" and identifying thought patterns influencing social perceptions of women in this context. The selection of this method is deemed relevant as it allows for comprehensive exploration of social views and potential barriers through various literary sources, including scholarly journals, books, and related articles.<sup>9</sup>

The research process involves in-depth analysis of literature discussing women's dual roles, the "*Kepala Putik*" stigma, and practical challenges encountered by women in the workforce and family life. Critical analysis steps are employed to identify key findings and patterns emerging from relevant literature. This literature review approach enables researchers to gain a holistic understanding of these issues, leveraging existing knowledge and involving a multidisciplinary perspective. The research also includes the strict application of inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the

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Home (WFH) in Family," *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender* 17, no. 1 (2022): 97-118, <https://doi.org/10.21580/sa.v17i1.10437>.

<sup>9</sup> Eko Sugiarto, *Menyusun Proposal Penelitian Kualitatif: Skripsi dan Tesis* (Yogyakarta: Suaka Media, 2015).

literature used. Ultimately, this literature review is expected to contribute to a profound insight into societal perspectives and barriers faced by women in navigating dual roles in Indonesia, detailing implications and potential solutions for further development.<sup>10</sup>

## C. Results and Discussion

### Women's Higher Education and Dual-Role Challenges

The report from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) illustrates the dynamic changes in education in Indonesia, specifically regarding the involvement of women in higher education. According to the latest data, the percentage of women successfully completing higher education is higher than that of men, reaching 10.06% in 2021, while men reached 9.28%.<sup>11</sup> This reflects a positive development in empowering women in the education sector, where women are becoming more active and successfully achieving higher levels of education. Breaking down the data based on the region of residence, the percentage difference between women and men with higher education degrees in urban areas (13.51% and 12.56% respectively) indicates a higher participation rate of women in higher education, especially in urban environments. However, in rural areas, this difference narrows slightly, with 5.57% of women and 4.76% of men holding higher education degrees. This reflects the continuing challenges of access to higher education in rural areas, especially for women.<sup>12</sup>

Although many women have successfully completed higher education, approximately 16.09% of women aged 15 and above do not have any degrees. This percentage is higher than that of men, which stands at 11.65%. This fact highlights the importance of continuously improving access and the quality of

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<sup>10</sup> Iwan Hermawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan (Kualitatif, Kuantitatif dan Mixed Method)* (Kuningan: Hidayatul Quran, 2019).

<sup>11</sup> Vika Azkiya Dihni, "Lulusan Perguruan Tinggi Lebih Banyak Perempuan Ketimbang Laki-Laki," *Katadata Media Network*, March 9, 2022, [https://databoks.katadata.co.id/demografi/statistik/4be8cbf5144147d/lulusan-perguruan-tinggi-lebih-banyak-perempuan-ketimbang-laki-laki#:~:text=Laporan Badan Pusat Statistik \(BPS,laki 9%2C28%25](https://databoks.katadata.co.id/demografi/statistik/4be8cbf5144147d/lulusan-perguruan-tinggi-lebih-banyak-perempuan-ketimbang-laki-laki#:~:text=Laporan Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS,laki 9%2C28%25).

<sup>12</sup> Elisabeth Dewi, "Trauma and Fear of Long-Distance Mothering among Indonesian Female Migrant Domestic Workers," in *Enabling Gender Equality: Future Generations of the Global World* (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2015), 67–79, <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0895-993520150000023005>.

education for women throughout Indonesia. It is crucial to recognize that women, besides being active participants in education, also play a central role in shaping the family as the smallest unit in society. As homemakers, women contribute significantly to family well-being. Therefore, efforts to support women's education will not only enhance individual well-being but also contribute to the development of a more civilized and competitive society.<sup>13</sup>

The involvement of women in higher education not only has a positive impact on individual development but also implicates social and economic dynamics at the national level. Women with access and opportunities to pursue higher education have the potential to be agents of change, driving innovation, economic development, and overall improvement in human resource quality. However, behind women's educational achievements, there are still issues that need addressing. The high percentage of women who have not completed education at any level, around 16.09%, indicates ongoing inequality in access to education. These challenges may be related to economic, geographic, or social norm factors that hinder women from exercising their rights in the field of education.<sup>14</sup>

Cross-sectoral efforts and collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and society are needed to continue improving access and the quality of education, especially in rural areas. Empowering women through higher education is not just about providing rights and opportunities but also creating an environment that supports women in balancing their dual roles as agents of change in society and dedicated homemakers. With a profound understanding of this BPS data, more effective policies, empowerment programs, and sustainable community support can be designed. Higher education for women is not only about obtaining degrees but also empowering them to take an active role in various aspects of life, including achieving a balance between their dual roles as mothers and workers. Through

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<sup>13</sup> Syarifah Farradina, “Interdependence of Roles, Work-Family Roles and Psychological Strain: A Study on Married Working Women in Indonesia,” *Humanika* 24, no. 2 (2018): 73–83, <https://doi.org/10.14710/humanika.v24i2.13846>.

<sup>14</sup> Leslie Butt, Harriot Beazley, and Jessica Ball, “Migrant Mothers and the Sedentary Child Bias: Constraints on Child Circulation in Indonesia,” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 18, no. 4 (2017): 372–88, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2017.1346699>.

appropriate measures, Indonesia has the potential to continue developing into an inclusive, competitive, and gender-equal society.<sup>15</sup>

The data presented by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) leads us to a profound reflection on the views and obstacles in navigating the dual role of women in Indonesia, especially as mothers and workers. Despite the increased participation of women in higher education, reaching 10.06% in 2021, challenges are still evident in achieving a balance in this dual role. Although the percentage of women with higher education degrees is higher, about 16.09% of women aged 15 and above have not completed any education, creating inequality in access that requires further attention.<sup>16</sup> It is essential to note that the percentage differences between women and men in having higher education degrees in urban and rural areas indicate different dynamics. While women's participation is higher in urban environments, in rural areas, challenges in accessing higher education remain a reality, especially for women. This provides context regarding geographical and economic barriers that may affect women's ability to attain higher levels of education.<sup>17</sup>

The importance of women's role in family formation and their contribution as homemakers is a focal point in this context. Although many women have successfully pursued higher education, there is potential for obstacles related to social norms or family demands that can affect women's ability to manage their dual roles. In achieving a balance between the roles of motherhood and employment, women need support and understanding from their surrounding environment.<sup>18</sup> Cross-sectoral efforts and collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and society are crucial in overcoming

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<sup>15</sup> Indah S. R. Kuntari, Jan M. A. M. Janssens, and Henndy Ginting, "Gender, Life Role Importance, and Work-Family Conflict in Indonesia: A Non-Western Perspective," *Academic Research International* 8, no. 1 (2017): 139–53.

<sup>16</sup> Alvina Fadila Maulida and Isma Widiaty, "Work Family Conflict on Female Teachers in the Time of the Covid-19 Pandemic," in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Innovation in Engineering and Vocational Education (ICIEVE 2021)* (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220305.037>.

<sup>17</sup> Ali Halidin, "Dual Role Is Adjusting the Conflict of Employees Women in Pinrang Regency Office," *Journal of Research and Multidisciplinary* 2, no. 1 (2019): 84–93, <https://journal.alhikam.net/index.php/jrm/article/view/7>.

<sup>18</sup> Indah Soca Retno Kuntari, "Work-Family Conflict Among Indonesian Working Couples: In Relation to Work and Family Role Importance, Support, and Satisfactio [Doctoral Thesis]" (Radboud University, 2018).



these challenges. Empowering women through higher education is not just about providing rights and opportunities but also creating an environment that supports women in fulfilling their dual roles. Through a profound understanding of BPS data, more effective policies, empowerment programs, and sustainable community support can be designed to create an inclusive, competitive, and gender-equal society.

In discussing the views and obstacles faced by women in navigating their dual roles as mothers and workers in Indonesia, it is important to understand that high achievements in women's higher education should be a benchmark for equality in access and opportunities. Despite the increasing number of women successfully completing higher education, there is a paradox where a considerable number of women have not completed education at any level.<sup>19</sup> This indicates that access constraints and other factors such as economic, social, or geographic factors may still affect a significant portion of women in Indonesia. The urban and rural contexts become essential aspects in this analysis. While women in urban areas show higher participation in higher education, challenges in rural areas create a different picture. The smaller percentage differences between women and men with higher education degrees in rural areas can be interpreted as an urgent need to improve access and support for women in these regions. This could include initiatives to address geographical constraints, such as providing educational facilities and scholarship programs.<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, the role of women as homemakers, which is the primary focus in family formation, requires special attention. Understanding the responsibilities and demands of this role must be balanced with societal support and a work environment that enables women to achieve a balance between work and personal life.<sup>21</sup> Creating a flexible and supportive work

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<sup>19</sup> Diah Irawaty, “Considering the Role of Money and Gifts in the (Re)-Construction of Motherhood and Family Among Indonesian Transnational Female Domestic Workers,” *Ikat: The Indonesian Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 4, no. 2 (2021): 89–111, <https://doi.org/10.22146/ikat.v4i2.61570>.

<sup>20</sup> Wening Udasmoro and Setiadi Setiadi, “Gender Discourses in Positioning Indonesian Female Migrant Workers,” *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik* 24, no. 3 (2021): 237–52, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.54034>.

<sup>21</sup> Choon Yen Khoo and Brenda S.A. Yeoh, “Responsible Adults-in-the-Making: Intergenerational Impact of Parental Migration on Indonesian Young Women’s Aspirational Capacity,” *Geoforum* 85 (2017): 280–89, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.08.005>.

culture for women as both workers and mothers will be a crucial step in overcoming potential obstacles they may face. Concrete measures, such as economic empowerment and education programs at the local level, along with advocacy for inclusive policies, can help create a more women-friendly environment. Considering these views and obstacles, we can open space for broader dialogue, create awareness, and promote positive changes that support women in navigating their dual roles in Indonesia.<sup>22</sup>

The expansion of women's participation in higher education in Indonesia reflects positive progress toward gender equality. However, given the fact that some women still face challenges in completing education, especially in rural areas, reminds us that efforts to improve education access must continue. This includes the development of more equitable educational infrastructure, focused scholarship programs, and approaches that consider local factors affecting educational access.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, it is essential to understand that higher education is just one aspect of women's dual roles. The role as a homemaker requires a deep assessment of family and societal dynamics that may influence women's choices and aspirations. Promoting awareness of the importance of balancing women's dual roles and providing genuine support from society, especially the workplace, are key factors in creating an environment that supports women in reaching their full potential.<sup>24</sup>

It is also important to scrutinize the impact of the global pandemic on women, both in education and in their dual roles. The pandemic's influence on educational availability and changes in job dynamics can present additional obstacles.<sup>25</sup> Responsive and progressive policies must be implemented to ensure that the negative impact of the pandemic does not disproportionately harm

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<sup>22</sup> Boli Hariyanto, Fitri Ramadhani Harahap, and Tiara Ramadhani, "The Dual Role of Women Farm Workers in Payung Village, Payung District, South Bangka Regency," *Social Science Studies* 3, no. 1 (2023): 564–80, <https://doi.org/10.47153/sss31.5332023>.

<sup>23</sup> Rachel Silvey, "Consuming the Transnational Family: Indonesian Migrant Domestic Workers to Saudi Arabia," *Global Networks* 6, no. 1 (2006): 23–40, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2006.00131.x>.

<sup>24</sup> Siska Ayu Tiara Dewi et al., "Working Mother's Experience with School-Age Children during the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Family Sciences*, 2022, 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.29244/jfs.vi.36575>.

<sup>25</sup> Dhiza Aliffia et al., "Konflik Peran Ganda Wanita Karir Saat Work From Home di Masa Pandemi Covid-19: Studi Meta Analisis," *Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengukuran Psikologi: JPPP* 11, no. 2 (2022): 110–14, <https://doi.org/10.21009/JPPP.112.08>.

women. Understanding and addressing views and obstacles in women's dual roles in Indonesia require cross-sectoral cooperation. Improved access to education, inclusive job support, and changes in more supportive social norms will help create an environment where women can achieve their full potential, both as professionals and as dedicated mothers. Thus, we can envision a future where every woman feels supported to pursue their dreams without unnecessary barriers.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to exploring views and obstacles in women's dual roles, it is essential to consider concrete steps to address these challenges. The government, educational institutions, and society need to collaborate to create sustainable solutions. One step that can be taken is to enhance specialized scholarship programs for women, especially in rural areas.<sup>27</sup> This will not only stimulate women's interest in pursuing higher education but also help overcome economic constraints that may act as barriers. Adopting policies and practices in the workplace that support the balance between women's work and personal life is crucial. More flexible working facilities, support for family leave, and recognition of women's contributions in the workforce can help create a more inclusive environment and support women in navigating their dual roles.

Improving access to reproductive health services and providing support for women who are mothers are expected to reduce barriers related to the role of homemakers. This includes the provision of safe and affordable childcare facilities, as well as psychological support for women striving to achieve a balance between their career and family.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, community education programs aimed at changing perceptions and social norms related to women's dual roles need to be enhanced. Gender awareness campaigns and women's empowerment will help shift societal views and stimulate communal support for women trying to navigate their dual roles. With these measures, Indonesia can embrace a future where women not only succeed in various fields but also feel supported in their

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<sup>26</sup> Ani Soetjipto, “Kebijakan Negara terhadap PRT Migran di Indonesia: Telaah Gender dan Hubungan Internasional,” *Jurnal Masyarakat dan Budaya* 19, no. 1 (2017): 45, <https://doi.org/10.14203/jmb.v19i1.388>.

<sup>27</sup> Carol Chan, “Follow the Maid: Domestic Worker Migration in and from Indonesia by Olivia Killias,” *Indonesia* 106, no. 1 (2018): 161–64, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ind.2018.0020>.

<sup>28</sup> Hiqma Nur Agustina, “Indonesian Woman Migrant Workers Fighting Inequality and Violence in Burung-Burung Migran,” *Journal of Language and Literature* 21, no. 1 (2021): 79–91, <https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v21i1.2861>.

dual roles as mothers and professionals. This is a crucial step towards a more inclusive, competitive, and gender-equal society.<sup>29</sup>

Alongside efforts to address views and obstacles in women's dual roles in Indonesia, it is crucial to pay attention to micro-level aspects in women's daily lives. Active engagement in family, community, and workplace discussions is key to strengthening social support for women striving to balance their dual roles.<sup>30</sup> Expanding dialogue platforms and experience-sharing forums at various levels can enrich the collective understanding of the challenges faced by women. Empowerment through mentoring and women's networks can also help create opportunities and build confidence. Structured and inclusive mentoring programs, along with professional networks, can provide much-needed support in navigating the dual roles of being a worker and a mother. Through these connections, women can inspire, advise, and offer practical solutions to overcome the obstacles they face.<sup>31</sup>

Enhancing the role of educational institutions and the business sector in designing policies that support dual-role balance is crucial. Collaboration between educational institutions, the government, and companies can result in training and skill development programs that add value to women, helping them stay relevant and competent in the workforce. By implementing tangible actions like these, it is expected to have a positive impact on cultural change and social norms related to women's dual roles. Indonesia, with its cultural diversity, has the potential to be a pioneer in shaping a society that understands and supports women's ambitions for success in various aspects of life. Through cross-sectoral cooperation and a positive spirit of change, we can achieve broader goals of inclusivity and gender equality.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Karina Putri Utami and Yeny Duriana Wijaya, "Hubungan Dukungan Sosial Pasangan Dengan Konflik Pekerjaan-Keluarga pada Ibu Bekerja," *Jurnal Psikologi* 16, no. 1 (2018): 1–8, <https://ejournal.esaunggul.ac.id/index.php/psiko/article/view/2351>.

<sup>30</sup> Aswatini Raharto and Mita Noveria, "Advocacy Groups for Indonesian Women Migrant Workers Protection," *Jurnal Kependudukan Indonesia* 7, no. 1 (2012): 1–20.

<sup>31</sup> Khoo Choon Yen et al., *Structural Conditions and Agency in Migrant Decision-Making: A Case of Domestic and Construction Workers from Java, Indonesia* (Sussex UK: Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium, 2015), [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a0898be5274a31e0000130/WP25\\_Khoo\\_et\\_al\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a0898be5274a31e0000130/WP25_Khoo_et_al_2015.pdf).

<sup>32</sup> Suryaningsih et al., "Employment Opportunities and Social Networks of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers at the Border," *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development* 11, no. 2 (2023): e403, <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i2.403>.

### The Origin and Significance of "Kepala Putik"

The use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" in this study is not accidental or without basis. Although technically "*Kepala Putik*" and "stigma" share the same meaning in a biological context—referring to the part of the female reproductive organ in plants—the choice of this term in this study is based on several deeper considerations related to cultural significance, symbolism, and social relevance. Etymologically, "*Kepala Putik*" refers to the part of the pistil that serves as the attachment point for pollen. This term carries strong connotations in Indonesian, especially in the context of fertility, life, and the reproductive role. "*Kepala Putik*" is often associated with the beginning of new life, symbolizing the role of women in giving birth and raising children. In this study, the use of this term aims to emphasize its meaning and symbolism in the context of women's dual roles as mothers and workers.<sup>33</sup>

On the other hand, the term "stigma" in a biological context is a translation of the same word in English, which, although it shares the same meaning, lacks the rich meaning and connotations associated with local culture. The use of "stigma" in Indonesian is often more associated with a negative connotation, such as a mark or label attached to someone due to certain social views or norms. Therefore, in this study, the choice of the term "*Kepala Putik*" is prioritized to avoid the potential negative connotations that might arise from the use of the word "stigma".<sup>34</sup> Additionally, the use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" also reflects an effort to popularize and elevate local terminology that is richer in meaning and more relevant to the Indonesian socio-cultural context. In recent years, the term "*Kepala Putik*" has become popular in discussions related to women's roles, especially among female activists and academics focused on gender studies. This term is considered more capable of representing women's roles in social and biological life as a whole.

"*Kepala Putik*" is also used to emphasize that women, like the pistil in plants, are central to life and reproduction, playing a vital role in the continuity

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<sup>33</sup> Kartika Widiningtyas, "Dinamika Konflik Peran Ganda Ibu Bekerja yang Menjalani Dual Earner Family," *Psyche: Jurnal Psikologi* 4, no. 2 (2022): 202–18, <https://doi.org/10.36269/psyche.v4i2.735>.

<sup>34</sup> Tri Yulian Pratiwi and Ike Betria, "Konflik Peran Ganda dan Stres Kerja pada Karyawan Perempuan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Cano Ekonomos* 10, no. 2 (2021): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.30606/cano.v10i2.1127>.

of society. This symbolism not only reinforces women's biological roles but also highlights the importance of their role in shaping generations and social welfare. Thus, the use of this term in this study is intended to honor and recognize the significant contributions of women in society. However, this study also uses the term "stigma" in certain contexts, particularly when referring to social views or norms that may hinder women's roles. In this case, "stigma" is used to describe the social burden or negative perceptions that women may experience, especially when they try to balance their roles as mothers and workers. The simultaneous use of these two terms creates a contrast that clarifies the difference between women's natural roles and the social challenges they face.<sup>35</sup>

The use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" is also part of an effort to create a more positive and empowering narrative about women's roles. By adopting a more positive and meaningful term, this study seeks to change society's perception of women's dual roles, from something that may have previously been viewed as a burden or challenge, to something noble and worthy of respect. This is important in efforts to promote gender equality and support women in fully embracing their roles. The term "*Kepala Putik*" also reflects the uniqueness of Indonesian culture, where natural symbolism is often used to describe broader social concepts. In Indonesian culture, many metaphors and symbols are derived from nature to explain social roles and functions, and "*Kepala Putik*" is one example of this symbolic usage. Thus, the use of this term is not only linguistically relevant but also culturally appropriate, making it a fitting choice in the context of this study.

The use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" in this study is part of an effort to build a strong and meaningful narrative about women's roles in Indonesia. It is a way to highlight the significant contributions of women in society while acknowledging the challenges they face. This term functions not only as a technical term but also as a symbol of the meaningful and important dual roles women play in the continuity of society. Besides linguistic and symbolic considerations, the use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" in this study is also rooted in a desire to emphasize the identity and uniqueness of Indonesian women in

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<sup>35</sup> Tri Martiana et al., "Dual Roles of Mothers Working in the Indonesia Industry: Its Effects on Maternal and Child Health in Sidoarjo," in *The Rise of Asia in Global History and Perspective: What Local and Global Changes in Diversity of Life? Université Paris, 14-16 March 2018* (Paris, 2018).

carrying out their roles. This term, derived from botanical terminology, was chosen not only for its biological meaning but also for its ability to describe the resilience and endurance of women in facing various challenges. "*Kepala Putik*" reflects the core of reproductive power and the birth of new life, which symbolically mirrors the strength of women in maintaining and building family and societal life.<sup>36</sup>

The use of this term is also a form of respect for Indonesia's cultural heritage, rich in symbolism and metaphors inspired by nature. In this context, "*Kepala Putik*" is not just a technical term but also a symbol with narrative power in framing the discussion about women's roles. The use of this term in the study also helps raise awareness that women's roles are not only about biology but also about the values upheld in society. This study also attempts to link the concept of "*Kepala Putik*" with local wisdom values that still live in Indonesian society. In many local cultures, women's roles are often depicted through analogies with nature, and "*Kepala Putik*" is one strong representation of this. By bringing this term into academic discussion, this study tries to bring traditional values back into modern discourse, enriching the dialogue about women's roles in the contemporary era.

Furthermore, the choice of the term "*Kepala Putik*" also reflects the social dynamics currently developing, where more and more women are taking on important roles in various sectors of life, both in public and private spheres. In this context, "*Kepala Putik*" is not only a symbol of reproductive roles but also a representation of women's ability to adapt and thrive in various situations. This term emphasizes that women, like the stigma that is the center of the plant's reproductive process, are also central to many social changes happening in Indonesia. Ultimately, the term "*Kepala Putik*" was chosen to emphasize that women have a very significant role in shaping the nation's future. As the center of life, women play a role not only in biological aspects but also in education, economics, and society. Therefore, this study uses the term "*Kepala Putik*" as a tribute to that role while remaining aware of the challenges that must be faced in achieving equality and well-being for all women in Indonesia. The use of the term "*Kepala Putik*" in this study is a conscious step to elevate and popularize a

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<sup>36</sup> Fitranita Ibnu et al., "International Indonesian Migrant Women Workers," in *Immigrant Women's Voices and Integrating Feminism Into Migration Theory*, ed. Florence Nyemba and Rufaro Chitiyo (Hershey: IGI Global, 2021), 97–117, <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-4664-2.ch006>.

terminology that is not only rich in biological meaning but also full of cultural symbolism. This study contributes not only to academic discussions about women's roles but also strives to change society's perspective on women and the dual roles they play. This term is expected to become a bridge to understanding the complexity of women's roles in Indonesia and supporting efforts toward a more just and inclusive gender equality.

### **Recommendations for Enhancing Support Systems**

One of the crucial aspects is providing recommendations to enhance support systems for women in higher education and the workforce. Women who juggle dual roles as mothers and workers face various challenges that require support from various parties. The recommendations presented here aim to help create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women so they can better manage these dual roles. It is essential to strengthen institutional policies in higher education that support women, especially those who also serve as mothers. For instance, universities can provide facilities such as childcare centers, lactation rooms, and flexible class schedules. These policies would greatly assist mothers still pursuing higher education in focusing on their studies without having to sacrifice their responsibilities as mothers.

There should be increased access to scholarship programs specifically targeted at women. These scholarships can help alleviate financial burdens and provide greater opportunities for women to continue their education. This way, women not only have the chance to improve their qualifications but are also able to compete in an increasingly competitive job market. Companies and organizations where women work also need to adopt policies that support work-life balance. Policies such as extended maternity leave, paternity leave, and flexible or part-time work options are examples of steps that can be taken to help women manage their dual roles better. Such support will allow women to remain productive in the workplace without having to sacrifice their roles as mothers.

Continued education and training should be widely accessible to women. In a rapidly changing world, it is important for women to continually enhance their skills and knowledge. This training could cover various aspects, from professional development to time management and stress management, all of which are highly relevant for women managing dual roles. Strengthening social



support networks is also crucial. Support groups such as working mothers' communities, discussion forums, and mentorship programs can provide women with a space to share experiences, challenges, and strategies in managing their dual roles. These networks not only offer emotional support but also serve as valuable sources of information and inspiration.<sup>37</sup>

Efforts must be made to increase awareness and understanding among the broader public regarding the importance of women's dual roles. Public awareness campaigns emphasizing the importance of gender equality and appreciation for women's roles as mothers and workers can help shift societal views that may still be patriarchal. The government also plays a critical role in creating regulations that support women in the workplace and higher education. National policies that are pro-women, such as anti-discrimination laws, fair maternity leave policies, and women's empowerment programs, can have a significant impact in supporting women.

It is important to involve men in this effort. Men's roles as husbands, fathers, and colleagues are vital in creating a supportive environment for women. Men should be encouraged to take on a greater role in childcare and household responsibilities, so the burden does not rest solely on women. Further research is needed to continue identifying the needs and challenges faced by women in managing dual roles. The data and findings from this research will be invaluable in developing more effective and targeted policies and programs. It is essential to continue promoting dialogue and cooperation among various parties, including the government, private sector, educational institutions, and civil society. This collaboration will ensure that efforts to support women can be effectively and sustainably implemented, so that women in Indonesia can manage their dual roles with adequate support and equal opportunities.<sup>38</sup>

Aside from institutional policies and support, it is also important to consider psychological support for women managing dual roles. Many women face mental and emotional pressure due to the demands of their dual roles as

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<sup>37</sup> Diah Irawaty, “Indonesian Transnational Female Domestic Workers: Between Agency and the Commodification of Love and Care,” *Gender Equality: International Journal of Child and Gender Studies* 8, no. 1 (2022): 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.22373/equality.v8i1.11993>.

<sup>38</sup> Fathayatul Husna and Ainal Fitri, “Gender-Based Dayah: The Role of Female Ulama in Trauma Recovery Strategies for Sexual Violence Victims in Aceh,” *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender* 18, no. 2 (2023): 169–94, <https://doi.org/10.21580/sa.v18i2.17416>.

mothers and workers. It is crucial for educational institutions and companies to provide counseling services or psychological support that women can easily access. These services could include individual counseling sessions, support groups, or mental health programs specifically designed to help women manage stress and maintain their emotional well-being. Furthermore, the importance of balancing personal life and work should be instilled from an early age, both in educational settings and within the family. Education that emphasizes the importance of dual roles and how to manage time and priorities should be part of the curriculum in schools and universities. By equipping young women with these skills, they will be better prepared to face the challenges of dual roles in the future.<sup>39</sup>

It is also important to view women's dual roles in a broader context, namely their contribution to the economy and social development. Women who successfully manage dual roles not only benefit their own families but also society and the economy as a whole. They contribute to increased productivity and economic sustainability, as well as promote the creation of a more inclusive and prosperous society. However, in efforts to support women's dual roles, cultural aspects and traditional values that may pose obstacles must not be overlooked. In many societies, norms and expectations still limit women's roles, particularly in the context of work and decision-making. Therefore, a culturally sensitive approach is needed in implementing policies and programs that support women. Public education aimed at changing patriarchal views should be carried out gradually and involve community leaders and religious figures.

On the other hand, technology can also be an effective tool in supporting women's dual roles. For example, the use of digital platforms for distance learning, e-commerce, and freelance work can provide flexibility for women to manage their roles at home and at work. This technology enables women to remain productive and connected with the outside world without having to abandon their responsibilities at home. In the family context, it is important to promote fair distribution of household tasks between husband and wife. Women should not have to bear the burden of household responsibilities alone. The role of husbands in supporting and sharing household chores and child-rearing is key to creating a healthy balance for women managing dual roles. Campaigns

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<sup>39</sup> Mina Elfira et al., "Working From Home: Women between Public and Domestic Spheres after the Outbreak of COVID-19," *International Review of Humanities Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.7454/irhs.v6i1.326>.

promoting equality within the household could be one important step toward achieving this.

It is also crucial to strengthen community support. A solid and supportive community can be a source of strength for women. Through social networks and communities, women can share experiences, resources, and moral support that are highly needed in managing dual roles. Programs that encourage community involvement and build strong social networks should be prioritized. The role of the media in supporting women cannot be overlooked. The media has a significant influence on shaping public opinion and societal views. Therefore, the media should be encouraged to promote a positive image of women managing dual roles, as well as highlight issues relevant to the challenges they face. Inclusive and positive coverage can help change negative stereotypes and provide inspiration for other women.<sup>40</sup>

It is important to recognize that change will not happen overnight. It requires time, consistent effort, and collaboration among various parties to create an environment that truly supports women in managing dual roles. Continuous evaluation and adjustment of existing policies and programs must be carried out to ensure they remain relevant and effective in addressing ever-evolving challenges. With this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that women in Indonesia can better manage their dual roles, supported by an inclusive environment and policies that favor gender equality. This is not only about providing fair opportunities for women but also about building a stronger, more sustainable, and prosperous society for all.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), Indonesia has seen a positive trend in women's participation in higher education, with 10.06% of women completing their studies in 2021 compared to 9.28% of men. Despite this notable advancement, significant challenges persist, particularly regarding educational access in rural areas and persistent educational inequalities that reflect the dual roles women play as both mothers and workers. The percentage of women without a degree stands at 16.09%, which is higher than

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<sup>40</sup> Siti Nurmayanti et al., “Work Family Conflict: A Review of Female Teachers in Indonesia,” *International Journal of Psychological Studies* 6, no. 4 (2014): 134–42, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijps.v6n4p134>.

that of men. This disparity highlights the critical need for continued efforts to enhance educational access and quality for women. It also underscores the importance of addressing the specific barriers faced by women, particularly in balancing their educational and professional responsibilities alongside their domestic roles.

To effectively address these challenges, it is essential to implement and enhance policies and support programs that assist women in managing their dual roles. Educational institutions should invest in infrastructure such as childcare centers and offer flexible class schedules to accommodate the needs of student mothers. Expanding scholarship opportunities specifically for women, particularly in underserved rural areas, can also play a significant role in improving educational outcomes. In the workplace, policies that promote work-life balance, such as extended maternity leave and flexible working arrangements, can significantly enhance women's productivity and overall well-being. Furthermore, comprehensive public awareness campaigns and community support are crucial for transforming social and cultural norms that restrict women's roles. By adopting these measures, Indonesia can better support women in managing their dual roles, fostering a more inclusive and gender-equal society.[s]

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