

The Effect of Work-Family Conflict, Communication Pattern, Social Support, and Stress Levels toward Family Quality of Life During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Staying at home during the pandemic COVID-19 should be an opportunity to improve the family's quality of life (QoL). Positively, gathering with family at home provides an opportunity to get to know family members in-depth, but also prone to causing various frictions due to the boundary between office work, housework, and family becoming invisible. This study aims to analyze the effect of work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, and stress levels on the family quality of life before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The design of this study was a retrospective and cross-sectional study. The study was conducted on nuclear families with working mothers in Jabodetabek and involved 169 working mothers as respondents using voluntary sampling. This study used descriptive analysis, paired two-group analysis, and path analysis. As a result, work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, stress levels, and quality of life increased during the pandemic. The results of the path analysis found that work-family conflict, communication patterns, and social support had a significant direct effect on family quality of life during a pandemic. The quality of life can be improved by increasing open communication patterns, more social support from husbands and extended families, and reducing work-family conflicts.

Keywords: family communication pattern, quality of life, social support, stress levels, work-family conflict

Abstrak

Tetap di rumah selama pandemi COVID-19 seharusnya menjadi kesempatan yang baik untuk meningkatkan kualitas hidup bersama keluarga. Secara positif, waktu berkumpul bersama keluarga di rumah memberikan kesempatan untuk lebih mengenal antaranggota keluarga secara mendalam, di sisi lain juga rentan menimbulkan berbagai gesekan akibat batas antara pekerjaan kantor dan pekerjaan rumah menjadi tidak terlihat. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh konflik pekerjaan-keluarga, pola komunikasi, dukungan sosial, dan tingkat stres terhadap kualitas hidup keluarga sebelum dan saat pandemi covid-19. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian retrospektif dan *cross-sectional*. Penelitian dilakukan pada keluarga inti dengan ibu bekerja di Jabodetabek dengan 169 ibu pekerja sebagai responden secara *voluntary sampling*. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis deskriptif, analisis dua kelompok berpasangan, dan analisis jalur. Hasilnya, konflik kerja-keluarga, pola komunikasi, dukungan sosial, tingkat stres dan kualitas hidup meningkat saat pandemi. Hasil analisis jalur menemukan bahwa konflik kerja-keluarga, pola komunikasi, dan dukungan sosial berpengaruh langsung signifikan terhadap kualitas hidup keluarga saat pandemi. Implikasi penelitian adalah kualitas hidup keluarga dapat ditingkatkan dengan pola komunikasi yang terbuka, dukungan sosial dari suami dan keluarga besar, serta mengurangi konflik kerja-keluarga.

Kata kunci: dukungan sosial, konflik kerja-keluarga, kualitas hidup, pola komunikasi keluarga, tingkat stres

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected human social life. Various efforts have been made to stop this virus, including the Large-Scale Social Restriction (PSBB) policy. PSBB causes various activities such as education and works to move online from home. Working from home due to PSBB increasingly provides opportunities for overlapping activities for working mothers' potential for conflict in managing to fulfill responsibilities in work and family (Marga & Sintaasih, 2017). LIPI's research (2020) on 919 people aged 15 years and over in DKI Jakarta, West Java, and Banten noted that 3.2 percent of respondents admitted that they did not leave the house at all, 82.5 percent only went out to buy necessities, 10.6 percent go out to work. The rest do activities outside the home like before the COVID-19 pandemic. This condition gives more time to gather with family. Positively, spending time with family at home provides an opportunity for parents, children, and other family members to know more deeply by increasing the family QoL. However, it is prone to causing various frictions due to the frequent meeting of family members.

The impact of the pandemic on economic stability has affected household life. Mother's participation as a breadwinner has increased due to the demands of economic needs, both in the formal and informal sectors. If the mother participates in work activities, then the mother will have a dual role, namely being responsible for work assignments and family tasks, potentially causing work-family conflict. Work-family conflict among female workers significantly decreased the quality of life (Purba & Sandroto, 2017; Pandu & Sankar, 2019). Around 1 in 5 (19.7%) female households are unhappy, stressed, and even under stress due to the pandemic and social restrictions (UNICEF, 2020). Economic pressures during the pandemic can increase stress, impacting family quality (Azzahra, Simanjuntak, & Puspitawati, 2022). Economic stress may contribute to increased parenting stress and the possibility of abuse and violence against children (Humphrey, Myint, & Zeanah, 2020) and ultimately impact the family QoL (Hsiao, 2018). The PPA Symphony (2021) showed that violence against children increased from 11278 cases in 2020 to 14517 cases in 2021. It is contrary to the expected benefits of spending time with family to improve the family QoL.

In a stressful situation during the pandemic, family social support is necessary because family support plays a vital role in the psychological problems faced. According to Gopalan, Pattusamy, and Gollakota (2020), family support, such as instrumental and emotional support, is needed to deal with the dual role of working mothers. Instrumental support indicates providing support that involves direct assistance, such as financial assistance or assistance in carrying out specific tasks. In contrast, empathy and concern indicate emotional support and attention. In addition, the active role of family members in creating effective communication needs to provide social support to family members.

Effective communication is an essential and complex thing that also occurs in parent-child relationships. Parents must create open and effective communication with their children to create a good relationship. Individuals with good family communication, namely having a wise attitude toward feedback, will tend to use problem-focused coping strategies (Ningsih, Utaminingsih, & Pratama, 2019). As previously mentioned, based on several studies have examined the relationship between variables (Azarbouyeh & Naini, 2014; Purba & Sandroto, 2017; Pandu & Sankar, 2019; Song & Gao, 2019) but conducted separately is still very limited by comparing the family conditions of working mothers' families before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the amount of time together with family and the changing role of the family during the pandemic, it is important to measure the family QoL during the pandemic by comparing family conditions before the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the direct and indirect effects of work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, and stress levels on family quality of life with the subject of working mothers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research is expected to provide benefits and contributions to various groups, including a reference with helpful information related to work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, stress levels, and family quality of life for future research. For families, this study can be used as material for self-evaluation to improve the working mother managing both roles in family and work.

Methods

Participants

This study used a cross-sectional design and a retrospective method to obtain information on the condition of families with working mothers before and during the pandemic at a particular time. This study was conducted on families with working mothers living in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek), with a working mother as the respondent. The research data was obtained by distributing online questionnaires. The pandemic was impossible to hold face-to-face meetings and interviews. This study used a probability sampling technique by voluntary sampling. Data were gathered from 169 female workers who worked during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collection was from March 1 to June 28, 2021.

Measurement

The data taken include the following variables: (1) family characteristics, (2) work-family conflict, (3) communication pattern, (4) social support, (5) stress level, and (6) family QoL. Family characteristics are the characteristics of the respondent's family in terms of the social and economic aspects of the family. The family characteristics measured in this study include husband and wife age, husband and wife education, husband and wife occupation, husband and wife income, length of the marriage, family form, family size, and age of the first child. Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the distribution of family characteristics on the average value, minimum value, maximum value, and percentage.

Work-family conflict is a condition where a person is bound by two roles, namely a role in the family and work, which results in one role demanding the other role so that one or both of them are mutually disturbed. Work-family conflict consists of work interfering with family (WIF) and family-interfering work (FIW). Work-family conflict was measured using the modified Development and Validation of Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict Scales (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). The questionnaire was valid and consistent, evidenced by the Cronbach alpha value of work-family conflict before the pandemic of 0.918 and during the pandemic 0.914. All items are scored on a 5-score item scale ranging from 1= never to 5= always, with possible scores ranging from 10-50 (a higher score indicates higher work-family conflict).

The communication pattern is family communication based on the level of openness of conversation (conversation) of all family members. Communication patterns were measured using a modified version of The Revised Family Communication Pattern

Scale (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). The questionnaire was valid and consistent, evidenced by the Cronbach alpha value of communication patterns before the pandemic of 0.956 and during the pandemic 0.873. All items are scored on 5-score item scale ranging from 1= never to 5= always, with possible scores ranging from 8-40 (a higher score indicates a better open communication pattern).

Social support is the support spouses and families provide in overcoming problems stemming from office work and household activities. Social support was measured using the modified Work Support Subscale of Social Support (Jain & Nair, 2017). The questionnaire was valid and consistent, with the Cronbach alpha value of social support before the pandemic of 0.929 and during the pandemic of 0.924. All items are scored on a 5-score item scale ranging from 1= never to 5= always, with possible scores ranging from 10-50 (a higher score indicates greater social support).

Stress level is the frequency of stress symptoms experienced by working mothers' attitudes and inner feelings towards the stressor. Stress levels were measured using the modified results of Maulana and Iswari (2020). The questionnaire was proven valid and consistent, as evidenced by the Cronbach alpha stress level before the pandemic being 0.866 and during the pandemic 0.886. All items are scored on 5-score item scale ranging from 1= never to 5= always, with possible scores ranging from 11-55 (a higher score indicates a higher level of stress).

Family QoL is the extent to which the respondent's satisfaction is based on the desired level of a person's family life standard in terms of physical, economic, social, and psychological aspects. Family QoL was measured using a modified result of The World Health Organization QoL (WHOQOL-BREF) (2020). The questionnaire was proven to be valid and consistent, as evidenced by the Cronbach alpha value of family QoL before the pandemic of 0.924 and 0.920 during the pandemic. All items are scored on a 5-score item scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree with possible scores ranging from 14-70 (a higher score indicates a better family quality of life).

Analysis

Descriptive analysis analyzes each data per variable and dimension, including frequency, mean, and standard deviation (SD). The Likert-scale responses from participants to each questionnaire were added up to obtain a total score and categorization (low, moderate, high). The cut-off for categorization refers to Sunarti et al. (2005), namely 60.00 in the low category, 60.01-79.99 in the medium category, and 80.00 in the high category. However, the cut-off point for the stress level variable refers to Puspitawati (2013), namely 33.39 (low), 33.40-66.69 (medium), and 66.70 (high). As several data did not meet the assumption and normality tests, the data with two paired samples were analyzed using Wilcoxon Signed Test. All data analysis was carried out using version 25.0 of SPSS software. In addition, analyzed the direct and indirect effects of work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, and stress levels on family QoL by Linear Structure Relations (LISREL 8.70).

Findings

Family Quality of Life

Results in Table 1 show that the average family QoL increased during the pandemic (74.50) than before the pandemic (72.77) significantly, as evidenced by < 0.05 . More than half of the families had a moderate QoL (Table 2). Improving family quality is that individuals become more satisfied with creativity and enjoy time with family during the pandemic. The pandemic has also further improved the spiritual condition of the family, meaning that the pandemic period is an opportunity for parents to optimally implement religious education in the family due to a large amount of meeting time between parents and children at home. All activities carried out from home during the pandemic, whether education, work, or worship, increased family QoL on working women's family. There is no correlation between the characteristics of participants with family quality of life before and during the pandemic.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of variables before and during the pandemic

Variable/ Time	Before the pandemic		During the pandemic		p-value
	M (SD)	Range	M (SD)	Range	
Work Interfering Family (WIF)	38.19(20.58)	0-95	41.42(23.47)	0-100	0.009*
Family Interfering Work (FIW)	21.39(17.93)	0-95	25.76(21.43)	0-95	0.000*
Work-Family Conflict (WFC)	29.29(17.61)	0-95	33.59(20.45)	0-92.5	0.000*
Communication Pattern	62.42(17.65)	0-100	64.42(17.65)	0-100	0.000*
Husband's Support	68.39(21.62)	0-100	70.16(21.05)	0-100	0.000*
Extended Family Support	68.52(22.02)	0-100	70.44(22.14)	8.3-100	0.000*
Social Support	68.45(20.28)	0-100	70.30(19.89)	0-100	0.000*
Stress Level	30.47(16.31)	0-67.5	33.49(18.47)	0-75	0.000*
Family QoL	72.77(14.28)	5.7-100	74.50(14.55)	7.7-100	0.000*

Note. (*) significant at $p < 0.05$

The extend the family quality of life, this study collects data on the characteristics of working mothers' families and correlates them with the studied variables. The descriptive results of family characteristics show that the working mother's age range is 24-60 years, the average age is 40.75 years, the husband's age is in the 26-61 year range, and the average age is 43.57 years. By using the age of the first child approach to classifying families based on the stage of family development, the largest percentage of families are in the fourth stage of development, namely families with school-age children, as many as 36.1 percent with the age range of the first child being 7-12 years. The average length of the marriage of respondents is 14.78 years. In addition, more than half of the participant family consists of 4 family members. More than half of working mothers and husbands have studied for up to sixteen years or have completed D4 or Bachelor's (S1). The largest percentage of working mothers and husbands work as civil servants/police/TNI. The highest percentage of the mother's income is in the range of Rp. 3.000.000 to Rp. 5.000.000 per month, and the husband (34.3%) reaches more than Rp. 11.000.000 per month. Unfortunately, there is no correlation between the characteristics of participants with family quality of life before and during the pandemic.

Work-Family Conflict

The work-family conflict increased significantly during the pandemic, as evidenced by < 0.05 (Table 1). Work-family conflict arises during a pandemic, indicating that the demands, time spent, and pressure from work interfere with participants fulfilling responsibilities as a mother and/or wife at home; even domestic life interferes with

responsibilities in the office, such as completing everyday tasks or overtime. Based on the result of descriptive data analysis, Table 2 shows that the majority of participants had low work-family conflicts before and during the pandemic. Low work-family conflict indicates that the participants rarely or never encounter any work-family conflict in their daily lives. Work Interfering Family (WIF) in the high category increased higher than Family Interfering Work (FIW) during the pandemic, which means the demands, time spent, and pressure that arise from work interfere with participants fulfilling responsibility as a mother and/or wife at home.

Table 2. Distribution of the percentage of respondents based on low, medium, and high categories in each variable before and during the pandemic

Variable/ Time	Before the pandemic			During the pandemic		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Work Interfering Family (WIF)	89.3	8.3	2.4	79.9	11.8	8.3
Family Interfering Work (FIW)	97.0	3.0	0.0	92.9	5.3	1.8
Work-Family Conflict (WFC)	94.1	5.3	0.6	88.8	8.9	2.4
Communication pattern	42.6	42.6	14.8	37.9	45.6	16.6
Husband's support	31.4	37.9	30.8	27.8	37.9	34.3
Extended family support	34.3	33.7	32.0	30.8	32.0	37.3
Social support	30.2	41.4	28.4	26.0	39.1	34.9
Stress level	60.9	34.9	4.1	56.2	37.9	5.9
Family QoL	13.6	59.8	26.6	8.9	54.4	36.7

The provide a more detailed explanation, a correlation test of the demographic before and during the pandemic was also performed. Based on the result of the correlation test, as shown in Table 3, before the pandemic, a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) was found between the working mother's age, the length of the marriage, and the first child's age with work-family conflict. As the wife's age, husband's age, length of the marriage, and age of the first child increase, the work-family conflict in the family decreases. While during the pandemic, a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) was found between the first child's age and family form. Families with a mother as the main provider (single earner) are more likely to experience work-family conflict, while families with a working mother and husband (double earner) experience low work-family conflict. Consistently, the age of the first child was significantly negatively associated with work-family conflict. Families with younger children are more likely to experience work-family conflict.

Table 3. Correlation test of demographics data and work-family conflict

Characteristics of Participants	Correlation (p-value)	
	Before the pandemic	During the pandemic
Working mother's age	-0.190* (0.013)	-0.133 (0.084)
The length of the marriage	-0.173* (0.024)	-0.131 (0.090)
The first child's age	-0.212** (0.049)	-0.157* (0.041)
Family Form (1=dual earner; 0=single earner)	-0.071 (0.362)	-0.159* (0.038)

Note. (*) significant at $p < 0.05$

Work-family time allocation provides additional information on the amount of time working mothers allocate for household chores, office work, and activities with children. Working from home increasingly provides opportunities for overlapping activities for working mothers. Based on Table 4, the time allocated by mothers to work is getting more extended during the pandemic, from 1-19 hours to 1-24 hours. In addition, the average time allocated to children and household chores increased during the pandemic. The average time allocation for children before the pandemic was 2.8 hours, increasing to 3.7

hours during the pandemic. The average time allocated for household chores before the pandemic was 3.3 hours, increasing to 4.3 hours.

Table 4. The amount of time allocated for work, children, and household chores in a day based on time

Indicator	Before the pandemic		During the pandemic		<i>p-value</i>
	Min-Max	Mean	Min-Max	Mean	
Time to work	1-19 hours	8.3 hours	1-24 hours	7.9 hours	0.033*
Time for kids	0-24 hours	2.8 hours	0-24 hours	3.7 hours	0.000*
Time for housework	0-15 hours	3.3 hours	1-24 hours	4.3 hours	0.000*

Note. (*) significant at $p < 0.05$

Stress Level

For families with mothers who work in the formal sector, the challenge of bearing work in Indonesia and work spheres will be even more difficult. All the work assigned to women triggers increased stress levels. Furthermore, the gap in working hours occurs because mothers must take care of all housework, including mothering. The study's results in Table 1 show that the average stress level increases significantly during a pandemic, as evidenced by < 0.05 . In general, families often experience symptoms that trigger stress levels during a pandemic increase unless economic conditions and difficulties tolerate anything that will stop activities. When the data was taken in 2021, one year after the COVID-19 pandemic was officially declared to have entered Indonesia, respondents had already begun to adapt to changes in economic stability during the pandemic. More than half of the respondents had low-stress levels before and during the pandemic (Table 2).

Based on the result of the correlation test, as shown in Table 5, during the pandemic, a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) was found between the working mother's age, the mother's education, the first child's age, and family form with stress level. As the wife's age, the mother's education, and the first child's age increase, the stress level on the working mother tend to decrease. Stress levels during the pandemic were significantly negatively related to maternal age, the age of the first child, the mother's education, and the wife's and husband's occupations. The mother's increasing age, the first child's age tends to have lower stress levels during the pandemic. Mothers studying up to the college level tend to have lower stress levels. Families with single earners or mothers being the family's primary breadwinners tend to have higher stress levels. While the pandemic, no characteristics of participants correlate with stress levels.

Table 5. Correlation test of demographics data and stress level

Characteristics of Participants	Correlation (<i>p-value</i>)	
	Before the pandemic	During the pandemic
Working mother's age	-0.136 (0.078)	-0.157* (0.041)
Mother's education	-0.122 (0.115)	-0.174* (0.024)
The first child's age	-0.144 (0.061)	-0.167* (0.030)
Family Form (1=dual earner; 0=single earner)	-0.098 (0.206)	-0.181* (0.020)

Note. (*) significant at $p < 0.05$

Family Communication Pattern

The results of Table 1 show that the average communication pattern during the pandemic increases, as evidenced by < 0.05 , meaning there is a difference between communication patterns before and during the pandemic. It concluded that family members' openness in family communication patterns increased during the pandemic. Table 2 shows that the category of communication pattern with the most significant increase before and during the pandemic is moderate. Families with high-category communication patterns increased during the pandemic (from 14.8 percent to 16.6 percent). The increasing pattern of high family communication during the pandemic indicates the frequency of intense conversations between family members. Time with family during the pandemic creates a sense of emotional security to express themselves and their opinions and discuss the difficulties they face. There is only found correlation between mothers' education and communication patterns during the pandemic. Families with mothers with an education background up to the college level tend to apply an available communication pattern in the family during the pandemic.

Social Support

Social support in this study measures the type of work-related social support from two potential sources of social support, spouse and family, based on the respondent's point of view. The study results in Table 1 show that the respondents' average social support from husbands and extended families increased during the pandemic, as evidenced by < 0.05 . The percentage of families with high social support increased from 28.4 percent to 34.9 percent during the pandemic. The highest percentage of social support from the husband was in the moderate category before and during the pandemic. The highest percentage of social support from family support was low before the pandemic and the high category during the pandemic (Table 2). The husband and extended family give support to respondents in the form of listening to work problems, providing input in going through difficult times during work, dividing work time with family, caring about work, and helping in dealing with work stress. There is no correlation between the characteristics of participants with social support before and during the pandemic.

Factors Affect the Family Quality of Life

Based on Figure 1 regarding the path analysis measurement model, several factors have a significant effect, (1) work-family conflict has a significant positive direct effect on stress levels before and during the pandemic, (2) communication patterns have a positive direct effect on the family QoL before and during the pandemic, (3) social support has a direct positive effect on the QoL before and during the pandemic, and (4)

work-family conflict has a significant negative direct effect on the QoL only during the Pandemic.

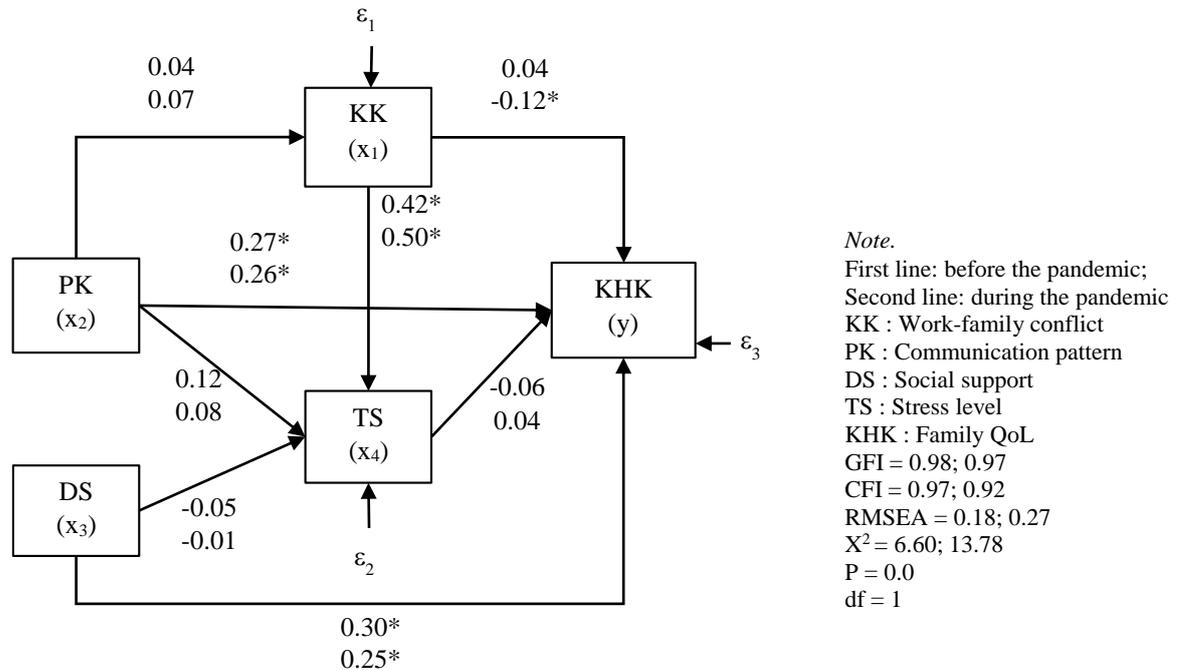


Figure 1. Path analysis measurement model

Stress levels are significantly affected by work-family conflict positive. It means that an increase in work-family conflict will increase stress. Communication patterns and social support significantly affect the QoL before and during the pandemic. Work-family conflict significantly affects QoL only during the pandemic. It means that increased communication patterns, social support from husband and extended family, and low work-family conflict will increase the family QoL during the pandemic.

Table 6. The decomposition effects result for family QoL before and during the pandemic

Variables	Before the pandemic			During the pandemic		
	TE	DE	IE	TE	DE	IE
Work-family conflict						
1. Communication pattern	0.04	0.04	-	0.06	0.06	-
Stress level						
1. Work-family conflict	0.42*	0.42*	-	0.50*	0.50*	-
2. Communication pattern	0.14	0.12	0.02	0.11	0.08	0.03
3. Social support	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.00
Family QoL						
1. Work-family conflict	0.01	0.04	-0.03	-0.10*	-0.12*	0.02
2. Communication pattern	0.27*	0.27*	-0.00	0.26*	0.26*	-0.00
3. Social support	0.30*	0.30*	0.00	0.25*	0.25*	-0.00
4. Stress level	-0.06	-0.06	-	0.03	0.03	-

Note. *significant at $t > 1.96$; DE: Direct Effect, IE: Indirect Effect, TE: Total Effect

Table 6 shows the results of the decomposition of effects in direct or indirect effects on the QoL. During the pandemic, there are three direct effects paths from each model: work-family conflict, communication pattern, and social support. Work-family conflict

has an effect of 1.44 percent during the pandemic. Meanwhile, the work-family conflict did not significantly affect QoL before the pandemic. The family QoL is positively influenced by communication patterns by 7.29 percent before and 6.76 percent during the pandemic. Increasing openness between family members in family communication patterns will further improve the quality of life. Social support also positively affects the family QoL by 9 percent before and 6.25 percent during the pandemic. The most effective path to influence the QoL is the social support variable before the pandemic, with an effect on the QoL by 9 percent and the direct influence of the communication pattern variable during the pandemic on the QoL by 6.76 percent.

Discussion

During the pandemic, many organizations began to provide a new working lifestyle, namely teleworking or working from home. The obligation to work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic brings new challenges and has the potential to create conflict between the work environment and family. The grand theory referred to in this study is the structural-functional theory. The situation and conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused instability and imbalance in the family system. The shift in work patterns from working in the office to working from home causes increased work-family conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes in work patterns that become more flexible make the demands of work and household blurry so that mothers have a dual role between work and family simultaneously. The average allocation of mothers to work before the pandemic was 8 hours per day, which became 7.5 hours per day. The average allocation of mothers' time to children and household chores increases during the pandemic. The shift in the allocation of mothers' time is evidence of a change in mothers managing the time of dual roles between work and family simultaneously.

This study combines the three bases of work-family conflict: time-based conflict, tension-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict. The study found that work-family conflict affected the family QoL only during the pandemic. These results indicate that the increase in work-family conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic can reduce the QoL of working mothers' families. Work-family conflict significantly adversely affects the QoL only during the pandemic due to increased work-family conflict. This study supports the results of research by Savitri and Nugraha (2019), which states that work-family conflict is negatively related and closely related to the QoL of working mothers. Working from home during the pandemic increases work-family conflict among working mothers in the form of work demands that interfere with responsibilities at home and vice versa. These results prove Karakose, Yirci, and Papadakis (2021) stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is positively related to the conflict between the work environment and family and affects the QoL.

The increase in work-family conflict during the pandemic occurs due to several factors, one of which is because the majority of children age of participants are in the early childhood stage, meaning the parents require special attention or assistance from their children. This is in line with Nomaguchi and Fetto (2018) that a mother with children at a younger age will experience a higher level of work-family conflict. The second factor is the family form in dual-earner vs. single-earner. During the pandemic, layoffs increased, so there was a change in family form from dual-earner to single-earner.

This study enriches previous research Jannah, Kadiyono, and Harding (2020) that dual-earner families tend to experience work-family conflict.

Work-family conflict shows have a direct effect on stress levels before and during the pandemic. The effect of work-family conflict on working mothers brings a piece of evidence on stress levels, and the number of influences increases during the pandemic. Work demands disturb the mind when spending time with family, making it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities. When the pandemic triggers an increase in stress levels, which marks by working mothers who are easily irritated by small things, tend to be impatient, and get angry quickly. Although more than half of the respondents had low-stress levels during the pandemic, the percentage of respondents with moderate and high-stress levels increased from before the pandemic. The results of this study provide a new picture that work-family conflict has a direct effect on stress levels, not only on one or part of the conflict bases as in previous studies (Armstrong, Atkin-Plunk, & Wells, 2015; Liu, Lambert, Jiang, & Zhang, 2017; Vickovic & Morrow, 2020).

Based on the functional structure, it is necessary to realize the roles, functions, and duties employing deliberation within the family to maintain family harmony. Communication is the key to overcoming conflicts that occur in the family, including work-family conflicts. Family gatherings during the pandemic make family members encourage each other to interact on various topics of conversation (Putri & Supratman, 2021). Open and deep communication within the family is essential in building interpersonal relationships between family members (Kadarsih in Makmur, 2020) to minimize conflict (Rodonuwu, Tasik, & Goni, 2021). However, the results of this study do not prove the effect of communication patterns in overcoming work-family conflicts that occur in the household. The results of this study contradict Setiawan (2020) that maintaining interpersonal communication between husband and wife will make it easier to understand and carry out their respective roles in the family.

Communication patterns do not affect stress levels before and during the pandemic. These results contradict (Merz, Meuwly, Rondall, & Bodenmann, 2014) regarding the importance of individual involvement in problem-solving communication and dealing with dyadic in the face of stressful events for the marital and family system. This result also contradicts the research by Curran and Allen (2017), which states that individuals in families with high open communication have lower stress levels to depression. In addition, communication patterns directly affect the family QoL before and during the pandemic. The study is in line with Walsh (2015) that to form a prosperous family through three processes, namely (a) communication (clear information, emotional sharing, collaborative problem solving, handling dyadic and family), (b) organization (adaptability, connectedness, and access to social and economic resources), and (c) belief systems (meaning, creation, hope, and spirituality). In addition, the active role of family members in creating effective communication is needed to provide social support to family members. This study also found that families with high communication patterns during the pandemic showed that family members were more open in expressing opinions. During a pandemic, family members encourage each other to interact with various conversation topics (Putri & Supratman, 2021).

Social support in this study came from two potential sources, namely spouses and families, using the respondent's point of view. The results of this study found a direct effect of social support on family QoL before and during the pandemic. Research shows that supporting the husband and extended family will improve the family QoL. These

results align with previous research that social support can improve the QoL of individuals in carrying out their roles (Gopalan, Pattusamy, & Gollakota, 2020; Zhang, Foley, Li, & Zhu, 2018). Based on the theory of Deacon and Firebaugh (1985), the family's quality is influenced by how the environment interacts. The husband and extended family are part of the microsystem environment as a social environment, people who interact directly with members of the family system to form the family QoL. According to Deacon and Firebaugh's theory, the COVID-19 pandemic is a macro-environment affecting the family QoL. The family may not be able to control the situation from the macro environment, but the pandemic conditions have a big enough impact on the family system. The implementation of the PSBB policy is one of the policies formed by the government as a political system in the macro-environment. The successful implementation of policies in a political system requires family support. Family support is manifested in the compliance and awareness of every family member to implement health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social support does not affect stress levels before and during the pandemic. The study is not in line with Puspitawati (2012) states that social support obtained through family, community, or community institutions can help reduce the stress experienced by individuals in the family. According to Kusrini and Prihartani (2014), the benefits of receiving social support from trusted people will feel they are cared for, appreciated, and loved to feel confident and competent. On the other hand, Daawi and Nisa (2021) stated that the social support obtained was not under the need can cause ineffectiveness of social support on stress.

More than half of working mothers have low-stress levels, but the stress level of working mothers increased during the pandemic. The study does not find the effect of stress levels on the family QoL before and during the pandemic. This result contradicts previous research, which states a strong positive and negative relationship between stress levels and QoL (Ardila & Sulistyaningsih, 2014; Putri, Kholis, & Ngestiningsih, 2018). The increase in stress levels during the pandemic results from the absence of clear boundaries between work and personal life, impacting work overload (Liu & Lo, 2018; Novianti & Roz, 2020; Ojala, Nätti, & Anttila, 2014). Stress is reduced if a person has schedule flexibility (Azarbouyeh & Naini, 2014; Kim, Henly, Golden, & Lambert, 2020). The role of stress was not found as a mediator that could partially mediate work-family conflict on QoL. This result contradicts the results of Presilia, Koesma, and Zamralita (2019) that stress can partially mediate work-family conflict on QoL, so that when individuals who experience work-family conflict also experience stress, they will have a lower QoL.

Path analysis shows that work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, and stress levels simultaneously affect the family QoL before the pandemic by 42 percent and during the pandemic by 32 percent. Patterns of communication and social support positively affect the family QoL before and during the pandemic. Work-family conflict significantly negatively affects the family QoL only during a pandemic. The study indicates that conditions that force working mothers to work from home during the pandemic add to the conflict between work and household roles, thus affecting the family QoL.

The average family QoL before the pandemic increased during the pandemic. Shareena and Shaid (2020) found that those with children at home, adequate and comfortable workspace, a quiet environment at home, and good internet connectivity are more willing to work from home than from the office. Working from home allows

working mothers to simultaneously take on a dual role between work and family (Azarbouyeh & Naini, 2014; Kim, Henly, Golden, & Lambert, 2020). In contrast, Jaiswal & Arun (2020) found that the QoL of female employees, while working from home during the pandemic, most women prefer to work from the office than work from home. The preference for working from home depends on factors such as the work environment at home and the support and motivation provided by the employer or organization (Feleen & David, 2021).

This study has several limitations. First, by distributing questionnaires online, only certain groups of working mothers with the ability to access the internet are captured. Second, this study did not use open-ended questions or conduct in-depth interviews, so it did not get more detailed answers from respondents. Third, the instrument of work-family conflict does not separate the items based on work-family conflicts, such as time and strain-based conflicts. Therefore, the results could not identify more specifically what types of conflicts were experienced by participants

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

There is a difference in the variables of work-family conflicts, communication pattern, social support, stress levels, and family QoL before and during the pandemic. There was a significant increase in work-family conflict, communication patterns, social support, stress levels, and family QoL before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The family in this study has low work-family conflict, low communication patterns, low-stress levels, social support from family and partners, and moderate family QoL. The higher openness on family communication patterns and higher social support from spouses and extended families, the higher family QoL on families with working mothers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, work-family conflicts reduce the family QoL only during a pandemic. Stress levels have no significant effect on family QoL before and during the pandemic.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the research obtained, communication patterns affect the family QoL, so advice to working mothers is to provide understanding to maintain good communication by being more open in accepting and considering the opinions of each family member. These results can be used as a reference for counseling activities or programs about the importance of implementing good communication patterns in the family in activities such as recitation and social gatherings by utilizing influential figures in the community. Social support affects the family's QoL, so it is recommended that husbands and extended families provide instrumental and emotional support. The government is also expected to provide paternity leave for working mothers giving birth to provide optimal social support so that the quality of life of working mothers' families increases. Further research is expected to expand the scope by adding interview sessions and open-ended questions to enrich the research results.

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