

Gender Communication Dynamics in an Effort to Uderstand the Multiple Role of Career Women in Indonesia: A Phenomenological Study

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How to cite this article: Susilawati, E., Yulianita, N., Fardiah, D. Yuningsih, A. (2024). Gender Communication Dynamics in an effort to Uderstand the Multiple Role of Career Women in Indonesia: A Phenomenological Study. *Library Progress International*, 44(3),1858-1577

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore and understand the meaning of a harmonious family life for career women and how they adapt to their dual roles. Utilizing a qualitative methodology with a constructivist paradigm and a phenomenological approach, this research examines the experiences of five career women from diverse fields, including academia, healthcare, religion, entrepreneurship, and government service. The study addresses key research questions about the motives for women's careers, their experiences juggling dual roles, their perceptions of success, and their strategies for managing self-conflict. The findings reveal that career women are motivated by personal fulfillment and economic necessity. Their experiences highlight significant challenges, including time management and societal expectations, and showcase their resilience and adaptability. Women perceive success in their dual roles through achieving a balance between career and family life, and they employ various strategies to manage self-conflict, such as effective communication, support systems, and personal time management. These findings enhance our understanding of how gender dynamics and communication strategies can support career women in successfully managing their multiple roles.

Keywords: Gender Dynamics, Phenomenology, Dual Roles, Career Women, Conflict Resolution

1 INTRODUCTION

The participation of women in the workforce has seen a significant increase in recent years. In Banten Province, over 48% of the workforce comprises female workers (BPS, 2022). This trend mirrors the broader national and global movements towards gender inclusivity in employment. This increasing participation is crucial as it contributes to economic growth and promotes gender equality and empowerment.

For several reasons, understanding the dynamics of career women who balance multiple roles is essential. Firstly, career women often juggle professional responsibilities with household duties, including caregiving and managing household chores. This balancing act can lead to significant stress and conflict, known as role conflict, which can adversely affect their professional performance and personal well-being (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The workforce in Banten Province is dominated by female workers, who constitute more than 48% of the total workforce. These women, who balance their careers with their roles as mothers and wives, often face multiple role conflicts. Effective communication skills are essential for managing these conflicts, as they help women understand and regulate their emotions, facilitating conflict resolution.

Research indicates that the dual role of career and family can lead to several forms of conflict, including time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Time-based conflict arises when time devoted to one role restricts time available for another role. Strain-based conflict occurs when the stress from one role impairs performance in another, and behavior-based conflict happens when behavior patterns required in one role are incompatible with those expected in another.

Moreover, the importance of effective communication cannot be overstated in managing these conflicts. Communication skills are vital for understanding and regulating emotions, negotiating role expectations with family members and colleagues, and seeking social support (Kahn et al., 1964). Effective communication helps mitigate the adverse effects of role conflict and fosters a supportive environment at home and work.

Several studies have highlighted the strategies employed by career women to manage these dual roles effectively. For instance, a study by Hecht and Boies (2009) found that women who practiced effective time management, sought spousal support and engaged in open communication were better able to manage their dual roles and experienced lower levels of stress and higher levels of job satisfaction.

Additionally, understanding these dynamics can inform organizational policies and support systems that cater specifically to the needs of career women. For example, flexible working hours, telecommuting options, and on-site childcare facilities can significantly alleviate the pressures of balancing work and family roles (Allen, 2001).

Career women often navigate the complex and demanding terrain of dual roles. Employees must meet professional expectations, which include achieving targets, meeting deadlines, and continuously enhancing their skills and knowledge. Simultaneously, mothers and wives manage household tasks, provide emotional and physical care for their children, and maintain a harmonious family environment. These dual roles demand significant time, energy, and emotional resources.

In their professional roles, career women are expected to demonstrate competence, dedication, and productivity. This often entails long working hours, participation in professional development activities, and, in some cases, travel. The professional landscape, particularly in healthcare, academia, and government services, can be highly competitive and stressful (Hochschild, 1989).

At home, their responsibilities are equally demanding. Mothers are typically involved in activities such as childcare, helping with homework, preparing meals, and attending school events. As wives, they also play a crucial role in maintaining the emotional and relational aspects of the family unit, including supporting their spouse and managing household finances (Shelton, 1992). The expectation to excel in both domains can lead to constantly being pulled in different directions.

The intersection of these dual roles often leads to significant conflicts and pressures, commonly called work-family conflict. This type of conflict arises when the demands of the work role are incompatible with the demands of the family role, causing stress and strain on the individual (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Several types of conflicts can emerge from these dual roles. Time-based conflict occurs when the time devoted to work reduces the time available for family responsibilities and vice versa. For instance, attending late-night meetings or working overtime can interfere with family dinners or bedtime routines for children. Strain-based conflict arises when the stress experienced in one role affects performance in the other. A demanding project at work can lead to irritability and fatigue at home, making it difficult to engage positively with family members. Behavior-based conflict emerges when behaviors required in one role are incompatible with behaviors expected in the other. For example, the assertiveness and competitiveness valued in many professional settings may clash with the nurturing and cooperative behaviors expected at home (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The pressures from these conflicts can manifest in various forms, including psychological stress, physical health issues, and relationship strain. Studies have shown that women experiencing high levels of work-family conflict report lower job satisfaction, higher levels of depression, and greater marital dissatisfaction (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992).

Moreover, societal expectations and cultural norms can exacerbate these pressures. In many cultures, including Indonesia, women are traditionally expected to prioritize family over career, which can lead to guilt and internal conflict when professional demands encroach on family time (Cousins & Tang, 2004).

To manage these conflicts, career women often employ various strategies, such as seeking flexible work arrangements, delegating household tasks, and prioritizing self-care. Effective communication with employers and family members is crucial in negotiating these dual demands and finding a sustainable balance (Allen et al., 2000).

Effective communication is crucial in managing self-conflict for career women balancing multiple roles. Self-conflict often arises when internal expectations and external demands clash, leading to stress and confusion. Effective communication helps individuals articulate their thoughts and feelings clearly, reducing misunderstandings and fostering a better understanding of personal needs and priorities. By expressing concerns and setting boundaries, career women can navigate the expectations of their professional and personal lives more effectively.

Moreover, effective communication facilitates problem-solving and decision-making. When career women communicate their challenges and needs openly with their employers, colleagues, and family members, it opens the door to collaborative solutions. For instance, discussing flexible working arrangements with an employer or delegating household tasks to family members can alleviate the burden of juggling multiple roles. This proactive approach mitigates self-conflict and enhances overall well-being and productivity (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991).

Emotional regulation and interpersonal communication are vital components of conflict resolution. Emotional regulation involves recognizing and managing one's emotions healthily and constructively. For career women, regulating emotions such as frustration, guilt, and stress is essential in preventing these emotions from spilling over into other areas of life. Techniques such as mindfulness, deep breathing, and reflective listening can help maintain emotional balance (Gross, 2002).

On the other hand, interpersonal communication involves exchanging information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages. Effective interpersonal communication skills enable career women to convey their needs, negotiate roles, and seek support from others. For example, open and honest communication with a spouse about the distribution of household responsibilities can lead to a more equitable sharing of tasks, reducing the overall stress and conflict within the household (Canary & Canary, 2013).

Furthermore, strong interpersonal communication skills are essential to building positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors. These relationships can provide a support system that helps career women manage work-related stress and conflicts more effectively. For instance, having a mentor or a supportive peer group can offer valuable advice and emotional support, making it easier to handle professional challenges (Allen et al., 2004).

The rapid economic growth in Indonesia has significantly impacted household needs. According to the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), Indonesia experienced a 5.02% economic growth in the fourth quarter of 2019, accompanied by a 5.1% increase in household consumption compared to the previous quarter (Bappenas, 2019). This economic pressure has driven more women to join the workforce to meet their household needs despite their limited knowledge and skills (Widiningtyas, 2022).

Data from the National Statistics Agency (BPS) indicates a steady increase in Indonesia's labor force from 114.8 million in 2015 to 124 million in 2018, growing at an annual rate of 1.85%. Notably, the female workforce also saw a significant rise from 63.2 million in 2015 to 66.7 million in 2018, with an annual growth rate of 1.29%, comprising over 50% of the total workforce (BPS, 2019). In 2022, the female labor force reached 52.74 million, accounting for 50.08% of women opting to work rather than focus solely on household duties (BPS, 2022).

Further studies indicate that a higher percentage of married women in both urban (65.35%) and rural areas (73.88%) are employed compared to their unmarried counterparts (Subekti & Khurun'in, 2019). Accenture's research also revealed that 42% of Indonesian women prefer to work outside the home, with 50% expressing job satisfaction and 64% identifying as workaholics (Yuniar, 2019). Consequently, women are prevalent in various domestic industries, including factory work and household services.

In Banten, known for its industrial sector, women constitute a significant portion of the workforce. The 2023 BPS Banten data shows that the manufacturing sector employs 20.99% of female workers, equaling 448,400 women out of 1.18 million total workers. In 2021, Banten ranked third in Indonesia for the highest percentage (40.78%) of female workers working over 40 hours per week (BPS Banten, 2023).

Banten's female labor force participation rate averaged around 48% between 2021 and 2023. Although slightly lower than the male participation rate, this figure illustrates that nearly half of the Banten women balance roles as homemakers and workers. This substantial participation underscores women's potential and critical role in driving

Banten's economic growth (Ahmadi et al., 2019). Enhancing gender equality and supporting women's career aspirations are essential strategies for fostering regional economic stability.

Gender equality emphasizes equal rights for women and men to access education and employment, which impacts personal and family life (Afriyani, 2021; Kurnia et al., 2022). Historically, women have been expected to be independent in managing domestic roles, and today, economic needs drive many to work outside the home despite traditional views (Ratnaningtyas & Diniyyati, 2023).

Women often juggle multiple roles as employees, mothers, and wives. Employees face demands such as meeting company targets and attending mandatory training outside work hours. As mothers and wives, they manage household chores and childcare. This dual role can lead to significant stress and role conflict, as they must perform various duties simultaneously (Tuty & Tambun, 2021).

Studies indicate that women with high resilience (hardiness) manage these dual roles better, viewing challenges as opportunities rather than stressors (Khan et al., 2021; Zheng, 2018). However, balancing work and family responsibilities can be overwhelming without effective coping strategies.

In Islam, while providing for the family is primarily a man's duty, women are allowed to work with their husband's consent. Women who work contribute significantly to family finances and social status but face challenges maintaining family harmony (Ananda et al., 2021). The ability to manage both roles effectively is crucial but challenging, often leading to partial success in either role (Widiyanto & Sanusi, 2021).

The dual role conflict is common, especially when family responsibilities clash with work duties, such as attending a child's school meeting during work hours (Rahayu et al., 2020). Effective communication, particularly intrapersonal communication, is essential in managing these conflicts. This study focuses on the dynamics of dual roles among career women in Banten Province, highlighting their communication strategies and self-perception as they balance professional and domestic responsibilities.

This research aims to understand the meaning of dual roles for professional women in Banten and how they achieve an ideal balance between career and household duties. By examining the experiences of women who successfully manage both roles, this study provides insights into effective strategies for handling similar conflicts. This research also explores the intrapersonal communication skills of these women in navigating their dual roles and managing associated conflicts.

2 Literature Review

Gender Concept

"Gender" is derived from English, meaning "sex." According to Webster's Studies Encyclopedia, gender is a cultural concept that distinguishes roles, behaviors, mentalities, and emotional characteristics between men and women within society (Umar, 2018). Fakihi (2018) differentiates between gender and sex, where sex refers to the biological differences that are inherent and unchangeable, while gender pertains to socially and culturally constructed attributes that can be exchanged and changed over time and place.

Gender is understood as social sex, while sex is biological. This distinction highlights that the differences in roles, functions, and responsibilities between men and women are socially constructed rather than biologically determined (Narwoko & Yuryanto, 2018). Gender roles vary across societies and are not universal, as they are influenced by cultural, economic, and political structures (Iftinani & Putra, 2021).

The division of labor based on gender is perceived as normal; however, it has led to gender inequality. Gender roles, socially and culturally constructed, are activities, tasks, or responsibilities attributed to men and women (Sugihastuti & Saptiawan, 2017).

Gender, as a social construct, assigns roles and responsibilities to men and women, often not based on equality. This division is typically rooted in a patriarchal culture, resulting in inequality (Bhalotra et al., 2022). The gender disparity in roles and status stems from theories of nature and nurture, with nature attributing differences to biological factors and nurture to social and cultural construction (Zahra, 2020).

Gender roles are shaped by cultural, economic, and political influences, leading to practical and strategic gender needs. Practical needs involve daily necessities like water, food, and healthcare, while strategic needs involve

power issues, such as equal pay and legal rights (Subekti & Khurun'in, 2019).

Gender inequality manifests in various forms, including marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, violence, and unequal workloads (Chauhan et al., 2022). Marginalization leads to economic impoverishment, with gender differences rooted in governmental policies, religious interpretations, traditions, and scientific assumptions (Nugroho, 2016).

Subordination places women in less important positions due to stereotypes portraying them as emotional and irrational. This affects policies in society, households, and nations where women's contributions are undervalued. Stereotyping results in discrimination, such as lower wages for women, assuming their work is supplementary to men's.

Gender-based violence includes physical and psychological assaults, often targeting women due to gender disparities. Additionally, women often bear a heavier domestic workload, perceived as less valuable and non-productive compared to men's work, reinforcing gender biases (Khalid et al., 2020).

Concept of Career Women's Existence

Existence refers to the state of being present and recognized. It is a dynamic process of "becoming" or "being" and involves a desire for recognition and appreciation by others (Wakirin, 2017). Personal existence is the condition where an individual, through their abilities, finds meaning in life. This meaning represents fulfilling intrinsic values such as respect for others, cooperation, and harmonious work for mutual benefit (Amin, 2022). Thus, existence is how individuals actualize their potential, allowing them to play active roles in defining their existence in the world. This drives individuals to engage in activities aligned with their choices and face life's challenges courageously.

Individuals with a strong sense of existence exhibit several key characteristics, as Smith (2018) outlined. These include self-awareness, recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses, and self-confidence, which involves seeing the positive aspects of events. Self-esteem is another trait, as well as focusing on serving others and believing in one's ability to work effectively. Role awareness is crucial, as it involves understanding the importance of their roles and the need for them to be realized. Additionally, awareness of personal mission, characterized by a clear vision and motivation, is essential. Personal appeal, which includes traits that attract and influence others' perceptions, is also significant. Furthermore, these individuals are strongly aware of their uniqueness, avoiding comparisons. They exhibit consistency in life, remain steady despite different ideas, maintain calmness and peace, and stay composed even when facing numerous problems.

Theory of Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication begins within oneself, serving as the foundational level for all other communication contexts. It involves how individuals receive, process, store, and retrieve information (Rakhmat, 2018). As spiritual beings, humans can reflect on themselves, distinguishing themselves as subjects and objects, thus enabling self-communication (Hardjana, 2016). This process is essential for understanding interpersonal, group, organizational, mass, intercultural, international, and even global communication (Turner, 2017).

Intrapersonal communication involves active internal engagement where an individual sends and receives messages, providing self-feedback in an ongoing internal process. This form of communication can trigger other communication types by helping individuals understand themselves and others (Laksana, 2017).

Key elements of intrapersonal communication include self-concept, social characteristics, social roles, and multiple selves (Effendy, 2019). Self-concept refers to how individuals perceive themselves through personal, social, and role characteristics. Social characteristics relate to behaviors displayed in interactions, such as being friendly or reserved. Social roles define how individuals view their relationships with others, often influenced by cultural, ethnic, or religious factors. Additionally, individuals may have multiple identities, reflecting different aspects of their selves.

The goals of intrapersonal communication encompass self-awareness, understanding the external world, creating and maintaining meaningful relationships, altering attitudes and behaviors, seeking entertainment, and helping others (Laksana, 2017). For instance, intrapersonal communication allows individuals to reflect on personal values, attitudes, and behaviors, which is crucial for understanding others and the world around them. It also aids

in establishing positive relationships and reducing loneliness and tension.

The scope of intrapersonal communication involves processes like sensation, perception, memory, and thinking. Sensation, the initial stage of information reception, involves converting stimuli into neural impulses. Perception entails interpreting sensory stimuli to derive meaning, influenced by personal and situational factors (Laksana, 2017). Memory is critical in storing and recalling information, affecting perception and thought processes. Thinking involves organizing and manipulating environmental elements using symbols, aiming for decision-making, problem-solving, and creativity (Rakhmat, 2018).

Self-Concept Theory

Self-concept refers to the perception and feelings an individual holds about themselves. Rakhmat (2018) defines self-concept as the thoughts and feelings one has about oneself, encapsulating the entire complex of beliefs and attitudes. Hurlock (2018) describes it as a person's image of themselves, encompassing physical, psychological, social, emotional, aspirational, and achievement-based beliefs.

Self-concept is formed through separate concepts derived from experiences, shaping an individual's self-image, which influences their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Hurlock (2018) notes that self-image emerges in early childhood as children develop self-awareness. Self-concept formation includes subjective self-view, body image, the ideal self, and the social self. These elements arise from self-recognition, physical perception, comparison with ideal figures, and social interactions (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 1992; Harter, 1999).

Self-concept evolves through interactions, especially within social environments. Calhoun and Acocella (2018) state that humans lack self-knowledge and awareness at birth. As sensory abilities strengthen, individuals start distinguishing "self" from "non-self," constructing their self-concept. This process is significantly influenced by language development around the age of one. Throughout life, self-concept continues to develop along the lines established in early childhood.

Several factors influence self-concept, including economic limitations, social class, the influence of others, and reference groups. Economic challenges and lower social class can negatively impact self-concept and self-esteem (Puspasari, 2017). Rakhmat (2018) emphasizes the significant role of others, particularly significant others like family and close friends, in shaping self-concept. Additionally, reference groups, which hold emotional significance, guide behavior and self-perception by setting standards individuals strive to meet.

Perception Theory

Perception is a crucial psychological aspect that enables individuals to respond to various environmental stimuli. It involves both internal and external processes. According to the Indonesian Dictionary, perception is a direct response to something processed through the senses (Sugihartono, 2017). Perception is the brain's ability to interpret stimuli, positively or negatively influencing actions. Walgito (2018) elaborates that perception is an organizational and interpretative process of received stimuli, leading to meaningful responses. The process varies among individuals due to differences in feelings, cognitive abilities, and experiences. Perception, thus, involves interpreting sensory information and forming a cognitive response that makes individuals aware of their environment (Rakhmat, 2018).

Walgito (2018) outlines the conditions necessary for perception. First, the presence of an object is essential, as attention serves as the initial step in preparing for perception. Second, sensory organs or receptors play a critical role. Sensory nerves transmit stimuli to the brain, processing and forming responses. These conditions highlight the intricate link between external stimuli and the internal cognitive processes constituting perception.

Several factors influence perception, categorized into internal and external factors (Walgito, 2018; Sugihartono, 2017). Internal factors include emotions, attitudes, personality, prejudices, desires, attention, learning processes, physical state, mental health, values, needs, interests, and motivation. External factors encompass family background, information, surrounding knowledge and needs, intensity, size, contrast, repetition, novelty, and familiarity of objects. These factors contribute to the diversity in individual perceptions of the same stimulus. Differences in perception arise from individual variations in personality, attitudes, and motivations, as well as from personal experiences, learning processes, and knowledge. This variability in perception underscores the complexity of cognitive processes and their profound influence on how individuals interpret their surroundings.

Self-Image Theory

As Chaplin (2017) defined, self-image refers to an individual's conception of themselves, encompassing their identity as visualized or imagined. Walgito (2018) adds that self-image is how an individual's behavior is perceived by others and society, emphasizing the interdependent nature of human relationships. Rakhmat (2018) describes self-image as the recognition, assessment, and opinions formed by others and society about an individual, highlighting that achieving a positive self-image requires a long, pressure-free process. Thus, self-image involves both self-perception and the perceptions of others, forming a comprehensive view of oneself.

Brown (2016) identifies three key aspects of self-knowledge that contribute to self-image. The first aspect is the physical world, which provides measurable attributes that contribute to self-knowledge, though these attributes are subjective without comparison to others. The second aspect is the social world, where social interactions offer two main processes for understanding self-image: social comparison and reflected appraisal. Social comparison involves individuals comparing themselves to others, which can be upward (to those perceived as better) or downward (to those perceived as worse). Reflected appraisal involves understanding oneself through others' reactions, such as interpreting laughter in response to humor. The third aspect is the inner or psychological world, which includes introspection, self-perception, and causal attributions. Introspection involves self-reflection to understand personal strengths, self-perception involves reviewing past events to conclude one's attributes, and causal attributions involve understanding the reasons behind behaviors, influencing self-image. These aspects highlight the multifaceted nature of self-image, involving physical reality, social interactions, and internal reflections.

As Walgito (2018) and Brown (2016) noted, several factors influence self-image. Physical appearance and attire significantly impact self-image, especially during adolescence when comparisons with peers are frequent. Social influences, such as peer acceptance and family dynamics, play crucial roles in shaping self-image. Positive reinforcement from peers and a supportive family environment enhance a positive self-image. Behavioral factors include selective attention to supportive feedback, self-handicapping behaviors, and strategic information-seeking, all contributing to self-image. Social factors involve selective interactions and biased social comparisons, where individuals prefer to associate with those perceived as less capable, further influencing self-image. These factors collectively shape self-image, involving both personal behaviors and social contexts.

Self-image has two main characteristics: positive and negative (Walgito, 2018). A positive self-image is characterized by self-acceptance, positive actions, appreciation of differences, and readiness to apologize for mistakes. Individuals with a positive self-image demonstrate honesty, confidence, and fairness. Conversely, a negative self-image is marked by a lack of confidence, arrogance, insecurity, a desire to be someone else, and sensitivity to criticism. These individuals often feel inadequate and surrender to challenging situations. Thus, a positive self-image is associated with constructive behaviors and attitudes, while a negative self-image is linked to feelings of inferiority and negativity.

Conflict Management Theory

Conflict is a social phenomenon characterized by opposition or disagreement. According to Wirawan (2017), conflict begins when one party perceives another party as thwarting or attempting to thwart its interests. Conflicts emerge from perceived goal incompatibilities and efforts to control each other's choices, which lead to oppositional feelings and behaviors. Winardi (2018) categorizes conflict into three levels: conflicts between individuals and societal or parental expectations, internal conflicts within an individual, and conflicts related to adaptation strategies. Conflict can have negative impacts if not managed properly, necessitating effective conflict management. Wirawan (2017) defines conflict management as the process by which involved parties or third parties develop and implement strategies to control conflict and achieve desired resolutions. Therefore, conflict management can be summarized as the coordination process used to organize and regulate disputes in attitudes and behaviors.

Winardi (2018) outlines several common conflict management styles. The first style is **competing**, a power-oriented approach where individuals use their authority to win conflicts. The second style is **collaborating**, aimed at finding integrative solutions when both parties' interests are too important to compromise, fostering situations where all goals are achieved. The third style is **avoiding**, which views conflict as unproductive and often involves ignoring or withdrawing from the issue. The fourth style is **accommodating**, which prioritizes

relationships over personal interests, often sacrificing personal goals for the benefit of others. The fifth style is **compromising**, a middle-ground approach where both parties give up something to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

Similarly, Wirawan (2017) differentiates conflict management styles into five categories. The first category is **dominating (competing)**, where individuals fulfill personal goals without considering the opponent's needs. The second category is **integrating (collaborating)**, where parties strive to create a resolution that meets personal and opponent goals. The third category is **compromising**, aiming to partially satisfy both parties' goals without maximizing them. The fourth category is **avoiding**, which involves refusing to engage in discussions about the conflict. The fifth category is **obliging**, combining high concern for the opponent with low concern for oneself.

These aspects and styles indicate that effective conflict management involves balancing power dynamics, seeking collaborative solutions, and sometimes compromising or avoiding confrontation to maintain relationships. Understanding these styles can help individuals and organizations develop strategies to manage conflicts effectively, ensuring that disputes are resolved to meet the needs of all parties involved.

1. Research Methodology

Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a constellation of a community's concepts, values, perceptions, and practices, forming a vision of reality and guiding organizational approaches (Moleong, 2019). It is a foundational reference for researchers to uncover facts through their studies (Arifin, 2018). Qualitative research adheres to the naturalistic paradigm, placing humans as the main subjects in social and cultural events. Key paradigms in qualitative research include postpositivism, constructivism, and critical theory.

Postpositivism emerged to address the limitations of positivism, advocating for an interactive relationship between researchers and reality to obtain facts (Bungin, 2019). Constructivism, often seen as an antithesis to positivism, views social science as the systematic analysis of socially meaningful actions through detailed observations of social actors, emphasizing that knowledge results from experience and cognitive construction (Arifin, 2018). The critical paradigm asserts that reality is closely tied to observers' values, influencing the interpretation of facts (Bungin, 2019).

This study employs the constructivist paradigm, grounded in understanding the motives, experiences, and interpretations of women facing dual-role conflicts in career and household spheres. This perspective allows the researcher to appreciate the factual experiences of women and the cognitive constructions arising from their intrapersonal communications as they navigate their roles.

Research Method

The study uses a qualitative research method to examine natural settings where the researcher is the primary instrument, data collection is triangulated, and analysis is inductive (Sugiyono, 2019). This method aims to deeply understand the dual-role conflict dynamics experienced by women in their careers and households. Information is gathered from informants knowledgeable about the issues under study, enabling accurate data collection through direct questions to the subjects. The qualitative approach provides a comprehensive view of the processes and components involved in the dual-role conflict communications of career women in Banten, examined from gender and phenomenological perspectives.

Research Approach

This research adopts a phenomenological approach to reveal a deep understanding of phenomena in the field. Phenomenology aims to uncover, describe, and interpret the meanings or symbols being studied, guiding researchers to objectively explore social actors' experiences and behaviors (Kuswarno, 2018). The dual roles of career women are viewed through the lenses of gender and social class, aiming to comprehensively explore hidden meanings, such as the potential reduction in maternal roles due to work commitments and women's success in financially supporting their families.

Subjects and Objects of Research

The subjects of this study are five Banten women deemed successful in balancing their dual roles in family and career, representing various professions: academia, health, religion, entrepreneurship, and government. The

study's object is these women's ability to handle the dynamic communication conflicts arising from their dual roles. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, validated by expert judgment, ensuring they possess deep understanding through enculturation, are actively involved in relevant activities, have adequate time, and can provide comprehensive insights (Faisal, 2018).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation.

1) Interviews

In-depth interviews are conducted to obtain direct information from informants, focusing on their experiences with dual-role conflicts. The interviews are guided by an outline rather than a strict questionnaire, allowing flexibility and depth (Kriyantono, 2019).

2) Observation

Participant observation is used, where the researcher openly engages with the subjects, allowing for natural and comprehensive data collection.

3) Documentation

This involves reviewing existing records, diaries, and relevant literature to supplement primary data and provide context.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis follows the phenomenological approach, as Creswell (2017) described. The steps include:

- 1) Describing the researcher's own experiences related to the study.
- 2) Identifying significant statements about how individuals experience the topic, treating each statement equally.
- 3) Forming meaningful units from these statements, with detailed textural descriptions of experiences.
- 4) Reflecting on these experiences will help construct a structural description of the phenomena.
- 5) Combining these descriptions constructs an overall meaning and essence of the experiences.
- 6) Integrating these insights with participants' experiences to form a comprehensive narrative.

Data Validity Techniques

Data validity in phenomenological research involves several steps (Kuswarno, 2018):

- 1) Peer Confirmation: Discuss findings with other researchers who study similar patterns.
- 2) Reader Verification: Consulting individuals familiar with the phenomena to confirm logical explanations.
- 3) Rational Analysis: Conducted during supervisory sessions with experts.
- 4) Data Categorization: Classifying data under appropriate categories to ensure coherence.

2. Results and Discussion

Motives for Career Pursuits

The motivation behind career pursuits among the women interviewed was multifaceted, encompassing personal fulfillment, economic necessity, and social and cultural influences. Personal fulfillment emerged as a significant driver, with many expressing that their careers provide a profound sense of purpose, achievement, and identity beyond their familial roles. This aligns with the Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation, such as personal growth and satisfaction, in propelling individuals toward their goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

S.A., an academic, emphasized the intellectual stimulation and personal growth inherent in her career, viewing teaching and research as passions rather than mere jobs. Despite challenges, this sense of fulfillment keeps her motivated, echoing findings by Weiss and Rupp (2011) linking career satisfaction with overall life satisfaction and well-being.

Economic necessity was another compelling factor, particularly among women like H.M., an entrepreneur who started her business to supplement family income. Over time, financial stability became a necessity, driving her dedication and hard work. This resonates with the Dual-Income Family Model (Blumberg & Coleman, 1989), which underscores the economic pressures necessitating both spouses' participation in the workforce.

Social and cultural influences also played a pivotal role, with societal expectations and cultural shifts towards

gender equality encouraging more women to pursue professional opportunities in Banten. This transition aligns with the Social Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012), which suggests that as gender roles evolve, women increasingly participate in the workforce traditionally dominated by men.

I.G.A., a healthcare professional, noted the growing acceptance of women to pursue careers in her community, empowered by changing social norms. This reflects research by Cotter et al. (2011), indicating how societal shifts influence women's career aspirations.

Unique perspectives were also offered by individuals like H., who engaged in religious pursuits, viewing their careers as spiritual vocations intertwined with personal fulfillment and contribution to society. This perspective resonates with theories emphasizing the influence of personal values and beliefs in career pursuits (Judge & Bono, 2001).

Moreover, H.R.T.C., a government official, highlighted the importance of community and professional support in her career journey. This echoes the Social Support Theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985), emphasizing the role of support networks in managing stress and achieving career goals.

Experiences of Dual Role Conflicts

One of the most pervasive conflicts faced by career women is the challenge of managing time effectively between their professional and personal responsibilities. According to the Work-Family Conflict Theory (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), individuals experience conflict when the demands of work and family roles are incompatible, making it difficult to fulfill both satisfactorily.

Time Management Challenges

S.A., an academic, often struggles to balance her teaching, research responsibilities, and family duties. Despite her efforts to maintain a strict schedule, professional commitments sometimes spill over into her time, leading to feelings of guilt and frustration. She shared that managing deadlines for research projects while attending to her children's needs requires constant juggling, which can be exhausting and stressful.

H.M., an entrepreneur, faces similar time management issues, particularly during peak business periods. Running her business demands long hours and often requires her attention, even during weekends and holidays. This work, which overlaps with personal time, creates tension within her family, as her children and spouse sometimes feel neglected.

These time management challenges highlight the intense pressure on career women to perform well in both professional and personal domains. Despite meticulous planning, the unpredictable nature of professional demands often encroaches on personal time, causing stress and dissatisfaction. These experiences emphasize the need for flexible work arrangements and supportive family dynamics to help mitigate the stress associated with dual role conflicts.

Societal Expectations and Pressures

Societal expectations and cultural norms exert additional pressure on career women, compelling them to conform to traditional gender roles while pursuing their professional aspirations. The Social Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012) posits that societal norms shape the roles individuals are expected to perform, and deviations from these roles often lead to social disapproval and internal conflict.

I.G.A., a healthcare professional, experiences societal pressure to prioritize her family over her career. Despite her professional achievements, she often encounters criticism for not adhering to traditional gender roles, which dictate that women should primarily be caregivers. This societal expectation creates an internal struggle as she strives to balance her professional identity with her role as a mother and wife.

H.H., involved in the religious field, faces expectations to uphold and exemplify religious and cultural values in her daily life. These expectations sometimes conflict with her professional responsibilities, tearing her between meeting societal norms and fulfilling her career goals.

The societal expectations and pressures reveal the deep-rooted cultural norms that influence women's roles in Banten Province. The conflict between personal ambitions and societal expectations can lead to significant internal and external stress. These pressures highlight the importance of social support systems and progressive cultural shifts to alleviate the burden on career women.

Emotional and Psychological Stress

The combined pressures of managing dual roles and meeting societal expectations often lead to significant emotional and psychological stress. This stress can manifest as anxiety, depression, and burnout, adversely affecting both personal well-being and professional performance.

H.R.T.C., a government official, frequently experiences high-stress levels due to her demanding job and the need to maintain a harmonious family life. The pressure to perform excellently in both spheres often leaves her feeling overwhelmed and emotionally drained. She noted that insufficient rest and personal time exacerbate her stress, impacting her overall health and productivity.

The emotional and psychological stress experienced by career women underscores the critical impact of dual role conflicts on mental health. The narratives of exhaustion and burnout indicate the urgent need for mental health support and stress management resources. These findings call for organizational policies prioritizing employee well-being and providing adequate mental health services.

Table 1. Specific Dual Role Conflicts Among Career Women

Name	Conflict	Experience	Theory Support
S.A	Balancing research deadlines with children's school activities	S.A. often works late into the night to complete research projects after attending her children's school events, leading to sleep deprivation and decreased efficiency.	The Role Strain Theory (Goode, 1960) suggests that strain from competing role demands can lead to stress and reduced performance.
H.M	Managing peak business periods and family vacations	H.M. frequently cancels or postpones family vacations due to business commitments, leading to disappointment and tension within her family.	The Boundary Theory (Nippert-Eng, 1996) explains that blurred boundaries between work and family roles can cause conflicts and stress.
I.G.A.	Societal disapproval for prioritizing career	I.G.A. faces societal criticism for working long hours, with some community members believing it detracts from her duties as a mother.	Social Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012) illustrates how societal norms influence role expectations and create conflicts.
H.H.	Upholding religious values versus professional demands	H.H. sometimes finds her professional responsibilities conflict with religious events or community expectations, leading to internal conflict and stress.	Identity Theory (Stryker & Burke, 2000) highlights how conflicting identities can cause stress and internal conflict.
H.R.T.C.	High job demands and lack of personal time	H.R.T.C. often sacrifices personal time to meet job demands, leading to emotional exhaustion and reduced effectiveness in her professional and personal life.	Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) posits that the depletion of personal resources leads to stress and burnout.

Perceptions of Success in Dual Roles

Exploration of How Career Women Define and Perceive Success

Career women often define success through a multifaceted lens, integrating their professional accomplishments and their roles within the family. According to the Achievement Motivation Theory (McClelland, 1961), individuals are driven by the need for achievement, power, and affiliation. For career women, success is a measure of professional milestones and fulfilling family relationships.

Balance Between Career Achievements and Family Life

A critical aspect of success for career women is achieving a balance between their career and family life. S.A., an academic, defines her success as being able to publish significant research while actively participating in her children's education and activities. She believes her professional success is incomplete without the ability to contribute meaningfully to her family. The Dual-Career Family Theory (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971) supports this perspective, emphasizing the need for equilibrium between work and family responsibilities.

H.M., an entrepreneur, shares a similar view. She measures her success by the growth of her business and her family's happiness. During peak business periods, she ensures that she spends quality time with her children despite the long hours, which she views as essential to her overall success.

Personal Satisfaction and Fulfillment

Personal satisfaction and fulfillment significantly affect how career women perceive success. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) posits that fulfilling the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness leads to enhanced motivation and well-being. I.G.A., a healthcare professional, finds personal fulfillment in the lives she saves and the advancements she makes in her career. However, she also values the emotional bonds she maintains with her family, which she considers a core component of her success.

H.H., who is involved in the religious field, describes her success as living a life aligned with her values and beliefs while excelling in her professional duties. She finds satisfaction in being a role model within her community and providing for her family's needs.

Recognition and Support from Family and Society

Recognition and support from family and society are crucial elements in the perception of success for career women. Social support theories (House, 1981) highlight that emotional, informational, and instrumental support from family and society significantly impacts an individual's ability to cope with stress and achieve success.

H.R.T.C., a government official, attributes her success to the unwavering support from her spouse and children. She notes that their encouragement and understanding have been vital in her ability to manage high job demands and maintain family harmony. Additionally, societal recognition of her contributions enhances her sense of achievement and motivates her to excel further.

Table 2. Narratives and Perceptions of Success Among Career Women in Banten Province

Informant	Success Perception	Narrative
S.A	Balancing academic achievements with active participation in family life	S.A. feels successful when she publishes a research paper and attends her children's school events. She values her ability to integrate professional success with personal fulfillment.
H.M	Business growth alongside a happy family	H.M. considers herself successful when her business thrives and her family feels supported and cherished. Her ultimate success lies in the happiness and well-being of her family.
I.G.A.	Professional impact and family bonds	I.G.A. defines her success by the lives she saves professionally and her strong emotional connections with her family. She sees her dual achievements as a comprehensive measure of her success.
H.H.	Alignment with personal values and professional excellence	H.H. perceives success in living a life that aligns with her religious values while achieving professional milestones. She feels fulfilled when she can serve her community and uphold her family's traditions.
H.R.T.C.	High job performance with familial	H.R.T.C. measures her success through her

Informant	Success Perception	Narrative
	support	contributions to government initiatives and the support she receives from her family. She believes her recognition from society and her family's encouragement are key to her success.

Strategies for Managing Self-Conflict

Effective Communication Techniques

Effective communication is a critical strategy for managing self-conflict. By clearly articulating their needs and boundaries, career women can navigate the demands of their dual roles more efficiently. The Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1973) suggests that adapting communication styles to suit different contexts can enhance understanding and cooperation.

S.A., an academic, emphasizes open communication with her family about her work commitments. She holds weekly family meetings to discuss upcoming schedules and potential conflicts. This practice helps in aligning family expectations and reducing misunderstandings.

Similarly, H.M., an entrepreneur, prioritizes transparent communication with her business team and family. She uses digital tools to keep everyone informed about her availability, ensuring that her business and family know her commitments and can plan accordingly.

Building and Utilizing Support Systems

Support systems comprising family, friends, and professional networks play a vital role in managing self-conflict. The Social Support Theory (House, 1981) posits that support from these networks can buffer the effects of stress and enhance well-being.

I.G.A., a healthcare professional, relies heavily on her extended family for childcare and household support. She has established a reliable network of relatives who assist with her children's needs, allowing her to focus on her professional responsibilities when necessary. This extended support system is crucial in helping her balance her dual roles effectively.

H.H., who is involved in the religious field, draws support from her community and religious groups. These networks provide practical assistance and emotional and moral support, which helps her navigate conflicts between her professional duties and religious commitments.

Personal Time Management and Self-Care Practices

Effective personal time management and self-care practices are essential for managing self-conflict. The Time Management Theory (Macan, 1994) suggests that individuals who manage their time effectively experience less stress and greater well-being.

H.R.T.C., a government official, employs meticulous time management strategies to balance her professional and personal life. She uses planners and digital calendars to schedule her tasks and allocates specific times for work, family, and self-care. Maintaining a structured routine reduces the likelihood of conflicts between her roles.

Self-care practices are also vital. S.A. integrates daily self-care routines such as meditation and exercise into her schedule. She believes caring for her physical and mental health is crucial for maintaining her productivity and emotional balance.

Table 3. Strategies Employed by Career Women in Banten Province to Manage Self-Conflict

Informant	Strategy	Implementation
S.A	Weekly family meetings for schedule alignment	S.A. discusses her work deadlines and family events every Sunday evening, ensuring that her family understands her commitments and supports her during busy periods.
H.M	Transparent communication using digital tools	H.M. uses shared digital calendars with her business team and family to keep everyone

Informant	Strategy	Implementation
		informed about her availability, minimizing conflicts and scheduling overlaps.
I.G.A.	Relying on extended family for support	I.G.A. coordinates with her relatives for childcare and household help, enabling her to manage her professional duties without compromising her family responsibilities.
H.H.	Leveraging community and religious group support	H.H. actively participates in community and religious activities, which provide her with practical support and a sense of belonging, helping her manage conflicts between her professional and religious roles.
H.R.T.C.	Structured time management and self-care routines	H.R.T.C. maintains a detailed planner and allocates specific work, family, and self-care times. Her routine includes daily exercise and meditation, which help her stay focused and reduce stress.

Role of Communication in Conflict Resolution

Intrapersonal Communication: Self-Reflection and Emotional Regulation

Intrapersonal communication, involving self-reflection and emotional regulation, is crucial for career women to manage internal conflicts and stress. According to the Emotional Intelligence Theory (Goleman, 1995), recognizing, understanding, and managing one's emotions is key to navigating complex social environments and personal challenges.

S.A., an academic, practices regular self-reflection to assess her priorities and emotional state. She maintains a journal where she writes about her daily experiences and feelings, which helps her gain clarity and make informed decisions about her professional and personal commitments. This self-reflective practice enables her to regulate her emotions effectively and balance her roles.

H.M., an entrepreneur, employs mindfulness techniques to stay grounded and manage stress. She allocates time each day for meditation and deep breathing exercises, which help her stay calm and focused amidst her busy schedule. These practices enhance her emotional resilience and improve her ability to handle conflicts that arise from her dual roles.

Interpersonal Communication: Dialogue with Family, Colleagues, and Support Networks

Interpersonal communication, which involves dialogue with family, colleagues, and support networks, is essential for resolving conflicts and fostering cooperation. The Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1973) suggests that adapting one's communication style to the context can facilitate better understanding and conflict resolution.

I.G.A., a healthcare professional, emphasizes the importance of open dialogue with her family and colleagues. She regularly communicates her work schedule and challenges to her family, ensuring they understand her professional demands. She engages in transparent discussions with her team at work, which fosters a supportive environment and helps mitigate work-related stress.

H.H., who is involved in the religious field, leverages her community and religious groups for support. She frequently participates in community meetings and religious gatherings, where she shares her experiences and seeks advice. This open communication within her support network provides her with practical and emotional assistance, aiding her in balancing her professional and personal responsibilities.

Table 4. Successful Communication Strategies Used by Career Women in Banten Province

Informant	Strategy	Implementation
S.A	Self-reflection through journaling	S.A. writes in her journal daily, reflecting on her experiences and emotions. This practice

Informant	Strategy	Implementation
		helps her understand her priorities and manage her roles effectively.
H.M	Mindfulness and meditation	H.M. practices meditation and deep breathing exercises every morning, which help her stay calm and focused, reduce stress, and improve her emotional regulation.
I.G.A.	Open dialogue with family and colleagues	I.G.A. regularly communicates her work schedule and challenges with her family and team, fostering a supportive environment and enhancing mutual understanding.
H.H.	Leveraging community support	H.H. actively participates in community and religious group meetings, where she shares her experiences and seeks support, helping her manage her dual roles more effectively.
H.R.T.C.	Regular family meetings and professional consultations	H.R.T.C. holds weekly family meetings to discuss schedules and responsibilities and consults with colleagues for professional advice, ensuring that her personal and professional commitments are aligned and managed efficiently.

Gender Dynamics and Societal Expectations

Impact of Traditional Gender Roles and Stereotypes

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes play a crucial role in shaping the experiences of career women, often exacerbating dual role conflicts. According to Social Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012), societal norms dictate specific roles for men and women, limiting women's opportunities and creating conflicts when they pursue careers.

For instance, S.A., an academic, often faces the expectation that she should prioritize her family over her career. Despite her professional achievements, societal pressure exists to conform to traditional roles as a primary caregiver. This expectation creates internal conflict and stress as S.A. strives to balance her professional aspirations with her family responsibilities.

Similarly, I.G.A., a healthcare professional, encounters stereotypes that undermine her professional identity. Community members sometimes criticize her for long hours at work, suggesting she neglects her duties as a mother. These stereotypes reinforce the notion that women's primary role is in the home, which can hinder their professional growth and contribute to dual role conflicts.

Societal Support and Recognition of Women's Dual Roles

The societal support and recognition level for women's dual roles significantly impacts their ability to manage conflicts effectively. The presence of supportive networks and recognition of women's contributions in both professional and personal spheres can alleviate some of the pressures associated with dual roles.

H.M., an entrepreneur, highlights the importance of societal support in her narrative. H.M. has built a strong support network that includes family, friends, and professional contacts who understand and appreciate her dual roles. This network provides emotional support and practical assistance, enabling her to manage her business and family life effectively.

H.H., involved in the religious field, emphasizes the value of community recognition. Her active participation in community and religious activities garners respect and acknowledgment from her peers, which boosts her confidence and reduces the stress associated with managing dual roles. The societal recognition of her contributions in both domains reinforces her sense of accomplishment and balance.

Informants' Perspectives on Overcoming Societal Barriers and Changing Perceptions

Overcoming societal barriers and changing perceptions require individual efforts and broader cultural shifts. Informants share their strategies for challenging traditional norms and advocating for gender equality.

H.R.T.C., a government official, believes in leading by example to challenge societal stereotypes. She demonstrates that women can excel in leadership roles while maintaining a fulfilling family life through her work. H.R.T.C. actively engages in public discourse on gender equality, using her platform to advocate for policies that support women's dual roles and promote work-life balance.

S.A. emphasizes the importance of education in changing perceptions. She incorporates discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment into her academic work, aiming to influence her students and the broader community. By raising awareness and promoting dialogue, S.A. contributes to a gradual shift in societal attitudes towards women's roles.

Table 5. Strategies and Perspectives on Gender Dynamics and Societal Expectations

Informant	Issue	Strategy/Perspective	Implementation/Outcome
S.A	Traditional gender expectations	Education and Awareness	Incorporates gender equality discussions in academic work, influencing student's and community attitudes
H.M	Societal support	Building support networks	Relies on family, friends, and professional contacts for emotional and practical support, enhancing work-life balance
I.G.A.	Stereotypes about professional women	Open communication	Engages in dialogues with the community to challenge stereotypes and explain professional commitments
H.H.	Recognition of contributions	Community involvement	Active participation in community and religious activities, gaining respect and reducing stress.
H.R.T.C.	Societal barriers	Advocacy and leadership	She uses her platform to advocate for gender equality and support for women's dual roles, leading by example.

3 Conclusion

Women find purpose and identity in their careers, propelled by intrinsic motivations such as personal growth and satisfaction, alongside the imperative of financial stability and societal expectations. Despite significant challenges, including time management and societal expectations, women demonstrate resilience and adaptability, leveraging support networks and personal strategies to navigate their dual roles successfully. Success for career women is perceived as achieving harmony between their career aspirations and familial responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of effective communication, support systems, and personal time management in achieving this balance. Moving forward, future research should explore intersectionality, conduct longitudinal studies, and conduct comparative studies to understand better variations in women's career experiences and the effectiveness of support systems. Practical implications include implementing flexible work policies, investment in career development programs, fostering supportive work cultures, and strengthening community support systems to empower and enable career women to thrive personally and professionally. By addressing these recommendations, policymakers, organizations, and support systems can create environments conducive to the success and well-being of career women, contributing to more inclusive and equitable societies.

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