

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DUAL ROLES AS MOTHERS AND WORKERS ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF POSTPARTUM MOTHERS AT SUNDARI GENERAL HOSPITAL MEDAN

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ABSTRACT

Background: Postpartum mothers who live in dual roles as mothers and workers face the demands of physical, psychological, and social adaptation, as well as job responsibilities after childbirth. These conditions can increase the risk of stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and mental health disorders if not supported by adequate adaptability and social support. **Objectives:** This study aims to determine the relationship between dual roles as mothers and workers on maternal mental health after childbirth at Sundari General Hospital, Medan. **Methods:** This study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive correlational design and a cross-sectional approach. The study population comprised 132 postpartum mothers, of whom 57 were selected based on the study criteria. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using the Spearman Rank test. **Results:** The results showed that respondents with dual roles in the high category were 30 people (52.6%), while respondents with mental health disorders were in the high category as many as 37 people (64.9%). The results of the statistical test showed a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05) with a correlation coefficient of 0.919. These findings suggest a significant and very strong relationship between dual maternal and worker roles and maternal postpartum mental health. **Conclusions:** This study concluded that the higher the demands of dual roles, the higher the risk of mental health disorders in postpartum mothers.

Keywords: dual role; mental health; postpartum mothers

INTRODUCTION

Postpartum mothers who live in dual roles as mothers and workers face complex physical, psychological, and social demands for adaptation after childbirth while still fulfilling job responsibilities (Widiningtyas, 2022); Zagefka (2021). This dual role can lead to role conflicts that increase the risk of stress, emotional exhaustion, and mental health disorders, especially postpartum depression (Karl, 2020; Putri & Ambarini, 2018). Social support, husband involvement, and a flexible work environment have been proven to be protective factors in maintaining the mental health of mothers (Putri, 2025). This phenomenon was seen in an initial survey at Sundari General Hospital, Medan, where 50% of mothers experienced mental health disorders and 80% experienced postpartum dual role conflicts. This study aims to determine the relationship between dual roles as mothers and workers and postpartum maternal mental health, using a quantitative descriptive correlation design and a cross-sectional approach. The study population consisted of 132 postpartum mothers, and 57 respondents were analyzed using the Spearman Rank test. The results of the study are expected to provide a basis for promotive and preventive interventions to improve

the psychological well-being of postpartum mothers and minimize the risk of mental disorders due to dual role pressure. This research is important because it strengthens empirical evidence on the impact of dual roles on maternal mental health in a hospital context and provides recommendations for health workers to improve support during the postpartum period (Widyaningtyas 2025; Putri & Ambarini, 2018; Karl, 2020).

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive design of correlation and a cross-sectional approach to determine the relationship between dual roles as mothers and workers on postpartum maternal mental health. The research is conducted at Sundari General Hospital, Medan, North Sumatra, with a research period from December 2025 to January 2026. The study population consisted of 132 postpartum mothers, with a purposively selected sample of 57 respondents who met the inclusion criteria of being actively working and willing to participate.

Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire comprising demographic data, the Work-Family Conflict scale to measure dual roles, and the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) to assess postpartum mothers' mental health. The identities of the respondents were maintained anonymously using the numerical code on the questionnaire sheet. The research stage includes completing questionnaires in person and online, checking data completeness, assigning variable codes, entering data into SPSS, and processing data for analysis. Data analysis included univariate analysis to describe the frequency distribution of respondent characteristics and bivariate analysis using the Spearman Rank test to determine the relationship between dual maternal and worker roles with mental health, with a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Ethical considerations include informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and fairness, ensuring that each respondent is given an equal opportunity to participate voluntarily and that the information provided is kept confidential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
22-25	3	5.3 %
26-30	22	38.6 %
31-35	20	35.1 %
36-39	11	21.1 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Jobs	Frequency	Percent
Private	17	29.8 %
Self-employed	23	40.4 %
Educators	11	19.3 %
Health Workers	6	10.5 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Number of Children	Frequency	Percent
2	30	52.6 %

3	16	28.1%
4	11	19.3 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Types of Childbirth	Frequency	Percent
SC	41	71.9 %
Normal	16	28.1 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Length of Labor	Frequency	Percent
Old	6	10.5 %
No	51	89.5 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Husband's Education	Frequency	Percent
SMP	6	10.5 %
SMA	38	66.7 %
SMK	3	5.3 %
D3	2	3.5 %
Bachelor	8	14.0 %
Total	57	100.0 %
Husband's Income	Frequency	Percent
IDR 500,000 – IDR 1,500,000	11	19.3 %
IDR 1,600,000 - IDR 2,500,000	19	33.3 %
IDR 2,600,000 - IDR 3,500,000	17	29.8 %
IDR 3,600,000 - IDR 5,000,000	10	17.5 %
Total	57	100.0 %

Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are in the age range of 26–30 years, work as self-employed, have 2 children, undergo SC delivery, have had a short delivery, with a husband's income between Rp 1,600,000-Rp 2,500,000, and the husband's education is mostly high school graduates, showing the characteristics of respondents who are relatively productive, have significant family and work responsibilities, as well as various socio-economic conditions that affect the experience of dual roles and postpartum mental health.

Univariate Analysis

The frequency distribution of dual roles and respondents' mental health showed the following pattern:

Table 2. Dual Role Frequency Distribution

Dual Role	Frequency	Percent
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Low	20	35.1 %
Medium	7	12.3 %
Height	30	52.6 %
Total	57	100.0 %

Most respondents in the study held high dual roles as mothers and workers, with 30 (52.6%) in the high category, indicating the dominance of dual roles among postpartum mothers.

Table 3: Mental Health

Mental Health	Frequency	Percent
Low	20	35.1 %
Height	37	64.9 %
Total	57	100.0 %

Most of the respondents in the study showed high levels of mental health, with 37 people (64.9%) experiencing the condition, while 20 people (35.1%) had low levels of mental health. This shows that the majority of postpartum mothers experience a significant risk of mental health disorders.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 4. Cross-Tabulation of Dual Role Relationship with Mental Health

Dual Role	Low Mental Health	High Mental Health	Total
Low	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	20 (35,1%)
Medium	0 (0%)	7 (100%)	7 (12,3%)
Height	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	30 (52,6%)
Total	20 (35,1%)	37 (64,9%)	57 (100%)

The results of the cross-tabulation showed a direct relationship between the quality of dual roles lived and the level of maternal mental health.

Table 5. Spearman's Rho Test Analysis of the Dual Role Relationship with Postpartum Maternal Mental Health Disorders

Variabel	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Dual Role × Mental Health Disorders	0,919**	0,000

The Spearman Rank correlation test results indicate a very strong and significant relationship between mothers' dual roles and mental health disorders in postpartum mothers, with a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05) and a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.919$, meaning that the higher the dual role undertaken by the mother, the higher the level of mental health disturbances experienced.

DISCUSSION

The majority of postpartum mothers at Sundari General Hospital, Medan, experience a high dual role as mothers and workers, which is influenced by the husband's age, number of children, occupation, income, and education. Dual roles require mothers to divide time and responsibilities between family and work, thus creating potential role conflicts if not managed properly. Family support, effective time management, and a flexible work environment can help mothers maintain psychological well-being and perform their dual

roles optimally. The mother's age plays an important role in psychological readiness and adaptability. Mothers aged 26–30 tend to be able to balance dual roles, while younger mothers have a higher risk of mental health disorders due to limited postpartum experience and adaptation. Working with erratic hours or high workloads increases psychological stress, while flexible work can support the mother's mental stability. The number of children and the level of education, as well as the husband's support, also affect the mother's ability to manage stress and responsibility.

The results showed that 64.9% of mothers experienced high mental health disorders, which indicates significant emotional distress after childbirth. The type of delivery, such as a cesarean section, and the length of the delivery also affect the risk of postpartum blues and stress. In contrast, normal or short deliveries allow for faster emotional recovery. The dual role burden that comes with postpartum physiological and hormonal changes increases maternal susceptibility to anxiety, fatigue, and mood swings.

Bivariate analysis with the Spearman Rank test showed a very strong and significant association between dual roles and mental health disorders ($\rho = 0.919$, $p < 0.05$), meaning that the higher the dual roles undertaken, the greater the risk of mental health disorders. These findings are in line with the adaptation theory of Callista Roy (1991), who explains that maladaptive responses arise when dual-role stimuli cannot be effectively addressed.

The findings of this study are consistent with Karl, (2020), who stated that unsafe working conditions and work-maternal role conflicts are significant predictors of postpartum depression symptoms. Aryanti, (2020) reported that working mothers had a 2,411 times higher risk of postpartum depression compared to non-working mothers. Zagefka (2021) emphasized that dual roles can have a positive impact if mothers can carry out both without conflict. However, role conflicts can increase psychological stress and decrease life satisfaction. The support of the husband and family has proven to be important in reducing emotional distress and increasing the mother's sense of security and confidence.

The practical implications of this study include the development of mental health education and intervention programs, flexible maternity leave policies, childcare facilities, and increased family awareness to support mothers. Health workers are expected to provide counseling, early detection, and adaptive coping strategies to prevent mental disorders due to dual role pressure. Evaluation of existing health programs and the active role of the family are key to maintaining the psychological well-being of postpartum mothers.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates a significant relationship between the dual roles of mother and worker and the mental health of postpartum mothers at Sundari General Hospital, Medan, with a correlation coefficient $\rho = 0.919$ ($p < 0.05$). The higher the dual role lived, the greater the risk of mental health disorders. Factors such as age, number of children, type and length of delivery, occupation, husband's income, and husband's education level also affect the mother's ability to balance roles and reduce postpartum stress. These findings underscore the importance of family support, work environment flexibility, and mental health interventions for postpartum mothers.

Based on the research results, several operational suggestions were provided. First, for nursing education institutions, materials on the mental health of postpartum mothers and dual roles should be strengthened so that prospective nurses can understand psychosocial problems and provide appropriate nursing education and interventions. Second, in nursing

services, nurses are expected to provide holistic care, including therapeutic communication, emotional support, early detection of mental disorders, and education on stress management, work-life balance, and adaptive coping strategies.

Third, for policymakers, the results of this research can serve as a basis for designing policies that support postpartum mothers, such as flexible maternity leave, workplace childcare facilities, and family support programs to ease their burden. Fourth, the evaluation and improvement of existing health programs need to be carried out, including counseling services, mental health checks, and stress management counseling, so that programs are more targeted for mothers with dual roles.

Fifth, the awareness and role of the family is very important, especially the spouse and other family members, in helping to divide household and childcare responsibilities, so that the mother can maintain her mental health optimally. Finally, further research is suggested to identify additional factors related to postpartum maternal mental health, such as workload, hours worked, social support, economic status, and education level, and to use a broader population to generalize the outcomes.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING DISCLOSURE

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

ERSM : Conceptualization, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project Administration, Validation, Visualization, Writing – Original Draft, and Writing – Review & Editing.

LP : Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing, and Resources.

AS : Formal Analysis, Investigation, Validation, Resources, Visualization, and Writing – Review & Editing.

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