

Women in a Time of Crisis: Inequality of Roles in the Family During the Pandemic in Indonesia

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Abstract

The introduction of work from home policies, intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19, has added to women's burden and reinforced their domestic roles. This article seeks to show that the ongoing pandemic, which has resulted in families being confined to home, has been used to justify the creation of new burdens for women. To support this argument, this article relies on data collected through two methods: mapping

online resources and interviews. Trends identified in online sources were confirmed through interviews with 22 women, as well as a focus group discussion with women leaders. This article shows that women have become responsible for more domestic duties during the pandemic, and their burdens have increased as a result. They are expected not only to handle domestic labor and childcare, but also to act as teachers. To achieve a deeper understanding, this article recommends using participant observation and in-depth interviews to obtain a broader understanding of women's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Gender Inequality, Social Reproduction, Women in Culture, Domestication of Women

A. Introduction

Women have been most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women, be they housewives or breadwinners, have been expected to educate their children while also maintaining their families' economic stability. This heavy burden is evidenced in the prevalence of mental illness among women during the pandemic; during the pandemic, 57% of mental health patients have been women (Dongche, 2021). Indeed, it has been estimated that 57.3% of women have experienced high levels of stress during the pandemic (Sediri et al., 2020), and the heavy burden borne by women has subjected them to intense psychological pressure (Dharwiyanto, 2020). As shown by Almaeda et al. (2020), the pandemic has not only increased the burdens borne by women, but also exacerbated society's existing gender inequalities.

To date, studies of women's experiences during the pandemic have paid little attention to the reproduction of gender inequalities, focusing instead on three areas. First, studies have considered how the health of women and families has been affected

by the pandemic (Morris et al., 2020; Nisbett, 2020; Munir et al., 2020). Studies have shown, for example, that women's menstrual cycles have been disrupted; women have experienced sleep disorders; and women have lost their appetites (Fazraningtyas et al., 2020). Pregnant women have been particularly vulnerable; premature birth rates have increased, and fetal development has been impaired (Arinda & Herdayati, 2021; Matvienko-Sikar et al., 2020). Second, studies have investigated the psychological problems experienced by women during the pandemic, including their stress and their trauma (Almeida et al., 2020; Sediri et al., 2020). Women have been more vulnerable to stress, anxiety, insomnia, and depression (Arinda & Herdayati, 2021). Third, studies have explored how the pandemic has blurred the boundaries between public and domestic spaces and between paid and unpaid labor (Borah Hazarika & Das, 2021; Chauhan, 2020; Craig, 2020). Such studies have failed to evaluate how the pandemic has facilitated the resurgence of gender inequality. As such, it is crucial to obtain a deeper understanding of the pandemic's effect on the reproduction of gender inequalities and women's dependencies.

This article seeks to complement the existing literature by providing a detailed analysis of gender and power dynamics within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It thus answers three questions: (a) how have (new) burdens affected women during the pandemic; how have these affected their activities and schedules; (b) how have religious and cultural understandings contributed to the restructuring of gender relations and legitimized the increased burden borne by women; (c) how has the pandemic and its associated burdens affected gender relations within the family. The answers to these questions will show how culture and religion influence the acceptance and legitimization of gender inequality.

This article departs from the assumption that women not only play an increasingly important role in times of crisis, but

are also most affected by said crises. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, women have not only been expected to resolve household issues and manage their families' finances, but also to guide their children through the learn-from-home program. As shown by Almeida et al. (2020), women have acted as their families' backbones, being responsible for most household affairs. Nevertheless, even with women playing such a central position during the pandemic, inequality—rooted in the culture and social structure of society—has been increasingly evident in gender relations.

Data for this article was collected through a qualitative examination of women's lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Supplemental data was collected by mapping women's everyday activities, thereby providing an understanding of how said activities are structured and managed. The challenges and difficulties experienced by women were also investigated, providing a means of better describing the burdens they experienced. Secondary data were collected through an exploration of online media coverage. All results were used to illustrate how women's burdens have increased during the ongoing pandemic.

This study focused on women actors who are active in their everyday lives, including housewives, women who worked for private enterprises or government institutions, and women who operated their own micro-enterprises. Twenty-two respondents were selected randomly, ensuring that women from diverse walks of life were represented. Respondents came from two cities, in Java and outside Java, to ensure representativeness. Two respondents were subsequently selected for in-depth interviews, thereby ensuring that the findings could be validated.

This research began by mapping news coverage and other secondary sources. The researchers then conducted a focus group discussion and a series of interviews. Secondary sources (online news coverage and reports) were read carefully, with data noted

and categorized thematically. Some interviews were conducted in person, following applicable health protocols, while others were conducted remotely using the digital platform WhatsApp. During the focus group discussion, which was conducted remotely using Zoom, several women leaders were asked to use an Islamic and cultural perspective to evaluate women's increased burdens.

Following Huberman (1990), data were analyzed through a process of data reduction, presentation, and verification. Collected data were selected and categorized thematically, based on relevance to the research questions. Subsequently, and while maintaining originality, data were presented in tables and quotations. Finally, data were verified through triangulation. Structured data were subsequently analyzed through restatement, description, and interpretation. Restatement involved presenting quotations from informants to present women's perspectives. Description involved the mapping of the excessive burdens borne by women. Interpretation, finally, involved the signification of data within the social and institutional contexts that are used to legitimize women's burdens. Conclusions were drawn from the results of all three analytical processes.

B. Discussion

COVID-19 has had a detrimental effect on women, leaving them in a difficult position. Women, already acting as housewives and as breadwinners, have taken on the additional responsibility of teaching. The existing division of labor, resulting from ongoing cultural negotiations designed to create balance, has been replaced by a situation wherein women are responsible for all household duties. Many have been forced to accept this situation, one of the most detrimental effects of the ongoing pandemic. This article seeks to reflect the experiences of women who have experienced *multiple burdens* during the COVID-19 pandemic, as highlighted by three indicators: first, the

activities expected of women during the pandemic; second, the “religious teachings” that “structure” relations and “legitimize” the multiple burdens borne by women; third, the increased inequality experienced by women as a result of their increased burdens. These three indicators are explored below.

1. Excessive Activities during the Pandemic

COVID-19 has precipitated the closure of offices and educational institutions. At the same time, employment opportunities in the informal sector have become increasingly limited. In many cases, this has led to all members of the family being required to work and study at home. However, the associated domestic burdens have been borne almost entirely by women (Handayani, 2021). According to a report by the International Labor Organization (ILO), during the pandemic women have handled three-quarters of all unpaid domestic labor (Ramons, 2020). Conditions have been worse for women with at least one school-aged child, as most teaching activities have fallen to them (Rakhmani, Eliyanah, & Sakhiyya, 2021). A survey by the National Commission on Women (Komnas Perempuan) noted that women with a monthly income of less than Rp 5 million were at particular risk ([Pantjoro, 2020](#)). All of these factors illustrate that women have been disproportionately affected by the ongoing pandemic.

The requirement that families work and study from home has also increased the amount of time necessary for women to complete their domestic activities. In one study ([Pantjoro, 2020](#)), women were found to be twice as likely to spend more than three hours doing housework than men. Time has been a luxury for women, as they are expected to teach their children, prepare food for their families, and earn an income. Men, conversely, tend to

spend their time at home working, a duty to which they can dedicate their concentration (Lungumbu & Butterly, 2020). The news agency Antara reported that 61% of women and 31% of men spent their time at home doing domestic duties (Christiyaningsih, 2020).

The challenges and problems experienced by women have been further exacerbated by rising unemployment rates, which have not only subjected families to economic stress, but also divided women's attention between their families and their jobs. Many women are worried that, if their work performance suffers, they will lose their job. Many have resigned from their positions, either permanently or until the end of the pandemic (Ramos, 2020). Data from infoanggaran.com indicates that, although more men have died of COVID-19 than women, the mental health effects of the pandemic have disproportionately affected women (Dongche, 2021). Many previously employed women have been fired, and ultimately turned to making and selling masks, personal protective equipment, and hand sanitizer to ensure the continued financial wellbeing of their families.

Table 1 presents women's evaluations of the excessive burdens born by women during the COVID-19 pandemic. These statements show that women are involved in diverse activities, all of which contribute to their burdens.

Table 1: Excessive Burdens Borne by Women during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Women’s Domestic Activities During the Pandemic	Source	Coding
<p>Every day, I need to handle my home first. Before, after breakfast, I’d take my children to school and I’d go to the office. Now I need to accompany my children as they study, even as I handle my own (office) work at home.</p>	<p>R3: Private-sector employee</p>	<p>Multiple burdens</p>
<p>My housework keeps piling up, as a housewife (cooking, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, ironing, etc.). In addition to that, I need to prepare my husband’s office and make sure the children don’t bother their father. Help them study... gosh, it’s so difficult.</p>	<p>R4: Housewife</p>	<p>Multiple burdens</p>
<p>Housework, choosing what to cook every day, preparing healthy meals, cleaning the house... basically, it’s unending. At the same time, I have to act as a teacher to my children. I must also go to the market.</p>	<p>R5: Merchant at a traditional market</p>	<p>Multiple burdens</p>

There's increasingly more housework.

I also need to accompany the children and handle my office work. My husband has his own stuff.

R6: Teacher

Division of labor

There is a division of labor amongst the children at home, but they're still under my watch. So I can't just let them be and ignore the results of their work. It's not uncommon for me to have to redo their work, without their knowledge. Like, washing the dishes after we're done eating. When I check, I often see that the dishes aren't clean, so I need to rewash them. I need to sweep, clean the windows... but the heaviest burden is accompanying the children during their studies.

R6: Lecturer

Division of labor

Accompanying the children during their studies, because I also have to learn the materials when I don't know them. I have to be able to explain if the children don't understand the materials their teachers send. And then the housework, it's unending.

R7: Small-scale merchant

Multiple burdens, challenges

My husband usually sells food at the school. Now that schools are closed, he has no income. Now, I sell things at the market, so we can survive, but I also have to do the housework after I get home from the market, teach my children, even when I don't understand the materials. And in that situation, I feel weak, and so I often get emotional... sometimes I get angry with the children.

R8: Small-scale merchant

Multiple burdens, challenges

I have to study the materials again so that I can explain.

R9: Private-sector employee

Challenges

Unemployment affected us, and so in addition to helping the children study, I also need to ensure that we still have money, so I sell fried foods.

R10: Small-scale merchant

Challenges

I need to manage my time to focus more on teaching the children. At the same time, I still have to do my professional duties.

R11: Lecturer

Time management

A burden? I've felt it mostly in matters of teaching. *Insha'Allah*, aside from that... we can consider everything a test of our patience, a thing of beauty in our condition. Alhamdulillah, Allah has still blessed me with health and other things.

R12: Housewife

Multiple burdens

My duties as a mother have increased. Every day, I need to do the housework, which never ends. I need to handle the cleaning, the childcare, accompany the children with their online studies. Maybe women who have domestic assistants have an easier time because they don't have to work alone. My husband is very busy with his work.

R13: Housewife

Multiple burdens, division of labor

There is a greater burden for working women, who need to handle their children's online studies, to the point that they cannot do their offline activities. When they reach the office, they also have to do their work, teach online... check on the children who are studying at home. If not, some of their children's homework will go unfinished.

R14: Lecturer

Multiple burdens

I've been heavily burdened by time management, as I need to focus more on helping my children with their studies.	R15: Motorcycle taxi driver	Challenges
Me, personally, I have problems with time management. Between my personal activities, my family duties, and my job... everything needs to be done at home.	R16: Teacher	Time management
I need a minimum of three to four hours to help the children with their online studies. And that's not including the other housework or me teaching online.	R17: Lecturer	Time management

Source: Interviews with Respondents

The data in Table 1 shows that women have used different perspectives to understand their diverse burdens. Women who had worked outside the home before the pandemic have had problems with time management, experiencing difficulty in balancing their workplace duties with the domestic and teaching duties expected of them. Women who had acted as housewives or merchants before the pandemic, meanwhile, have had to balance their family's financial well-being with the domestic and teaching duties expected of them. These diverse activities reflect how women have been excessively burdened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Islamic and Cultural Perspectives regarding Women's Excessive Burdens

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the unequal division of labor amongst men and women. The gender roles delineated in Islamic literature have been used to legitimize the continued burdening of women, leaving women restricted to domestic duties. While women had previously had the opportunity to live balanced lives, throughout the pandemic they have again taken a disproportionate percentage of household duties. Women's lived experiences and burdens during the pandemic have been inseparable from the cultural and religious understandings that are deeply entrenched in Indonesian society. Such religious messages are being propagated in both everyday discourse and in religious sermons. Religious texts, interpreted literally, have been used to legitimize the expectation that women handle domestic duties during the pandemic. Table 2 below provides an overview of how Islamic texts are used to structure and position women:

Table 2: The Structuration of Women in Islam

No.	Position of Women in Islam	Scriptural Reference	Implications for Function and Role in Society
1.	As human beings, noble creatures created from the same source and enjoying an equal position	Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 1 Q.S. Baqarah [2]: 30 Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]: 70 Q.S. Al-A'raf [7]: 189 HR. Abu Dawud No: 4695 HR. Al-Bukhari No: 8	To find a spouse and maintain good relations To bear heirs To realize prosperity on Earth
2.	As servants, having an equal position qualified by their consciousness of Allah (<i>taqwa</i>)	Q.S Adz-Dzariyat [51]: 56. Q.S Al-Hujurat [49]: 13 Q.S. At-Taubah [9]: 71	To worship To practice <i>taqwa</i> To serve

3.	As mothers, having a noble and honorable position	<p>Q.S. Luqman [31]: 14</p> <p>Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]: 23</p> <p>Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 222-223</p> <p>Q.S. Fatir [35]: 11</p> <p>Q.S. Hud [69]:71</p> <p>Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 233</p> <p>HR. An-Nasai No: 3104</p>	<p>To reproduce, being characterized by menstruation, pregnancy, giving birth, nursing.</p> <p>To protect and nurture</p>
4.	As wives, partners, adornments, and complements for their husbands	<p>Q.S. Ar-Rum [30]: 21</p> <p>Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 34</p> <p>Q.S. Al-Ahzab [33]: 33-35</p> <p>Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 223</p> <p>Q.A. Ali Imran [3]: 14</p> <p>HR. Al-Bukhari No: 3331</p>	<p>To love</p> <p>To have proper interactions</p> <p>To obey, serve, and adorn their husbands</p> <p>To manage and honor their households, where their husbands rest.</p>

5.	As members of society	Q.S. At-Taubah [9]: 71 An-Nahl [16]: 97 Q.S. Al-Ahzab [33]: 35 HR. An-Nasai NO: 5126	To practice <i>amar ma'ruf</i> and <i>nahi munkar</i> To practice <i>taqwa</i> To do good and charitable deeds
6.	As children, to be protected and represented	Q.S. Luqman [31]: 14 Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 232 HR. Ibnu Majah NO: 3669	To obey To serve parents

Women occupy several positions in Islam, being simultaneously individual beings in service of Allah (*'abd*) and beings defined relative to others (i.e. as mothers, as wives, as children, and as members of society). As individuals in the service of Allah, women are the equals of all others. All human beings share the origin and creation process, as stated by Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 1. Human beings, both men and women, were created as equals by Allah; any differences are not to establish primacy, but rather to ensure that men and women complement each other (Q.S Al-Taubah [9]: 71). At the same time, women are positioned as social beings, being defined by their relationships with others. In the family, for instance, women are positioned as mothers, and thus understood

as noble and venerable (Q.S. Al-Isra [17]:23, Q.S. Luqman [31]: 14). Women are also positioned as wives, thus as having specific roles, rights, and obligations to their husbands (Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 34). Meanwhile, owing to their societal position, women have a social expectation and obligation to spread goodness (Q.S At-Taubah [9]: 71).

Such positioning of women has significant implications for their structuration and the division of labor within the household. As wives, for instance, women are positioned as being protected (led) by men; men, thus, have a mandate to act as *qawwam* (Q.S. An-Nisa [4]: 34). Within the domestic context, meanwhile, women are urged to stay at home. This is emphasized several times in the Qur'an, and underscored by the Hadiths . Women are often positioned as “domestic” beings, wives and mothers who should remain at home. Women’s positioning as mothers, has implications for their reproductive and childcare roles—both of which are strongly associated with the domestic sphere. Meanwhile, women’s positioning as wives obliges them not only to obey their husbands, but also to provide them with the greatest physical and psychological services (al-Ahzab [33]: 33. All such positions are translated into and institutionalized through society’s dominant culture.

Through rewards and punishments in the hereafter, as expounded by the hadiths and disseminated through *da'wah*, Islam appreciates women’s contributions to their families. In prayer activities, for example, religious leaders often tell their female followers that obeying and serving their husbands is a blessing that will receive a heavenly reward. “If a woman remembers her five daily prayers, fasts for the month of *Ramadhan*, minds her body, and obeys her husband, then this noble woman will be

allowed into heaven through whichever door she likes” . Conversely, where women neglect their wifely duties to their husbands, they will be punished. If a wife refuses to serve her husband, for example, she will not only be punished by her husband, but also by the angels (Al-Bukhari, *Jami' Al-Shahih*, Juz III, h. 1182 ; Imam Muslim, *Shahih Muslim*, Juz II , h. 1059)

Such messages are popularly conveyed by religious scholars throughout Indonesia during their sermons, thereby legitimizing gender inequality within the household. Take, for example, a widely viewed sermon by the popular preacher Ustadh Das'ad Latif. Citing the hadiths, he said:

“Were prostration to human beings allowed, wives would be required to prostrate before their husbands, for ladies, we men are those who bear your sins. If you would like to enter Heaven through whichever door you please, then you're your husband and seek his blessings. You may even break a voluntary fast if your husband doesn't allow it. Even to see your parents, you must have your husband's permission.” (Das'ad Latif, “Alasan Isteri Harus taat kepada Suami” [Reasons Wives Must Obey their Husbands], www.youtube.com. September 20, 2020).

Even female preachers make such statements. Citing the hadiths, Ustadhah Dedeh Rosyadah—popularly known as Mamah Dedeh—stated:

“Ladies, listen to me. These are wives' obligations to their husbands, to obey their husbands and do what they want. The Prophet said, if a husband asks to be served by his wife, even if he sits upon a pelana (horse), then she must serve. If a wife has already made herself up, ready to go, but the husband asks, she must serve. The Prophet said that, if a husband asks to be served,

even if she is in the kitchen [cooking], then she must serve. Even in matters of color, ladies... if a husband likes a color you're wearing, or certain food, then you must follow your husband's tastes" (Mamah Dedeh, televised sermon "Rumah Mamah Dedeh: Ridho Suami Syurga Isteri" [Mamah Dedeh's House: A Husband's Blessings, a Wife's Heaven], February 18, 2020).

Religious texts, as well as their exegesis through sermons, have commonly been used to justify the subordination of women. The excessive burdens borne by women during the pandemic, thus, have been legitimized as part of the natural order taught by religion.

3. Cultural Reproduction of Gender Inequality

The COVID-19 pandemic has had diverse and far-reaching consequences. As more families have worked and studied at home, the disparate positions of men and women have increasingly provided a precedent for reinforcing existing gender inequalities within the family. Women have taken on even more domestic roles and functions, thereby reinforcing gender stereotypes regarding women's ideal roles and competencies.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seemingly provided men with the impetus to ask women to act primarily as mothers and wives. Consequently, women are expected to take care of their children, handle domestic labor, and serve their husbands while simultaneously continuing their workplace obligations. The boundaries between the public and the private are increasingly blurred, or even non-existent (Nadia, 2020; Chauhan, 2020; Lim et al., 2020). As a result, women have been subjected to increased pressure (DW, 2020; Kulsum, 2021). This is also true for housewives, who have been burdened with even more domestic labor. Activities such as preparing meals,

providing snacks, cleaning the home, and doing laundry have all become increasingly difficult as families have worked and studied from home, and women are expected to handle this additional domestic labor themselves. Women are told that a good wife and mother is one who can handle all of her burdens while remaining true to her womanly nature.

Such ideal roles are further reinforced by the concept of *ibuism*, wherein women are understood as being more patient and detail-oriented, and thus expected to contribute more to their children's online learning activities. Several online media outlets have highlighted parents' patience in teaching their children in their titles, only to exclusively discuss the experiences of mothers in their bodies (see, for example, Alam. 2020; Tim Tribun, 2020). The perception that women are naturally more caring and tender has likewise reinforced the expectation that women should guide the development of their children. A working woman in Lampung, for instance, indicated that she was responsible for communicating with schools, supervising her children's studies, and playing with her children so they would not be bored. She stated that, because women are perceived as naturally patient, tender, and flexible, they are thought to be best suited to these duties. Men, meanwhile, are seen as strict and inflexible, and thus poorly suited to childcare (Sizuka, R1). The positive labels attached to women have thus been used to create a gender stereotype that, through juxtaposition with gender stereotypes regarding men, has been used to justify the expectation that women guide their children in their studies.

The culturally constructed view that women must be skilled in the kitchen, at the well, and in the bed has been reinforced during the pandemic. Phrases such as

“Mother’s iced tea, it’s so fresh” and “mother’s coffee, it’s a kick” imply that women should distance themselves from public activities to prepare tea for their children or coffee for their husbands (MF, R3; AZ, R3). Folding clothes and organizing utensils are likewise viewed as fundamental skills that all mothers and daughters should possess (EM, R2). Such domestic labor, which could be handled by anybody, is delegated to women, and this is legitimized by culturally constructed understandings of women’s qualifications and competencies.

The normative views of women’s ideal roles, characteristics, and attitudes, as well as their expected qualifications and competencies, have been reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ongoing emergency has not only increased the domestic burdens borne by housewives, but also brought working women back from public spaces. Although men have also been required to work at home, they have had the privilege of concentrating on their public duties, as they are perceived as the heads of their households and as their families’ main breadwinners. The perceived primacy of men is reinforced and legitimized by the media (Table 3).

Table 3. Reproduction of Gender Inequality in the Media and Society

Forms of gender inequality in the family	Source	Coding	Category
<p>The duty of helping children learn tends to fall mothers. At the same time, women must handle their other domestic and public duties (work), all of which must be done at home.</p>	<p>https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/anak-belajar-dari-rumah-menguji-kesabaran-dan-bikin-keteteran-para-ibu.html?page=2</p>	<p>Multiple burden</p>	<p>Normative/ideal role as mother/woman</p>
<p>[because of their] role in child care and fulfilling the family's logistic needs, women are the vanguard, vulnerable to COVID- 19.</p>	<p>https://www.kompas.id/baca/dikbud/2021/03/25/perempuan-mengalami-kerugian-berlapis-di-masa-pandemi/</p>	<p>Multiple burden</p>	<p>Normative /ideal role as mother/woman</p>
<p>The increased domestic burden on women, as well as the prevalence of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, has subjected women to pressure and led women to suffer trauma.</p>	<p>https://www.tempo.co/dw/2347/di-masa-pandemi-corona-perempuan-indonesia-lebih-rentan-alami-kdrt</p>	<p>Subordination and violence</p>	<p>Gender stereotyping</p>

<p>Parents are asked to be patient in the article title, but the content deals with a mother who lost her patience dealing with children.</p>	<p>https://www.kompas.com/edu/read/2020/09/16/135700771/belajar-online-orangtua-diminta-lebih-sabar-dampingi-anak</p>	<p>Violence against children</p>	<p>Gender stereotyping</p>
<p>'I need to accompany all of my children when studying, because their father isn't patient. If I'm not with them, they won't study. Their father, why would he...'</p>	<p>Interview with Sizuka (R.1 Women working as a lecturer, her husband is a teacher)</p>	<p>Multiple burden</p>	<p>Gender stereotyping</p>
<p>The other day, there were problems with tuition. Their father, whom I asked to confirm [payment], wasn't willing. Said he'd get too emotional. So in the end I handled it myself.</p>	<p>Interview with EM (R.2 working mother with three children)</p>	<p>Multiple burden</p>	<p>Gender stereotyping</p>
<p>Request to make food or drink, using certain codes. 'Mother's iced tea, it's so fresh.' 'Mother's coffee, it's a kick.'</p>	<p>Spoken by YES (R.3 Mother works in a state-owned enterprise office)</p>	<p>Sublimation</p>	<p>Competency standards for women.</p>

This study has shown that the increased burdens borne by women during the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant and detrimental effect on women's physical and psychological well-being. Women have been placed in a difficult situation, as they are expected to handle burdens that had previously been shared, and thus have had difficulty realizing their true potential. Women are responsible for a range of domestic activities, including the nurturing and education of children; the management of household finances; and the ensurance of family welfare. Exacerbating this situation, these duties are rarely shared, and this has resulted not only in marital tensions but also in domestic violence (Borah Hazarika & Das, 2021; Fazraningtyas et al., 2020; Lee, 2021). The economic consequences of job loss have further amplified women's suffering (Craig, 2020; Maji et al., 2021; Sarker, 2020), not only limiting the spaces available to them but also reinforcing their subordination (Chant, 2014; Mackett, 2021).

The gender inequalities evident in the additional burdens borne by women during the COVID-19 pandemic have reinforced the patriarchal ideology of Indonesian culture. Such an ideology has been justified through literal and dogmatic understandings of religious doctrine (which have positioned women's domestic duties as natural and obligatory), and these exegeses have continued to be socialized during the pandemic – thereby reinforcing the gender inequalities that have excessively burdened women (B. L. Bastian, Metcalfe, & Zali, 2019; Carlsen, 2020). Inequalities have been further institutionalized through the dominant social system, wherein gender roles have been culturally and socially distributed (Nurdiani, 2019). In this manner, the patriarchal ideology has been reinforced (Hasyim,

2010), concealing the truly egalitarian and progressive understandings of gender contained in Islam. In this manner, patriarchal traditions are upheld and legitimized, and biased exegeses of religious texts are facilitated (Norhidayat, 2016).

The gender inequalities that have occurred during the pandemic, including the excessive burdens borne by women, are reflective of the gender inequalities experienced by women in the past, present, and future. Women's past experiences with subordination, wherein men are dominant in both the public and private spheres, have been increasingly reinforced, and the hierarchy created by the patriarchy has resulted only in discrimination (Azong & Kelso, 2021; Onwutuebe, 2019). Women's experiences, including their diverse burdens, responsibilities, and problems, have highlighted that gender inequalities continue to be socially and culturally reproduced. Consequently, women cannot readily lead egalitarian and democratic lives, and they will continue to have trouble avoiding the gender equalities that result in their discrimination, marginalization, and subordination.

The experiences narrated by this study illustrate how, when gender inequality is culturally reproduced, a broader inegalitarian culture will ultimately emerge. Ignoring women's abilities and resources, as in the domestication process, does not only result in their marginalization and impoverishment, but also hegemony, with women no longer being viewed as subjects who are capable of making their own decisions. Such hegemony, as noted by Gramsci (1976), can only emerge through consensus. In the case of gender inequality, this consensus has been accepted for three reasons: fear, habituation, and awareness (Hendarto, 1993; Patria, Nezar, & Arief, 2015; Paechter, 2018). From the above discussion, it is apparent

how these three processes have led to the hegemony of the patriarchy being perceived as natural.

Studies of women's burdens during the pandemic have highlighted their various psychological, economic, and employment difficulties and problems (Yildirim and Eslen-Ziya [2021]). However, it remains necessary to investigate the pandemic's long-term implications for the personal, family, and social lives of women. This study has shown how COVID-19 has not only returned women to their homes (Cummins & Brannon, 2022), but also "forced" them to be wholly responsible for domestic duties that had previously been shared or abandoned. This, in turn, has justified the unequal division of labor within the household, wherein men are tasked with public duties while women handle all domestic labor. As noted by Thompson (2000), such a division of labor is deep-rooted, being evident even in Classical Greek mythology. Hermes, the "god of communication", was responsible for dealing with the outside world—just as men are expected to be involved in the public sphere. Hestia, meanwhile, was the "goddess of the hearth", illustrating the expectation that women concentrate on the domestic sphere.

C. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on gender relations and the division of labor within the household. This article has explored the experiences of women before and during the pandemic. Often active in the public sphere, playing various roles and holding a range of responsibilities, these women have been forced by the pandemic to return to the domestic sphere and handle all domestic labor. This situation has reinforced the wall between the domestic and public spheres, which was once

thought to be crumbling. Women are subjected not only to a dual burden, borne within a single space and time, but multiple burdens. The COVID-19 pandemic has restored the division of domestic labor to its traditional configuration, wherein most work is handled by women. Women's contributions to the public sphere have been undermined by the expectation that they return home and focus on their domestic responsibilities. Analysis of the gendered division of household labor has provided a new perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, which has generally been understood through its health, economic, and political effects. During the ongoing crisis, the unequal division of labor has been legitimized by religion and indirectly buttressed by the dominant religious and cultural paradigms. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a major setback for the struggle for gender equality and justice, which must begin within families' private spaces. Women have experienced vulnerability, discrimination, violence, stereotyping, and multiple burdens, all of which have been detrimental to their well-being.

This study has limited itself to collecting data from the media and a small sample of respondents. Further investigation is necessary to achieve an emic understanding of women's everyday lives and experiences in their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that, in the future, a more comprehensive study can obtain a deeper understanding of women's subjective experiences. For such a study, participant observation and in-depth interviews would be best suited for understanding women's experiences as well as said experiences' implications for women, their families, and their communities.

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