

Article

# Women's Double Burden: Balancing Domestic and Professional Spheres

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## ABSTRACT ENGLISH:

This study discusses the phenomenon of double burden experienced by women in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, who must carry two main responsibilities: working in the public sphere and managing household duties. Although they actively contribute to the family economy through farming, trading, and other informal jobs, household tasks such as cooking, washing, and taking care of children remain their primary obligations. This condition displays that social and economic changes in rural areas have not fully altered traditional gender-based role divisions. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews with three informants and documentation. The findings reveal that women in Jelun Village demonstrate high resilience in balancing these multiple responsibilities, even when facing physical exhaustion and emotional stress. Values of hard work, patience, and responsibility play an important role in helping them endure daily challenges. However, behind this strength, the influence of patriarchy remains strong, positioning women as the main caretakers of domestic affairs. This situation indicates that gender equality in rural areas has not yet been fully achieved. Therefore, there is a need to increase social awareness and encourage a fairer division of household roles, so that women can participate more equally in both public and domestic spheres without being overburdened.

**Keywords:** Double Burden, Household Roles, Gender Equality, Patriarchy, Rural Women.

## ABSTRACT INDONESIAN:

Penelitian ini mengkaji fenomena peran ganda yang dialami oleh perempuan di Desa Jelun, Banyuwangi, yang harus menjalankan dua tanggung jawab utama, yaitu bekerja di ranah publik dan mengelola tugas domestik. Meskipun mereka berkontribusi aktif dalam perekonomian keluarga melalui kegiatan bertani, berdagang, dan pekerjaan informal lainnya, tugas rumah tangga seperti memasak, mencuci, dan merawat anak tetap menjadi kewajiban utama mereka. Kondisi ini menunjukkan bahwa perubahan sosial dan ekonomi di wilayah pedesaan belum sepenuhnya mengubah pembagian peran berbasis gender yang tradisional. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa wawancara mendalam terhadap tiga informan serta dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perempuan di Desa Jelun memiliki tingkat ketahanan yang tinggi dalam menjalankan berbagai tanggung jawab tersebut, meskipun menghadapi kelelahan fisik dan tekanan emosional. Nilai-nilai kerja keras, kesabaran, dan tanggung jawab memiliki peran yang signifikan dalam membantu mereka menghadapi tantangan sehari-hari. Namun, di balik ketangguhan tersebut, pengaruh patriarki masih kuat, karena terus menempatkan perempuan sebagai penanggung jawab utama urusan domestik. Kondisi ini mengindikasikan bahwa kesetaraan gender di wilayah pedesaan belum sepenuhnya tercapai. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan peningkatan kesadaran sosial serta pembagian peran yang lebih adil dalam rumah tangga agar perempuan dapat berpartisipasi secara lebih seimbang di ranah publik dan domestik tanpa mengalami beban yang berlebihan.

**Kata Kunci:** Beban Ganda, Kesetaraan Gender, Patriarki, Perempuan Desa, Peran Rumah Tangga.

## Introduction

The phenomenon of double burden is often experienced by women in Indonesia, especially in rural areas. They not only helped the family economy by working on the farm, trading, or running small businesses, but also continued to manage household chores like cooking, washing, and childcare. According to [Harmanda & Sari \(2024\)](#), working women typically shoulder two responsibilities simultaneously: public work and household chores. This condition indicates that despite women's contributions to the economic field, they are still burdened with exhausting domestic tasks. This phenomenon illustrates the inequality in the division of gender roles that still persists strongly in society.

The social and economic changes occurring in rural areas have led many women to participate in work activities to supplement the family income. In Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, for example, women not only work in the fields or trade, but also continue to fulfill their roles as housewives. Although they have already helped the family economy, household responsibilities such as cooking, washing, and childcare still remain the primary obligation of women ([Astuti et al., 2024](#)). This situation shows that traditional gender roles are still strong, forcing women to divide their time and energy between public and domestic work. This indicates that economic changes have not fully brought about a balance in the division of roles between men and women in rural areas.

The double burden experienced by women has many impacts on their lives, both physically, socially, and emotionally. Many women feel tired because they have to work outside the home and still take care of household chores without enough help ([Junaidi & Sukanti, 2022](#)). Women who experience double burden are vulnerable to physical fatigue, stress, and emotional pressure because they have to balance two responsibilities simultaneously ([Woda & Pontoan, 2024](#)). This condition can also lead to family conflicts, such as poor communication and tension with a partner. As a result, women often feel overwhelmed and don't have time for themselves. This situation illustrates that the double burden not only affects women's bodies but also their mental well-being and social relationships in rural areas.

The division of roles in the household greatly affects the amount of burden borne by women. Many people still place women as the primary caregivers for household chores such as cooking, washing, and childcare. Husbands are often not equally involved in domestic work due to the strong influence of patriarchal culture in society ([Imamia & Jannah, 2024](#)). This condition shows that household responsibilities have not yet been fairly divided between husband and wife ([Nadirra & Nadilla, 2023](#)). This inequality forces women to bear a double burden: working outside the home while also managing family needs. This phenomenon shows that gender role equality in the household sphere remains a real challenge.

Social and cultural views in rural communities still heavily influence how people perceive the role of women. Many still believe that the primary responsibility of women is to take care of the house, cook, wash, and raise children. Research by [Harahap & Jailani \(2024\)](#), shows that in the patriarchal culture of rural communities, women are still burdened with household chores despite entering the realms of education and public work. This kind of view

means that social and economic changes have not yet been able to shift women's position in the family. As a result, they have to juggle two roles simultaneously: working outside the home and still fulfilling their domestic obligations. This situation explains why the double burden on rural women, including in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, still persists today.

Studying the double burden is important because this issue not only concerns individual roles, but also the social and cultural structures that shape them. In the context of rural societies, the division of labour based on gender is still heavily influenced by traditional values that place women as the primary caregivers for domestic affairs (Yasin, 2025). In fact, women's contribution to the economy is increasing with the social changes happening in the village. This imbalance creates new pressure for women who are trying to meet the dual demands of family and society. Therefore, this research is relevant to examine how social systems in rural areas shape and maintain the double burden on women.

The double burden remains a significant issue for many women, especially those living in rural areas. They have to work to help the family economy while also managing household chores without much help from their husbands (Jabeen et al., 2020; Zulia & Rahman, 2024; Zunaidi & Maghfiroh, 2021). This condition often makes women feel tired, both physically and mentally. This also shows that gender inequality is still strong in society. Therefore, it is important to understand how women navigate these two roles so that fairer solutions can be found for them.

The reality of the double burden still faced by rural women highlights the need for deeper attention to understanding the social and cultural conditions surrounding them. The study aims to uncover how women simultaneously fulfil two roles: as income earners and household managers. This study is expected to raise public awareness about the importance of cooperation and fairness within households. Thus, a more equal division of roles between men and women can be realized, leading to increased family welfare in rural areas.

## Literature Review

The literature review for this study serves as the foundation for understanding the phenomenon of double burden in rural women. The three theories used, namely *Double Burden Theory*, *Functionalist Feminism Theory*, and *Patriarchy Theory*, help explain how social roles and structures influence women's lives in fulfilling their responsibilities in both the domestic and public spheres. This research offers both theoretical and practical contributions.

### Double Burden Theory

The double burden theory explains that a person can experience stress when they have to fulfil two important roles simultaneously, such as working outside the home and still managing the household. Goode (1960) explains that "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations" is at the heart of multiple role strain. This means that women often find it difficult to fulfil their responsibilities in both domains due to competing demands. In the context of women in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, this is evident when they have to earn a living and still perform domestic

work without balanced assistance. As a result, many women feel physically and mentally exhausted due to the doubled workload. This theory helps understand that the pressure they experience arises because two social roles are performed simultaneously without a fair division of responsibility.

### Functionalist Feminism Theory

Functionalist feminist theory stems from the view that society will be stable if everyone fulfils their social roles, but this division often places women in an unequal position. [Parsons and Bales \(1955\)](#) in *Family: Socialization and Interaction Process*, explained that men hold the instrumental function as breadwinners, while women play an expressive role in managing the home and children. From a feminist perspective, this division is considered unfair because it confines women to the domestic sphere even though they also work. In Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, women help with the family's economy but remain primarily responsible for housework. This condition indicates that traditional social norms are still strongly shaping gender-based role division. This theory helps explain that women's double burden arises because the social system still maintains the old, unequal division of functions.

### Patriarchy Theory

Patriarchy theory explains that gender inequality occurs because of a social system that places men as the dominant party and women as the submissive party. [Walby \(1990\)](#), in *Theorizing Patriarchy*, states that "patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women." This means that men have greater power in regulating women's lives, both at home and in society. In research conducted in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, the patriarchal system is evident in how women continue to manage the household even though they work outside the home. Domestic roles are still considered the primary responsibility of women due to the strong cultural values of patriarchy. This theory helps explain that women's double burden is not just about the amount of work, but also a result of social structures that still place women in a subordinate position.

These three theories provide an important foundation for understanding how women experience the double burden. These theories explain that social roles and power structures often force women to bear a double burden at home and outside the home. This view also suggests that gender inequality is still influenced by social systems that place men in a dominant position. Thru these three theories, research can examine women's double burden more comprehensively from the perspectives of roles, social functions, and power structures that influence their lives.

### Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at deeply understanding women's experiences in simultaneously fulfilling two roles: *public worker* and *homemaker*, to explore women's experiences in balancing public work and household roles more clearly. This approach was chosen because it is able to depict a critical and social reality and the meaning women perceive regarding the double burden, they experience ([Fletcher, 2017](#)). The research location was Desa Jelun, Banyuwangi Regency, which was chosen because most women in this village are involved in economic activities such as farming, trading, or working in the

informal sector, while still managing household chores. The study reports that participants were selected using purposive sampling, with criteria including women who are or have been married and have responsibilities in work and domestic affairs. The number of informants was determined based on data sufficiency, indicated by recurring patterns and themes in the interview results. Data were collected from three informants with different life backgrounds, including variations in family roles and life stages.

Further, data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews and documentation (Chand, 2025). Interviews were used to explore women's experiences, perspectives, and the meanings they attach to the division of roles and workload in both family and work, using a semi-structured format to explore participants' experiences in detail. Documentation is used to supplement the data through field notes, photos, or documents relevant to the social conditions of Jelun Village. Data validity was obtained through a cross-checking process between informants to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the information obtained during the research. All participants provided informed consent prior to the interviews, and their identities were kept confidential to ensure ethical research practices (Surmiak, 2018). Through this method, the research is expected to provide a clearer picture of the reality of the double burden experienced by rural women.

## Result and Discussion

Women in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi play an important role in household life and the family economy. Every day they do domestic work like cooking, washing, and cleaning the house, while still working outside the home as merchants or farmers (Pathak, 2022). This condition shows that women are carrying out two major responsibilities simultaneously. This situation is known as a double burden because they have to divide their energy and time between two equally important roles. Social and economic changes have not significantly altered the public's view that household chores remain primarily women's responsibility.

Women in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi, continue to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and resilience in their lives (Lubis, 2024). They are trying to balance family and work needs without relying heavily on the help of others. This kind of attitude demonstrates high independence and resilience in maintaining the economic stability of the household (Karnawati, 2025). Many of them see hard work as a form of dedication to their families, not as a burden. This pattern shows that rural women play a central role in maintaining the sustainability of social and economic life in their environment.

Women in Jelun Village face a busy daily routine. Since morning, they have been doing various household chores such as cooking and cleaning the house, followed by work activities outside the home to help the family's economy. This condition leaves them little time to rest, but they continue with a sense of responsibility and sincerity. The community in Jelun Village considers this condition normal because it has become part of daily life. This situation shows that the double burden on women is still a part of social life in rural areas, as it does not significantly decrease despite women's involvement in public work (Pardede et al., 2024).

## Double Burden and Daily Activities of Women in Jelun Village, Banyuwangi

Women in Jelun Village have a double burden that they perform almost every day. Since morning, they have been busy with household chores, such as cooking, washing clothes, cleaning the house, and preparing the family's needs before starting work outside the home. After all the domestic work is done, some women continue their activities by trading at stalls or helping in the rice fields (Kinkingninhoun Medagbe et al., 2020). This kind of routine goes on from morning until night, leaving them with little time for adequate rest. This condition shows how rural women not only play a role in the domestic sphere but also actively contribute to the family economy.

Based on the interview results, most women begin to take on double burden after getting married. They were driven to work outside the home due to increasing family economic needs, while still maintaining their primary responsibility in managing household duties (Arfa et al., 2023). This made them accustomed to juggling multiple tasks at once, such as selling while still caring for children and the home. Although the workload felt heavy, many of them continued with that routine patiently and sincerely. This kind of perspective shows that the values of hard work and dedication to family are still deeply ingrained in the lives of women in rural areas.

The daily activities of women in Jelun Village reflect their high resilience and endurance against the pressures of life. They are able to balance economic needs and household obligations even with limited resources. Many of them consider the demanding activity a form of responsibility, not a burden. This way of thinking shows that there is a process of social acceptance of women's double burden as normal and natural (Dean, Churchill & Ruppanner, 2022). However, on the other hand, this situation also reveals the continued strength of the patriarchal system in rural communities, where women bear a greater workload without an equal division of responsibility with men.

### Time Management Between Work and Household

Women in Jelun Village have the ability to manage their time between household responsibilities and economic activities as part of their dual roles (Arfa et al., 2023). Every day they start their activities early in the morning, usually around four o'clock. Tasks such as cooking, sweeping, washing, and preparing family needs are their main routines before going to work. After that, they continue economic activities like trading or working in the rice fields until the afternoon. This series of activities shows that their time is divided between two realms: the domestic and the public, both of which demand their full energy and attention.

Some women have their own ways of balancing housework and outside work. They adjust their schedules according to daily needs, for example, finishing household chores earlier so they can focus on economic activities during the day. After returning home, domestic chores like washing and cleaning the house were done again even though the body was already tired. This pattern reflects the discipline and resilience of women in facing their busy daily routines. This situation shows how crucial women's role is for the smooth running of family life, both economically and in terms of household well-being (Gilbert, 2008).

This condition shows that women play an important role in maintaining the continuity of households, but also in supporting the family economy. Significant responsibilities in two

different domains are often not balanced by an equal division of roles within the family. Domestic work is still seen as a woman's obligation, while their contribution to the economy is often considered supplementary, not their primary role (García-Luque et al., 2026). This situation indicates that the work culture and social values in rural areas still place women as the central figure in the household, even though they are also an important part of the family's economic activities.

### **The Physical and Psychological Burden of Double Burden**

The demanding activities create physical and mental pressure among women in Jelun Village, affecting their productivity (Shalshabil et al., 2026). From morning till night, they kept switching between housework and outdoor work. Fatigue often sets in, especially when domestic chores coincide with trading or working in the rice fields. Despite this, they still try to fulfil all their responsibilities with patience. The daily repetitive routine forms a lifestyle that demands great energy and high discipline.

The pile of work that needs to be done every day often leaves women with no time for themselves. After finishing their errands outside the home, they still had to ensure the domestic chores continued. This situation leads to cumulative fatigue, both physically and emotionally (Agustin & Rahmasari, 2023). Nevertheless, they still try to go through everything with patience and accept the situation as part of their responsibility. This situation shows that the double burden they experience has become a part of life considered normal in the rural community environment.

### **Family Support and Solidarity in Domestic Work**

Women in Jelun Village demonstrate extraordinary resilience in facing the dual routine they live every day. Since morning, activities such as cooking, cleaning the house, and even trading or working in the rice fields are carried out without much complaint. All forms of work are carried out with habits that have been ingrained for years, as if they are a natural part of their lives. Although the burden they faced was quite heavy, they still saw it as natural and something they had to endure. This attitude shows that perseverance and resilience have become important values in the lives of rural women (Setijaningrum, Triana & Kassim, 2024).

Some women describe that relationships between family members are starting to show a warmer sense of togetherness. Help from a spouse, child, or sibling appears spontaneously when one feels tired. They share roles with each other, whether it is preparing meals, caring for the children, or managing household needs. This cooperation (between men and women) is not rigidly regulated, but rather grows from mutual understanding and empathy (Whitehead, 2023). The presence of moments like these shows that solidarity within the family is still a major strength for women in navigating their double burden.

There are also those who experience a different situation, where all household chores and outdoor work must be done by themselves. This situation often occurs in families where members are busy with their own activities or in households where women are the main breadwinners. Despite the heavy demands they face, they still try to balance their responsibilities without complaining much. Physical and mental fatigue is considered part of the consequences of life that must be accepted with patience. This image shows that the

resilience of women in Jelun Village is not only born from the help of others, but also from personal strength and a high sense of responsibility.

## Conclusion

This research shows that women have a very complex role in daily life. They not only serve as additional breadwinners but also as the primary managers of household affairs. Activities such as farming, trading, and working in the informal sector are an important part of their lives, helping to support the family economy. On the other hand, domestic tasks such as cooking, washing, and childcare remain the primary responsibilities that must be carried out tirelessly. This condition indicates that social and economic changes have not fully altered traditional views on the role of women. Thus, women in Jelun Village remain in a position that demands double work every day.

The daily routine of rural women runs from morning until night, with a packed schedule divided between household chores and public work. They need to manage their energy and minds so that all tasks can be completed well without neglecting their roles in the family. This activity is carried out consistently despite frequent fatigue due to limited rest time. Perseverance and a sense of responsibility are the key factors that enabled them to endure demanding situations. In their daily lives, they strive to maintain a balance so that the house remains tidy and their work outside the home continues. This demonstrates the high adaptability of rural women to the ever-evolving economic and social demands. This phenomenon of double burden also reveals the strong influence of the patriarchal system on the division of labor in the domestic sphere. Household chores are still considered a woman's obligation, while men focus more on public work. Although some families are starting to show cooperation in household chores, the roles remain significantly unbalanced. The cultural view that places women as the primary managers of households remains a difficult-to-change norm. This situation makes women constantly strive to adapt to the high social expectations placed upon them. Therefore, role equality in the household needs to be further emphasized so that women's workload can be reduced.

Overall, this research indicates that women's double burden in Jelun Village are not only an economic issue, but also reflect the still unbalanced social and cultural structures. Their resilience in the face of work pressure demonstrates an extraordinary fighting spirit in maintaining a balance between work and household responsibilities. However, behind that resilience lies emotional and physical exhaustion that is often overlooked. Public awareness of the importance of fair role division still needs to be increased thru education and changes in social perspectives. It is hoped that in the future, women can fulfill their roles more balanced without being overly burdened. With the support of family and the surrounding environment, rural women can continue to contribute with dignity in various areas of life.

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