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# The Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Perspective

Mayza Amelia<sup>1\*</sup>, and Tubagus Hasanuddin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Department of Extension and Community Development, University of Lampung

\* Corresponding Author: Mayza Amelia. Email: [mayzaamelia7@gmail.com](mailto:mayzaamelia7@gmail.com).

## Abstract

COVID-19 is a new virus that first appeared in 2020 and is a new type of virus (SARS-CoV-2) with the disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The rapid spread of this virus has caused social and economic issues practically everywhere in the world, including Indonesia. The purpose of this research is to analyze the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on gender perspective. The method in this research is literature study. The results of this study show that, the social impact of COVID-19 on gender perspective is double burden of women, domestic violence, mental and reproductive health, mobility limitation, limited space and access to technology. The economic impact of COVID-19 on gender perspective is unemployment, termination of employment, limited space and employment opportunities.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Social, Economic, Perspective, Gender.

## 1. Introduction

In Indonesia, the first problem of COVID-19 occurred in March 2020 in Depok City, West Java. After that, the spread of COVID-19 occurred rapidly until within a month, the number of COVID-19 infections reached more than 1,500 cases with the number of deaths reaching 139 people. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia is one of the most positive COVID-19 problems [19]. Until September 2021, the number of people affected by COVID-19 has reached 4.1 million and the death has reached 132 thousand people [20].

Pandemic COVID-19 listed in dramatic social change (social change electrify). An atmosphere where fast events focus on deep social transformations and create divisions in the balance of social and normative

forms and changes or threats to the cultural identity of group members. People who are not ready to face this pandemic cause social chaos in all aspects of life. The impact of pandemic COVIDd-19 has forced people to adapt to the social changes it causes [9].

1 COVID-19 is a new virus that first appeared in 2020 and is a new type of virus (SARS-CoV-2) with the disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The rapid spread of this virus has caused social and economic issues practically everywhere in the world, including Indonesia. 9 COVID-19 is not only a public health emergency, but it also has significant economic and social ramifications for women. As in prior crises, 4 it is likely to exacerbate women's already precarious labor market status, raise the burden of unpaid domestic and care duties, and lead to a higher incidence of and less effective response to gender-based violence. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 25 million people have lost their work, with women being one of them [16]. This change in order then became a threat to gender equality in Indonesia, because basically the uncertainty of economic conditions had a worse impact on women than men [1].

## 2. 10 Methods

The method used this research is literature study which collects information and data from various sources such as articles, journals, news, books, documents and others. This data supports the author's ideas which are used as the basis for research on, 15 the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on a gender perspective. Literature review or literature study is library data collection methods, defined as a series of processes related to literacy, and recording to be processed into research materials.

## 3. Results and Discussion

COVID-19 is a newly discovered outbreak whose cause comes from the coronavirus. This new virus was first recognized in Wuhan China December 2019. 18 On March 9, 2020 the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Has occurred in several countries and has spread to 32 countries all over the world. In general, impact has the meaning of all things that occur as a result of something that is experienced, while according to [2] impacts are things that result from what is done, can be in the form of good or

bad or strong influences that have bad or good impacts. Based on the understanding that has been explained previously, the researcher concludes that the notion of impact is all things that occur as a result of something being done or temporary.

Socio-economy is everything related to economic activities carried out usually to meet the needs of each individual such as clothing needs, food needs and housing need. So that COVID-19 also has an impact on the social and economic fields [12]. Meanwhile, according to [12] social and economic covers several hectares, namely the social environment, performance, which are rights and obligations related to resources. Social and economic position is a person's condition in social life because of course as a social creature, humans need and need other people during their lives.

Gender is <sup>5</sup> refers to the roles played in activities between men and women culturally. The social construction that develops in society is that men are superior while women are at the subordinate level. Gender perspectives on economics and social provide a sociological perspective on informal activities. For example are activities and social relationships in meeting basic daily needs in households and exploring how women and men have been affected differently [14].

### <sup>19</sup> The Social Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Perspective

The result of patriarchal norms that are being widely embraced by the Indonesian people which ultimately puts the position of men in a greater status than women. This situation causes men to feel they have power over women in their households and has the potential to trigger acts of domestic violence [11].

The current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, cases of domestic violence have become one of the main concerns due to the increasing number [18]. This is considered to be one of the impacts of work from home, namely that women who are in the household and experience domestic violence will be trapped and have no personal space [18] so that it will cause the recurrence of domestic violence.

According to a report by UN Women since <sup>21</sup> the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of cases of Domestic Violence (KDRT) against women has increased

with the increasing number of emergency phone calls in various countries around the world. One in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence mostly by their partner [16].

Indonesia the number of cases of violence against women throughout 2020 was 299,911 cases in the year-end notes of the National Commission On Violence Against Women 2021. Consisting of 291,677 cases handled by the District Court/Religious Court, 8,234 Women's Commission partner service institutions and 2,389 Women's Commission Service and Referral Units (UPR) cases. With a record of 2,134 cases being gender-based cases and 255 cases of which were cases that were not gender-based. During the pandemic, the highest information at the beginning of the pandemic was in March, which then declined in May because there was a process of changing the online complaint system. But after that, when the entire community system has begun to adjust to these conditions, in June it increased again, and decreased again until December 2020. Meanwhile, 34% of service institutions said they experienced an increase in cases during the pandemic, but another 36% stated no. This shows that there is a comparison of the quantity of information carried out at the service institution [10].

COVID-19 has also added to the workload in the domestic sector, such as household, nursing, and caregiving. This increase in workload allows individuals to have increased working hours, from their main paid job to the increasing number of unpaid domestic work during the pandemic. Under these circumstances, unfortunately, the role of family members in nursing work is often only borne by women, be it mothers or daughters. Women are the most disadvantaged because of the double burden that has increased during the pandemic. Not to mention the tendency of women to lose paid jobs which are higher than men which can make them fall into the powerless group. This situation further exacerbates existing gender inequalities.

Various surveys show that the COVID-19 pandemic has left a deeper trauma for women than men. The data also show that women are affected much worse than men. Working women have at least two main concerns, both of which demand responsibility. First attention to family and second full attention to office tasks. These two things are often a conflict for working women. The fact is that women are proven to carry more of a double burden, according to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA). [7].

In Indonesia, women's main responsibility is in domestic work. Meanwhile, to anticipate the spread of COVID-19, the government and companies enforce a Work From Home policy and schools implement a School From Home policy. This condition is the result of the unequal division of tasks and the low power relations of women in the household. Thus women who work from home, must be able to allocate their time to take care of the household, accompany their children to study, as well as work [1].

The socio-economic impact is not only related to the increase in poverty due to job loss, but also includes the cultural realm where gender inequality is increasingly severe for women. Therefore, there is a need for cultural advice on how a family divides tasks and works together to manage the life that must be done at home. This is a new social experience for women during work from home which is actually full of gender discrimination, adding to the psychological and physical burden of women. Whereas accompanying, teaching, and caring for children is not only the role and responsibility of the mother, but together with a father. It seems simple, but social expectations for women to be able to carry out these various roles while working from home, have the potential to increase the risk of violence against women during COVID-19.

Distrust and anxiety that affect health conditions, both mental health and have implications for women's reproductive health. In a pandemic situation, anxiety arises because of feeling uncertainty, including in terms of understanding the situation and the risks faced. Anxiety cannot be separated from concerns about how far the crisis conditions will be managed, both related to confidence in the ability of individuals and various authorities that are considered as the foundation (state or socio-community institutions) in terms of managing emergency situations. Anxiety due to the amount of incoming information, but not all of them can be trusted [6].

In addition, women experience health threats to reproductive health due to changes in health service priorities during this pandemic. Although the Ministry of Health recommends postponing pregnancy during the pandemic, Family Planning (KB) services do not necessarily become easy for women. During the physical distancing period, women need to make an appointment to get family planning services. In fact, due to unequal power relations in the household, the use of family planning is more dependent on women. In 2019, only 0.36 percent of men had a vasectomy, and only 1.36 percent of men

used condoms as a means of delaying pregnancy. This condition will affect the unfulfilled needs of women for access to reproductive health services [6].

To limit the risk of COVID-19 spreading, a large-scale social restriction (PSBB) strategy of work from home and study at home has concentrated everyday activities at home. Women are socially positioned as the person in charge of care and care, so the share of work and women's time is also concentrated in a locus called home. This makes women's mobility more limited. The affairs of productive work and domestic work or care are carried out at home. Slightly different from the experience of men, because even though there is an appeal to do activities at home, they are more free to leave the house because socially they are not attached to the responsibility for care and care work.

Access to technology is one of the gender issues that generally places women in a lower position and use of technology than men. This includes access to digital technology, where the digital gender disparity was a major development concern prior to the epidemic. <sup>22</sup> Data from the 2018 National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas) shows that internet access for women (37.49%) is lower than access for men (42.31%) In the context of a pandemic, when there is a shift from an offline approach to an online approach, the ability and mastery of digital technology is key. This will affect the ability to build communication (with families, communities, and other members of the community), the ability to access information relevant to survival, the ability to access various public services that change to an online approach, and the ability to maintain economic security. Many women voiced concern about access to digital technology which is still expensive, because it has implications for priorities and spending allocations [6].

Since the introduction of COVID-19, women have been disproportionately affected by increased tension and anxiety. More and more women are coping with and caring for ailing family members, adding to their already heavy care and domestic job loads. These issues, together with concerns about employment and financial security and the impact of lockdowns on gender-based violence, may contribute to women's mental health deteriorating disproportionately. 57 percent of women and 48 percent of men have had their mental health damaged as a result of the spread of COVID-19 [16].

## The economic impact of COVID-19 on gender perspective

The COVID-19 is more than just a health issue. The COVID-19 has a significant impact on the economy. One of the parties most affected by this crisis is women. Even though before the pandemic their economic conditions were already low, the pandemic has further widened the gap.

Women's economic vulnerability to the impact of COVID-19 tends to occur. Although women are also able to stand at the forefront of saving household economic resilience, with various activities (work) that can be done as an effort to affirm the economy that results in domestic and public survival.

If the pandemic goes on for a long time, more women will have no income. Meanwhile, government regulations advise people to always stay at home, this will automatically result in the inability of the informal sector economy, because there is no income. Not only that, with the call to work from home, let alone the closure of public facilities, it threatens that these informal sector workers will no longer be able to market their products or sell services. Meanwhile, the necessities of life, to continue to consume enough food, to pay for school for those who are married, remain a necessity that cannot be postponed.

Based on CNBC Indonesia's household profile [4], 85.7% are male. Where 46.6% are aged 50 years and over, 93.8% are married and 43.4% have primary school education or less. Meanwhile, 14.3% of household heads are women. Where 68.3% are 50 years old or older. Then 77.7% divorced dead/live, and 56.3% had primary school education or lower. The increase in poverty due to the pandemic will also widen the poverty gap between genders. In other words, more women than men will fall into extreme poverty. This is especially true for people aged 25 to 34 years, namely during the productive period and the formation of a family. By 2021, it is predicted that there will be 118 women between the ages of 25 and 34 in the world living in extreme poverty for every 100 men in the same age group. This index could increase to 121 poor women in the world by 2030 [14].

Data released by BPS shows that there was an increase in poverty among women in the second semester of 2020 (data as of September 2020) by a percentage of 10.19%, an increase of 0.41% when compared to the data for the first semester of 2020. This condition worsened when, Men who act as income earners also have to 'give up' because of the impact of the



pandemic. There were 2,084,593 of the 116,370 employees laid off during the pandemic, 15.6% were laid off and 40% of their total income decreased, and 7% experienced a decrease in income of up to 50% [9].

If the pandemic lasts for more than half a year, many families will gradually touch the poverty line as a result, women must be able to maximize their role in the domestic sphere (inside the home) or in the public sphere (outside the home) in an effort to maintain the family economy.

In August 2020, the number of unemployed in Indonesia has reached 67.77 million or 4.8 percent [13]. The pandemic conditions faced by Indonesia have the potential to increase the number of unemployed, even the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) projects an increase in the number of unemployed to 4.22 million people [8]. In addition, the slowdown in the education service sector and government services resulted in layoffs [5]. This can then have an impact on increasing the potential for women to lose their jobs. Around 2,385 workers were laid off as of April 16, 2020, with around 762 women accounted for 31% of those laid off. Another thing that needs to be considered is that this condition can increase the number of informal workers. However, the percentage of workers in the informal sector during the pandemic tends to increase from 56.64% in February 2020 to 59.62% in February 2021.

Based on CNBC Indonesia [3] CNBC, the Ministry of Manpower on April 7 2020 noted that more than 1.4 million workers throughout Indonesia were directly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. There are 41,876 formal sector companies that lay off or terminate their workforce as many as 1,052,216 people and there are 36,298 informal sector companies that lay off or terminate their employment as many as 374,851 people.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) in its 2021 Global Gender Gap report stated that, COVID-19 has pushed back the achievement of gender equality globally. It will take at least 133 years to achieve equality between women and men. In Indonesia, the impact of COVID-19 has been felt on access to jobs and the economy, especially for those who work in the informal sector. During COVID-19, 46% of male informal workers lost their jobs, while 39% of women experienced it. The condition of losing their jobs is getting worse for them not getting benefits. Among informal workers, women do not receive the most benefits with a percentage of 80%, while 63% of male workers do not receive benefits [17].

In fact, women who worked in the informal sector before the pandemic conditions had reached up to 61.80 percent (BPS, 2019a). The increase in informal workers among women is of course also directly related to the social security that they do not get. In addition, the possibility of returning to the labor market will be more difficult because there may be labor market limitations [18].

#### 4. Conclusions

Women experience higher difficulties and leave trauma in dealing with COVID-19 compared to men, where domestic violence was experienced by women in 99,911 cases. The double burden experienced by working from home adds to the psychological and physical burden of women, there by potentially increasing the risk of violence against women during the COVID-19. 46% of male informal workers lost their jobs, while 39% of women experienced it. In addition, among informal workers, women do not receive the most benefits with a percentage of 80%, while 63% male workers who do not receive benefits and the possibility of returning to the labor market will be more difficult because there will be labor market limitations. 57 percent of women and 48 percent of men have had their mental health damaged as a result of the spread of COVID-19.

So that double burden of women, domestic violence, mental and reproductive health, mobility limitation, limited space and access to technology is social impact of COVID-19 on gender perspective. Unemployment, termination of work, limited space, and employment prospects are some of the economic consequences of COVID-19 from a gender perspective.

#### Acknowledgement

The author would like to thank Shield 2021 University of Lampung for providing the opportunity to publish this scientific paper. Thanks also to parents who always give encouragement to continue writing scientific papers and learning.

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