



Gender Relations in the Modern Family: A Sociological Study of Changing Domestic and Public Roles

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Abstract

This study examines gender relations in contemporary Indonesian families by analyzing the interaction between domestic roles, public roles, and perceptions of gender equality. A quantitative survey was conducted among 700 respondents representing 350 married couples residing in five major Indonesian cities. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that although childcare is increasingly perceived as a shared responsibility, routine domestic work remains disproportionately performed by women, indicating the persistence of unequal household labor. Women's participation in the public sphere significantly strengthens perceptions of gender equality and demonstrates a stronger influence than domestic role participation. Nevertheless, traditional expectations regarding men as primary breadwinners continue to coexist with increasingly egalitarian attitudes, reflecting an ongoing negotiation between cultural traditions and modern social change. The study contributes to family sociology by providing an integrated empirical framework that explains how domestic and public participation collectively shape gender relations. The findings also offer practical insights for developing family policies and workplace strategies that support more equitable gender relations in contemporary societies.

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of gender relations has become one of the most significant social changes accompanying modernization, urbanization, and economic development across the world. Increasing educational attainment, labor market participation, and digital connectivity have substantially expanded women's opportunities to participate in public life, challenging traditional assumptions that men should dominate productive activities while women remain primarily responsible for domestic work (Williams, 2023; Oemmelen et al., 2026; Yazew, 2024). Nevertheless, numerous studies demonstrate that structural progress toward gender equality has not been fully accompanied by an equal redistribution of unpaid household labor. Instead, many contemporary families continue to experience a persistent imbalance

in domestic responsibilities despite women's growing economic contributions, indicating that modernization does not automatically eliminate patriarchal structures but often reshapes them into more subtle forms (Wulan et al., 2025; Rivera, 2025).

The persistence of unequal domestic labor has become an important concern because families represent the primary institution where social values, gender norms, and power relations are reproduced across generations. Recent international studies consistently report that women continue to perform considerably more unpaid household and caregiving work than men even within dual income households (Thakur & Goyal, 2025; Pacheco Barzallo et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2025). The expansion of female employment has therefore produced a paradox in which women simultaneously assume responsibilities in both productive and reproductive spheres. This phenomenon has been widely described as the double burden, reflecting the coexistence of increasing economic participation and enduring domestic expectations (Hasan, 2025; Shollenberger, 2025). Consequently, the family has become a strategic arena where traditional patriarchal values continuously interact with contemporary egalitarian ideals rather than a social institution that has completely embraced gender equality (Al Chami & Youssef, 2024; Kaur et al., 2024).

Indonesia represents an especially important context for examining these dynamics because rapid economic growth, educational expansion, and urbanization have significantly altered family structures during the last decade. The increasing number of women entering higher education and formal employment has transformed household economic arrangements, making dual income families increasingly common within urban middle class communities (Setyonaluri & Utomo, 2024; Benson & Owens, 2022). However, empirical evidence indicates that women's participation in paid employment has not been matched by proportional increases in men's participation in domestic work. Instead, household responsibilities remain strongly associated with women, while men continue to be socially recognized as primary breadwinners despite the growing importance of women's financial contributions. These conditions illustrate that gender relations in Indonesian families are characterized by continuous negotiation between economic necessity and deeply embedded cultural expectations.

Recent literature further argues that gender inequality within families cannot be understood solely through economic perspectives because it is simultaneously shaped by cultural norms, religious values, institutional arrangements, and symbolic constructions of masculinity and femininity. Labour market participation undoubtedly strengthens women's bargaining positions within households, yet patriarchal norms frequently redefine rather than eliminate gender hierarchies (Haque, 2025; Maqsood et al., 2024). Contemporary scholarship shows that men increasingly participate in childcare and domestic activities; however, such participation is frequently interpreted as voluntary assistance instead of shared responsibility. This symbolic distinction reinforces unequal expectations by positioning household work as fundamentally women's obligation while men's contributions remain discretionary (Vershinina et al., 2026). As a result, public acceptance of gender equality often exceeds its practical implementation within everyday family life.

The growing complexity of family life has also generated renewed scholarly interest in understanding how changing gender identities influence household decision making, emotional labor, and family well-being. Studies published during the last few years demonstrate that younger generations increasingly endorse egalitarian values regarding parenting, financial management, and career development. Nevertheless, traditional gender expectations frequently re-emerge after marriage and particularly following the birth of children, producing unequal divisions of

domestic labor despite egalitarian attitudes before family formation. Evidence from various countries consistently indicates that cultural expectations continue to influence the allocation of unpaid work even among highly educated couples, suggesting that structural modernization alone cannot fully transform household gender relations (Luo, 2025; Jiang & Zhu, 2025; Wulan et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have substantially advanced understanding of gender inequality within families, several important research gaps remain. First, much of the existing literature emphasizes either women's labor market participation or domestic workload without simultaneously examining how domestic and public roles jointly influence perceptions of gender equality. Second, many empirical investigations focus primarily on Western societies, whereas evidence from Southeast Asian countries, particularly Indonesia, remains relatively limited despite their distinctive sociocultural and religious contexts. Third, previous Indonesian studies predominantly employ qualitative approaches that provide rich contextual understanding but offer limited quantitative evidence regarding the statistical relationships among domestic participation, public participation, and perceived gender equality within modern urban families.

The present study addresses these limitations by integrating domestic roles, public roles, and perceptions of gender equality into a single analytical framework using quantitative evidence collected from 700 respondents representing 350 urban married couples across five major Indonesian cities. Rather than conceptualizing modernization as a linear process toward equality, this research considers gender relations as continuous social negotiations influenced by economic participation, cultural expectations, and everyday household practices. This integrated perspective enables a more comprehensive understanding of how domestic responsibilities and public participation simultaneously shape perceptions of equality within contemporary Indonesian families.

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical examination of the simultaneous contribution of domestic and public role participation toward gender equality perceptions within Indonesian modern families using large scale quantitative evidence. Unlike previous studies that separately discuss domestic inequality or women's employment, this research quantitatively evaluates the relative influence of both dimensions while situating the findings within the broader sociological debates concerning patriarchy, gender negotiation, and family transformation. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the distribution of domestic and public roles among urban Indonesian families, examine their influence on perceptions of gender equality, and provide empirical evidence that contributes to contemporary discussions regarding family sociology, gender studies, and social transformation in developing societies.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive explanatory survey design to investigate gender relations within contemporary Indonesian families. The quantitative approach was selected because it enables the systematic measurement of latent constructs related to domestic roles, public roles, and perceptions of gender equality while allowing statistical examination of the relationships among these variables. Survey research is widely recognized as an appropriate method for examining social attitudes and behavioral patterns within large populations because it provides standardized data collection procedures and facilitates generalization of findings. The descriptive component was used to portray existing patterns of gender role distribution, whereas the explanatory component aimed to examine the influence of domestic and public role participation on perceptions of gender equality among married couples.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted in five major metropolitan cities in Indonesia that represent regions experiencing rapid urbanization, increasing female labor force participation, and the expansion of middle-class households. These urban environments provide an appropriate context for examining changing gender relations because modernization, economic transformation, and educational advancement have accelerated the renegotiation of family roles. The target population consisted of legally married couples aged between 25 and 45 years who had been married for at least three years. This criterion was established to ensure that respondents had accumulated sufficient marital experience to develop relatively stable patterns of domestic and public role allocation.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to recruit respondents who fulfilled the predetermined inclusion criteria. Eligible participants were middle-income households in which one or both spouses were engaged in either formal or informal employment and had experience balancing family responsibilities with public activities. Based on these criteria, the study obtained data from 700 respondents representing 350 married couples. This sample size was considered adequate to produce statistically reliable estimates while representing urban middle-class families with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of approximately 5%, which is commonly accepted in social science research.

Data Collection Procedures

Primary data were collected through a structured online questionnaire administered between respondents in each participating household. The questionnaire was developed based on contemporary literature concerning family sociology, gender relations, and household division of labor. All measurement items employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument consisted of four sections. The first section collected respondents' demographic characteristics, including age, education, employment status, occupation, and number of children. The second section measured domestic role participation through indicators covering household chores, childcare responsibilities, and household management. The third section evaluated public role participation by assessing employment, career development, income contribution, and social participation outside the household. The final section measured perceptions of gender equality, including shared decision-making, financial management, labor division, and perceptions regarding equal rights between husbands and wives.

Prior to full-scale data collection, the questionnaire underwent preliminary evaluation to ensure clarity, comprehensibility, and contextual suitability for Indonesian respondents. Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the research process. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate after receiving information regarding the study objectives, confidentiality procedures, and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage. No personally identifiable information was recorded, and all collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

Variable Measurement

The study examined three principal constructs. Domestic role participation represented respondents' involvement in unpaid household activities, including cooking, cleaning, childcare, and household management. Public role participation referred to engagement in productive activities outside the household, including employment, career development, and economic contribution to family welfare. The dependent variable, perceived gender equality, reflected respondents' perceptions regarding fairness in household decision-making, financial management, role

distribution, and mutual respect between spouses. Table 1 summarizes the operational definitions and measurement indicators used in this study.

Table 1. Operational Definitions of Research Variables

Variable	Indicators	Scale
Domestic Role	Household chores, childcare, household management	Likert (1–5)
Public Role	Employment, career participation, economic contribution, social participation	Likert (1–5)
Gender Equality	Shared decision-making, financial equality, equal rights, role negotiation	Likert (1–5)

Source: Developed by the authors based on contemporary family sociology and gender literature, 2025

As shown in Table 1, each construct was operationalized using multiple indicators adapted from previous gender and family studies to ensure conceptual consistency and measurement adequacy.

Data Analysis and Instrument Quality

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics through descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were calculated to describe respondents' demographic characteristics and the distribution of domestic and public roles. Pearson correlation analysis was subsequently employed to examine the relationships among domestic roles, public roles, and perceptions of gender equality. Multiple linear regression analysis was then conducted to determine the relative contribution of domestic and public role participation to perceived gender equality while estimating the explanatory power of the proposed model.

Instrument validity was evaluated using expert judgment from scholars specializing in sociology and gender studies, followed by empirical validity testing using corrected item-total correlation coefficients. Measurement items with correlation coefficients greater than 0.30 were considered valid. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with coefficients exceeding 0.70 indicating satisfactory reliability. These validation procedures ensured that the research instrument consistently measured the intended constructs and produced reliable empirical evidence for subsequent statistical analyses. Overall, the methodological framework adopted in this study provides a robust basis for examining the dynamics of gender relations and the interaction between domestic and public roles within contemporary Indonesian families.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the transformation of gender relations within contemporary Indonesian urban families. The analysis is organized into several sections to systematically present the empirical evidence obtained from the survey. The discussion begins with respondents' demographic characteristics, followed by the distribution of domestic roles, public roles, and perceptions of gender equality. Finally, inferential statistical analyses are presented to examine the relationships between domestic participation, public participation, and perceived gender equality. This sequential presentation enables readers to understand both the descriptive patterns of gender role allocation and the statistical relationships among the study variables before these findings are interpreted in the subsequent discussion section.

Respondent Characteristics

The study involved 700 respondents representing 350 married couples residing in five major metropolitan areas in Indonesia. All participants met the inclusion criteria of being legally married, aged between 25 and 45 years, and having been married for at least three years.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 700)

Characteristics	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	50.0
	Female	50.0
Age	25–30 years	28.0
	31–35 years	40.0
	36–45 years	32.0
Education	High School/Diploma	20.0
	Bachelor's Degree	58.0
	Master's Degree	22.0

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2025

Table 2 demonstrates that the respondents were equally distributed between male and female participants, ensuring balanced representation of husbands and wives in the analysis. The largest proportion of respondents belonged to the 31–35 years age category (40%), followed by those aged 36–45 years (32%) and 25–30 years (28%). This age composition reflects families in their productive life stage, where employment responsibilities, childcare, and household management are simultaneously experienced. Such demographic characteristics are appropriate for investigating gender role negotiation because couples within these age groups generally encounter the greatest challenges in balancing domestic obligations with professional careers.

Educational attainment also indicates that the respondents largely represent Indonesia's emerging urban middle class. More than half of the participants (58%) possessed bachelor's degrees, while an additional 22% held postgraduate qualifications. Only one-fifth had completed education at the high school or diploma level. This relatively high educational profile suggests that respondents were exposed to broader perspectives concerning gender equality, labor market participation, and shared family responsibilities. Nevertheless, educational advancement alone does not necessarily imply that egalitarian practices are fully implemented within households, making further examination of domestic and public role distribution particularly relevant.

Distribution of Domestic Roles

The first analytical component examined respondents' perceptions regarding the allocation of domestic responsibilities within the household. Three principal indicators were assessed, including responsibility for household chores, fairness in domestic labor distribution, and shared childcare responsibilities.

Table 3. Distribution of Domestic Roles

Statement	Mean	SD
I am more responsible for household chores	3.92	0.88
Domestic work is divided fairly between husband and wife	3.45	0.91
Childcare is a shared responsibility	4.10	0.76

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2025

As presented in Table 3, respondents reported the highest agreement with the statement that childcare is a shared responsibility ($M = 4.10$; $SD = 0.76$). This finding indicates that parenting responsibilities are increasingly perceived as collaborative activities rather than exclusively maternal duties. The relatively high score reflects changing social expectations in urban Indonesian families, where fathers are becoming more actively involved in children's development.

Despite this positive trend, the distribution of other domestic activities reveals a different pattern. Respondents also reported relatively high agreement with the statement indicating greater responsibility for household chores ($M = 3.92$; $SD = 0.88$), suggesting that routine domestic work remains unevenly distributed. Furthermore, the perception that domestic labor is fairly divided between spouses obtained the lowest mean score ($M = 3.45$; $SD = 0.91$), indicating only moderate agreement regarding equality in household responsibilities.

These findings collectively suggest that while childcare has increasingly become a shared responsibility, routine household tasks continue to exhibit noticeable gender asymmetry. The coexistence of collaborative parenting and unequal domestic labor indicates that family modernization has progressed unevenly across different dimensions of household life. Consequently, the transition toward gender equality appears more evident in childcare practices than in everyday household maintenance activities.

Distribution of Public Roles

The second component investigated respondents' perceptions concerning gender roles in the public sphere, particularly regarding employment, economic contribution, and career recognition.

Table 4. Distribution of Public Roles

Statement	Mean	SD
Husband is still considered the primary breadwinner	4.05	0.79
Wife's income contributes significantly to family welfare	4.22	0.74
A wife's career is as important as her husband's career	3.87	0.83

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2025

The findings indicate substantial recognition of women's economic participation within contemporary families. The highest mean score was observed for the statement acknowledging that wives' income significantly contributes to family welfare ($M = 4.22$; $SD = 0.74$). This result demonstrates that respondents increasingly recognize women's employment as an essential component of household economic stability.

Respondents simultaneously maintained strong agreement with the perception that husbands remain the primary breadwinners ($M = 4.05$; $SD = 0.79$). This pattern reflects the persistence of traditional gender norms despite the growing prevalence of dual-income households. Although women's financial contributions have become increasingly indispensable, symbolic recognition of men's economic leadership continues to shape family perceptions. Similarly, respondents expressed relatively positive attitudes toward the importance of women's careers ($M = 3.87$; $SD = 0.83$). Nevertheless, this score remains lower than the perceived importance of women's financial contribution, suggesting that career equality has not yet been fully normalized within household expectations. Overall, these findings reveal that economic modernization has expanded women's participation in public life while traditional breadwinner ideology continues to coexist with emerging egalitarian values.

Perceptions of Gender Equality

Respondents' perceptions regarding gender equality were measured through three indicators reflecting decision-making, financial management, and family harmony.

Table 5. Perceptions of Gender Equality

Statement	Mean	SD
Important family decisions are made jointly	4.18	0.71
Husband and wife have equal rights in managing finances	3.95	0.82
Gender equality improves family harmony	4.30	0.68

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2025

Table 5 demonstrates generally positive attitudes toward gender equality among the respondents. The strongest agreement was found for the statement that gender equality improves family harmony ($M = 4.30$; $SD = 0.68$), indicating widespread acceptance of egalitarian relationships as beneficial for household well-being. Respondents also reported high agreement that important family decisions should be made jointly ($M = 4.18$; $SD = 0.71$), reflecting increasing support for collaborative decision-making processes. Equal rights in financial management likewise received positive evaluations ($M = 3.95$; $SD = 0.82$), although this indicator obtained the lowest score among the three equality dimensions.

Collectively, these results indicate that egalitarian ideals have gained considerable acceptance among urban Indonesian families. Nevertheless, comparison with previous findings reveals an important discrepancy between normative beliefs and actual household practices. While respondents strongly support equality in principle, domestic labor remains only moderately shared, and husbands continue to be viewed as the principal breadwinners. This inconsistency suggests that changing attitudes toward equality have progressed more rapidly than behavioral transformation within everyday family life.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To examine the influence of domestic and public role participation on perceptions of gender equality, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Results

Independent Variable	Beta (β)	Sig.
Domestic Role	0.33	0.000
Public Role	0.41	0.000
R^2	0.55	

Source: Primary survey data processed by the authors, 2025

The regression model demonstrates that both independent variables significantly predict perceptions of gender equality ($p < 0.001$). Public role participation exhibits the strongest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.41$), indicating that increased engagement in employment, economic contribution, and public activities is associated with stronger perceptions of gender equality among respondents. Domestic role participation also significantly influences perceptions of equality ($\beta = 0.33$), although its contribution is comparatively smaller than that of public role participation. This finding suggests that while equitable household responsibilities remain important, experiences within the public sphere exert greater influence on respondents' understanding of gender equality.

The model explains 55% of the variance in perceptions of gender equality ($R^2 = 0.55$), indicating substantial explanatory power. Nevertheless, approximately 45% of the

variance remains unexplained, suggesting that additional factors beyond domestic and public participation contribute to gender equality perceptions.

Negotiating Gender Equality Between Traditional Values and Modern Family Transformation

The findings of this study demonstrate that gender relations in contemporary Indonesian families are characterized by gradual transformation rather than complete structural change. Although respondents generally expressed positive perceptions of gender equality, the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities and the continuing recognition of men as primary breadwinners indicate that traditional gender norms remain influential. These findings suggest that modernization has not replaced patriarchal family structures but has instead reshaped them into more flexible and negotiated forms. Rather than representing a linear transition toward equality, contemporary family life reflects an ongoing interaction between economic modernization, cultural expectations, and evolving gender identities. This pattern is increasingly observed in many developing societies where social change progresses more rapidly in public institutions than within private household arrangements.

One of the most important findings concerns the persistence of unequal domestic labor despite increasing female participation in paid employment. Although respondents perceived childcare as a shared responsibility, household chores remained disproportionately associated with women. This finding supports recent evidence showing that women's entry into the labor market has not been accompanied by an equivalent redistribution of unpaid domestic work. Studies conducted during the post-pandemic period similarly report that women continue to perform a larger proportion of household responsibilities regardless of employment status, reflecting the persistence of the "second shift" within dual-income families (Borah Hazarika & Das, 2021; Graham et al., 2021). More recent research on Indonesian urban families likewise concludes that domestic and emotional labor continues to be socially constructed as women's responsibility, while men's participation is frequently interpreted as voluntary assistance rather than equal obligation.

The persistence of unequal domestic responsibilities can be interpreted through the perspective of social reproduction theory, which argues that unpaid care work remains essential for sustaining economic productivity while remaining largely invisible within formal economic systems. Contemporary feminist political economy suggests that modernization has expanded women's participation in productive employment without fundamentally transforming the organization of reproductive labor. Consequently, women increasingly perform dual responsibilities by simultaneously contributing to household income and maintaining primary responsibility for domestic work (Mezzadri et al., 2022; Ossome, 2021; Deshpande & Kabeer, 2024). The present findings reinforce this perspective by demonstrating that modernization has increased women's public participation while preserving traditional expectations regarding domestic caregiving. Therefore, family transformation should not be interpreted solely through labor market participation but also through the continuing organization of unpaid household work.

The findings further indicate that women's participation in the public sphere exerts a stronger influence on perceptions of gender equality than domestic role participation. This result highlights the growing importance of women's economic contribution in redefining family relationships. As women increasingly participate in formal employment and contribute substantially to household income, traditional gender hierarchies become subject to continuous negotiation. Recent comparative studies similarly report that women's employment strengthens bargaining power

within households and contributes to more egalitarian decision-making processes, although symbolic male authority frequently remains intact. Sánchez-Mira (2024), for example, demonstrates that female breadwinner households continue to negotiate gender expectations despite substantial changes in economic contribution, suggesting that financial equality alone does not automatically eliminate patriarchal norms.

The continued perception of men as primary breadwinners despite widespread recognition of women's economic contribution illustrates what gender scholars describe as adaptive patriarchy. Rather than disappearing, patriarchal structures evolve by accommodating women's employment while maintaining men's symbolic authority within families. Recent scholarship argues that contemporary masculinity is increasingly negotiated through legitimacy rather than direct dominance, allowing traditional gender hierarchies to persist in more subtle forms (Messerschmidt & Bridges, 2024). Similarly, comparative evidence from Europe and North America demonstrates that public acceptance of women's employment has increased substantially, yet cultural expectations regarding men's economic leadership continue to influence family identities (Miller et al., 2021). The present study extends these observations by showing that Indonesian families simultaneously recognize women's financial importance while preserving symbolic representations of men as household leaders.

Another important contribution of this study concerns the distinction between attitudes toward equality and actual family practices. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that gender equality contributes to family harmony and supported joint decision-making, yet these egalitarian values were not consistently reflected in the distribution of household responsibilities. This discrepancy suggests that normative acceptance of equality has developed more rapidly than behavioral transformation. Similar findings have recently been reported in studies examining modern family dynamics, where younger couples increasingly endorse egalitarian principles while continuing to reproduce conventional patterns of domestic labor due to cultural expectations and institutional constraints.

This inconsistency between beliefs and practices illustrates that gender equality should be understood as an ongoing social negotiation rather than a completed social achievement. Families continuously balance competing expectations arising from employment demands, cultural traditions, religious values, and economic pressures. Consequently, equality is experienced through everyday negotiation rather than complete redistribution of power. This interpretation complements recent sociological research emphasizing that contemporary families increasingly combine traditional and egalitarian arrangements instead of fully adopting either model. Such hybrid configurations demonstrate that modernization is inherently uneven, allowing different dimensions of family life to transform at different rates.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to family sociology by integrating domestic participation, public participation, and perceptions of gender equality within a single empirical framework. Previous studies frequently examined household labor or labor market participation separately. By simultaneously analyzing both dimensions, the present study demonstrates that gender equality is multidimensional and cannot be adequately explained through domestic or public roles alone. The stronger statistical influence of public participation indicates that economic engagement has become an increasingly significant mechanism through which gender identities and family relationships are reconstructed. At the same time, persistent domestic inequality illustrates the continuing importance of cultural norms in shaping family practices. This integrated perspective advances existing discussions regarding the relationship between modernization, patriarchy, and family transformation.

The results also have implications for family development programs and policy makers. First, policies to promote gender equality in the sharing of unpaid care work need to be accompanied by policy to promote women's work. Increase in paternity leave, flexible working practices and providing affordable childcare, can help ease the burden on women and increase the involvement of fathers. Secondly, gender equality education must reach both men and women as sustainable change in the family requires changing shared social expectations, not only empowering women. Third, workplace policies should acknowledge that family obligations are still an important influence on employees' health and career prospects, and that family-friendly workplace practices are becoming more critical to the attainment of substantive gender equality. The implications are consistent with recent recommendations that focus on a combination of labour market reform, family policy and cultural change to move towards more equitable relations within the family.

This study has novelty because it shows that the roles in the private sphere and public sphere are not considered as different dimensions when discussing gender equality in families in Indonesia. Rather, the results indicate that public engagement is now more closely linked to egalitarian attitudes than are domestic roles, which are relatively unchanging. The double evolution suggests that the process of family modernization is not a simple evolution but a process of simultaneous progress and continuity. In this context, the study provides empirical data on the impact of modernization, which continues to unfold and reshape gender relations in the process of ongoing negotiations between the new structures and old cultural norms, especially in fast-growing urban societies.

There are some drawbacks to these contributions, however. This study is restricted to middle class urban families, and results cannot be generalized to other rural families or families with varying socioeconomic statuses. In addition, the cross-sectional design limits understanding of gender relations to a single point in time and does not allow for an explanation of the evolution of the roles of the family members over time, or for gender relations in the context of broader social change. Using self-reported questionnaire data may also cause social desirability bias as the attitudes participants express in questionnaires may be more egalitarian than those they would express in real life.

Longitudinal research designs should thus be used in future to explore the shifts in gender relations over time and to investigate the impact of economic transition, parenthood and generational differences on the negotiation of household roles. Comparative studies across rural and urban communities, different cultural areas and cross-national samples would further reinforce the understanding of how the institutions and religious and cultural context influences family transformation. Furthermore, a mix of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews would allow for a greater understanding of the common practice of negotiation between different members within contemporary families, and how traditional values are negotiated with new ideals of gender equality. These would help in developing a wider body of knowledge around the complex evolution of the family and gender justice associated with modernization in different social settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that gender relations in contemporary Indonesian urban families are undergoing gradual transformation through continuous negotiation between traditional patriarchal values and emerging egalitarian ideals. Although women's participation in education, employment, and economic contribution has significantly increased, the distribution of domestic responsibilities remains uneven, indicating that modernization has not entirely restructured household gender roles. Public role participation was found to exert a stronger influence on perceptions of

gender equality than domestic role participation, suggesting that women's economic engagement has become a key driver of changing family relationships. These findings contribute theoretically by integrating domestic and public dimensions into a comprehensive framework for understanding gender relations within modern families.

Practically, the results highlight the importance of promoting family policies that encourage shared domestic responsibilities, gender-sensitive workplace practices, and educational initiatives supporting equal partnership within households. Nevertheless, this study is limited to urban middle-class families and employs a cross-sectional design, restricting broader generalization and causal interpretation. Future studies should incorporate longitudinal and comparative approaches across different cultural, socioeconomic, and regional contexts while combining quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics of gender relations in contemporary families.

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