

Does Parental Burnout Occur in Single Mother? Understanding Parental Burnout among Muslim Single Mother

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ABSTRACT

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Parental burnout is a condition of intense fatigue related to the role of being a parent, which impacts caregiving and increases the risk of maltreatment and child neglect. Previous research has shown that parenting stress is influenced by culture and religious beliefs. Therefore, this study aimed to explore parental burnout among Muslim single mothers. The study involved three participants, who were recruited through an open advertisement. The research used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method. The results of the study revealed that all three participants experienced parental burnout in the form of exhaustion from their role as parents due to the dual burden of being both a mother and the primary breadwinner. The aspects of parental burnout they experienced were emotional exhaustion, a sense of contrast with their previous self, and a feeling of being fed up. However, emotional detachment was not found in any of the three participants. This study showed that single mothers experienced emotional exhaustion caused by their dual roles as caregivers and breadwinners. This condition affected their perspective on ideal parenting and lead to feelings of being fed up.

INTRODUCTION

In the Surah An-nisa verses 34, Allah swt says:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنَاطٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

“Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allāh has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allāh would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike lightly]. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allāh is ever Exalted and Grand.”

In this verse, it is interpreted that the role of men in the household is as a leader in the family and has responsible for his wife and children, reflected in the attention to his wife, sustenance and speech (Anwar & Fauziah, 2019). As the head of the household, men or husbands have the responsibility for the survival of the family and make important decisions. When a woman gets a divorce or the death of her husband, then the woman is fully responsible for the family's economic life, making her own decisions without discussing her partner and raising children (Hutasoit &



[Brahmana, 2021](#)). This condition makes single parents, especially women, have to play a dual role so that they are not able to provide adequate care ([Angin, 2021](#)). On the other hand, the assumption in Indonesian society that women who have dual roles working in the public or domestic sector are considered to be of poor quality so that they do not receive balanced material rewards ([Puteri & Yuliarmi, 2022](#)).

The term "head of household" refers to a person responsible for daily life management, typically a man. However, in reality, the head of the family does not always refer to a man or husband, as there are households led by women. A report from the Central Statistics Agency ([2024](#)) shows that 12.73% of women are the head of households in Indonesia. The data shows the percentage of heads of households and the number of children they have as follows: 26.65% with one child, 46.41% with 2-3 children, 21.22% with 4-5 children, and 5.72% with 6 children. From this data, it can be concluded that single mothers in Indonesia take on the role of head of household and are responsible for their children's lives.

Previous findings showed that single mothers have higher stress than married women who live with her spouse ([Sartor et al., 2023](#)). The presence and role of the husband has an impact on reducing stress on working mothers ([Fitri & Nashori, 2021](#)). Emotion-based coping strategies such as exercising self-control or being patient have little effect on parenting stress ([Nihayah et al., 2023](#)). Children raised by single mothers have risk of low emotional well-being, developmental delays and child delinquency ([Ghani et al., 2023](#)). Other risks are chronic health problems in children ([Nishioka et al., 2021](#)) and suboptimal nutritional problems, so it risks to be stunting and other developmental disabilities ([Sari, 2021](#)). It can be concluded that single mother care is less than optimal due to the double burden that results in inadequate fulfillment of children's needs.

[Sartor et al. \(2023\)](#) believed that several stress factors for single parents are low self-confidence in parenting, having a child with disabilities, low perception of social support, having a new partner and the age of the youngest child. Low self-resilience makes it difficult to adapt to single mother status ([Afdal et al., 2022](#)), another source of stress is the economic demands to support oneself and one's children ([Azizah et al., 2022](#)). Sources of stress that come from internal factors or external factors develop into chronic stress. Chronic stress in parents causes emotional exhaustion that not only affects parents, but also parent-child interactions, child development and self-well-being ([Mikolajczak & Roskam, 2018](#)).

Chronic parenting fatigue is called parental burnout, this term was revealed since 1983 to describe the condition of parents who are too committed to giving everything for their children, so experience fatigue because the conditions do not meet expectations. The first scientific research on parental burnout was initiated by [Roskam et al \(2018\)](#) regarding the condition of parents who experience burnout and depersonalization. Initially [Roskam \(2018\)](#) assumed that parental burnout was a type of burnout that occurs in employees. [Roskam \(2018\)](#) found that the condition of parental burnout was similar to the condition of burnout in employees such as feeling emotionally exhausted, maintaining emotional distance from work, and feelings of incompetence. From his findings, he reported that the significant difference between parental burnout and burnout in employees lies in commitment, being a parent does not have leave or can quit like employees. Parental burnout research continues to look at the condition of parental burnout through an inductive approach. There are three aspects of parental burnout, namely extraordinary exhaustion, emotional distance and ineffectiveness in the role of parents ([Roskam et al, 2018](#)).

[Mikolajczak and Roskam \(2019\)](#) clinically examined cases of parental burnout as a trigger for increased ideas of running away from parents, neglectful behavior in parenting, and violence against

one's own children. Research findings show that parental burnout is more likely to occur in women than in men (Millones et al., 2022; Aunola et al., 2020a; Arikan et al., 2020). This is because childcare practices focus more on the role of the mother, while the father is considered a figure who provides life. The traditional view that separates the roles of fathers and mothers in domestic and public work has shifted. Women's participation in the workforce is already high, but childcare is still the responsibility of women as mothers.

Research on parental burnout in the Muslim community is still limited. Islamic paradigm gives responsibility to the father as the breadwinner, when the father dies, the mother becomes the breadwinner of the family, there is a change in structure and roles in the family. Parental burnout is a condition that is at risk of occurring in parents, but prevalent in single parents. Previous research findings have examined more parental burnout of parents with children with disabilities (Findling et al., 2023). Parental burnout is a result of unresolved and chronic parenting stress. Research indicates that parenting stress is influenced by the culture of residence (Lo et al., 2023) and an individual's religious beliefs (Henderson et al., 2016). Therefore, the dynamics of parental burnout and the aspects involved may differ across various cultures and religious beliefs.

In Islam, ideal parenting is based on the principles of compassion, justice, responsibility, and the development of good moral character in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. Parents play a crucial role in educating and guiding their children. The father acts as the head of the family, the provider, and a role model for moral and spiritual behavior. The mother serves as the primary educator, helping to shape the child's character and emotions. The absence of the father's role and the burden of parenting placed solely on the mother can lead to suboptimal parenting and trigger parental burnout. This study explores the dynamics of parental burnout among Muslim single mothers.

METHODS

This study used qualitative approach to explain in more detail the dynamic of parental burnout among moslem single mother. Qualitative research is a type of research whose research findings are not obtained from a statistical calculation process or a certain formula to understand contextual characteristics by using researchers as a natural part of the research. Qualitative research explains more, describes more and analyzes more using an inductive approach. Qualitative research prioritizes the process and meaning based on the respondent's point of view.

The qualitative research method for this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology aims to explain or reveal the meaning of a phenomenon or experience based on the consciousness that occurs in respondents (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The phenomenology used is based on Edmund Husserl's view, he believed that phenomenology is at the level of human consciousness to examine the experience of consciousness in depth (Purwanto, 2022). The search for respondents was carried out by providing advertisements in social media distributed since April-May 2023. The criteria for respondents in this study were: 1) single mothers due to divorce or death of a partner; 2) before being with a partner, not the main income earner of the family (breadwinner); 3) Raising children and living with children full time; 4) experiencing fatigue that impacts daily life; 5) willing to participate in the study until completion.

There were three respondents who participated in this research: they signed an informed consent which outlined the term and condition, full participation until completion, confidentiality of the respondents, and a prize of IDR 250,000 (\$16,16) as a reward for being interviewed. The

requirements to be a respondent in the study are being a single mother and experiencing daily stress related to parenting and work. Respondents who registered reported experiencing burnout related to parenting. The process was carried out from June-September 2023 using online or offline interview. The implementation was completed in October 2023, and the condition of the respondents was monitored afterward. If any issues affecting the development of parenting are identified, they will be referred to an expert. This is outlined in the informed consent of research.

The analysis in this study used an interactive model analysis developed by Miles & Huberman (Purwanto, 2022). Nuriman (2021) described the stages of interactive model analysis, including data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusions/verification. Nuriman (2021) explained that Interpretative Phenomenology commonly known as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research is a method to understanding a phenomenon in a social context naturally using in-depth communication interaction between researchers and respondent. This study used phenomenological approach because this study required detailed descriptions, in-depth analysis, and aimed to reveal the substance of the participant's experience as an individual who experiences events or phenomena directly in terms of parental burnout conditions in single parent. This study is an initial qualitative research on parental burnout in Indonesia so it can be a reference for further research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Respondents

There were three respondents in this study who are single mothers with different conditions. Respondent 1 was 53 years old with three children in young adulthood. She has been a single mother for 9 years due to the sudden death of her husband, there was no previous chronic illness. Her last education was high school, her current job is a freelancer in various agencies, both NGOs and government. She was confused, shocked and did not know what to do the first time she became single mother because so far respondent 1 has depended on her husband for financial matters and discussions about childcare. This condition made her lock herself in her room for several days, something that awakened her because her children needed money for school, so she looked for work to earn money starting from selling clothes and food. This condition is in accordance with the statement of respondent 1:

“My husband died because of illness. The illness was not serious, he died from 2 days of fever. He was taken to the hospital and could not be helped anymore. From 2014 until now I had been a single parent” (Respondent 1, Mrs. ES).

“The first time I was in shock. Definitely shocked, what should I do? At that time, I didn't know anything. Finally, I was surviving day by day. Finally, I realized and started to wake up when I knew my kid would need money for school, my youngest kid was going to continue to junior high school, my second kid was going to continue to high school. (I) realized I had to get up, trying to strengthen the family economy.” (Respondent 1, Mrs. ES)

The second respondent named RO was 33 years old with two children who were still in primary school. The reason to be single mother was divorce; she has been a single mother for 2.5 years. She holds a master degree and worked at a private company as marketing officer. The process of becoming a single mother has been prepared thoroughly because she sued her husband for divorce. Before deciding on the divorce process, RO had tried to improve their relationship. She gave her husband a chance and she expected that he would change but he did not.

From the statement of RO, the decision to become a single mother had been prepared well. To be a single mother was planned as part of her life choice.

"I feel there is something wrong in my home life, as a married couple, our life's principles cannot be continued any more" (Respondent 2, Mrs. RO).

"I gave the opportunity for him to change since 2019. In 2019, I hoped that he would change, he promised to change, but he did not. The next year, I tried to change my self so that there would be no regrets. I felt like something was wrong. I tried to give in, I change my self as what my husband's wishes, I really tried to fix our married life. After I change my self a lot, he was still like that. We still argued and fought. It seemed like we still go around in circles like that. Fighting, arguing, plus the principles that I could not understand" (Respondent 2, Mrs. RO).

The third respondent named LN was 31 years old with one toddler, and had been married for almost 2 years. The reason for becoming a single mother was because her husband died. The last education was a master's degree, the current job is part time lecturer at a private university. The reaction when becoming a single mother was sad because she did not expect it, especially since her marriage had not yet reached two years. This condition makes her still grieving, worried about the future of her children and financial problems.

"Frankly speaking, this role was very difficult, especially since my husband passed away. I was still adapting to this situation. Our happiness as a complete family was very short. Before he passed away, he didn't get serious illness. (Respondent 3, Mrs. LN).

"This situation made me shaken. The first thing that I thought about was what would happen after this? what would life be like after he passed away? How would I raise my own child without him as breadwinner? Honestly, I am anxious at that time cause of financial problem. I wasn't working, so I couldn't handle what would happen after he passed away." (Respondent 3, Mrs. LN)

The respondents' responses are described as follows:

Table 1. Responses to Be Single Mother

Name	Responses	Efforts	Results
ES	Shock, confused, didn't know what to do for a few days.	Worked as freelancer, street vendor for living	Be a breadwinner, she could pay her kid's tuition.
RO	Preparing herself to be single mother as life's choice.	Tried to improve their relationship, she changed her self.	No change from her husband's behavior. She felt something wrong in her married life.
LN	Shocked, sad, did not believe in husband's sudden death.	Tried to release her negative emotion and accepted the situation.	Until now, she still tried to accept and adjust her life without husband.

The findings of this study captured the phenomenon of parental burnout in single parents which consists of three aspects: 1) emotional exhaustion, feelings of tiredness and drained energy from caring for and playing the role of a parent; 2) contrast with the parent's previous self was characterized by a different assessment of parenting expectations; 3) feelings of being fed up with the parental role, was marked by feelings of disgust or boredom with the role of parents; 4) emotional distance from children was marked by reduced interaction with children, relationships limited to non-emotional instrumental needs.

One of the responses of parental burnout is emotional exhaustion, which is a feeling of tiredness because one feels physically and emotionally drained due to the role of a parent (Mikolajczak et al., 2019). Mrs. ES has three children who are still in school so they need funds and

still need supervision to be fed and taken to school. This is in accordance with the statement of Mrs. ES.

"From the time I woke up, I immediately do activities to earn a living, I also have to do house keeping, the whole house must be tidied up . I provide food for my kids, then take the children to school, after that I also have to think about earning a living for tommorow. I made food and sold it. I did activities like yesterday, I stayed up late, sold it. Well, that's what it feels like. If you say tired, yes very tired because all my activities are done repeatedly" (Mrs. ES, respondent 1).

Mrs. ES recognized her fatigue as breadwiner, but she felt there is no choice, if she did not work it would impact their life. Her main goal is working for family needs and finance the children. She hoped her kids can get the same opportunity to study like other kids who have complete parents.

Yes, i'm tired, certainly. However, when I just relax, how could I pay for my kid's need? When my kid says, she needs money to buy books, I had to pay it. However, if I did not work, just being lazy, maybe I won't be able to pay for these books. So there, being motivated, being innovative means that I have to work hard, try, and try. It would make our family won't lack of money. So I think, I dont want to waste time. I just work, send my kids to school like normal parents did. Our life will be the same as other people who have complete parents, even though I am a single parent and my job is only freelance. It's motivating me" (Mrs. ES, respondent 1).

Second responent was Mrs RO who became a single mother because of divorce. There were differences in her life before and after becoming a single mother. Previously she was fulltime housewife, she did not earn money, and had plenty time to care for her children, now she has to work to support her children because her ex-husband does not provide for her children's need. This is in accordance with the statement of Mrs. RO.

"When I got married, I resigned from my job, so I can focus to be housewife. Now, I automatically had to earn own money for our daily life. I started looking for work and got a job, i got salary for our daily life. My ex-husband could not give allowance for my kid to provide for them."

(Respondent 2 RO).

This condition means RO has to work double job as the breadwiner while taking care of her child's needs. As a single mother, she also had to solve her child's problems alone, such as school problems, health, and parenting. This is in accordance with Mrs. Ro statement:

"When I worked, I might feel like I cannot totally do my parenting duties. I have to share my time with my job, isn't? So I felt guilty to my kids, cause I can not be there for them. I must make quick decision, for example, school started yesterday, I worked in the office. Suddenly, I got news there's a little problem in school about class distribution. Some parents argued to get one favorite class for their kids. I felt like I have a double responsibility, right? "I had to work, I still had to take care of this problem, I must do my parenting duties for my kids at home. How tired I am." (Respondent 2,

Mrs. RO).

Another fatigue condition that Mrs RO experienced besides being a single mother, is social pressure on her status as a single mother, apart from that she considers the psychological condition of her child with divorced parents.

" When I chose divorce, there was still a lot of consideration, thinking about the child's mentality, thinking about social status in society. Now, I do not think about what people think of me as a single mom, so is it a problem for them? I do not think too much about what people say, I just enjoy it. In the past, I'm afraid about what people think of single moms. I'm worried when my kids enroll

school, some people will ask 'why don't they have father?'. They were only accompanied by their mother. But now it seems like I don't think about those things too much anymore." (Respondent 2, Mrs RO).

Respondent 3, Mrs LN acknowledged the physical and emotional exhaustion felt by being a single mother because she had to carry out two roles alone. She had responsibility for household chores, paying for the family's needs and was involved in parenting.

"I do housework chores definitely, because I don't have maid, so most of the responsibilities in the house, such as cooking and cleaning the house, are my jobs. So, the fatigue is piling up like that. Take for an example, I also have to pay for my child's school fees, so it's like the burden is all piling up on my head. I'm physically tired of having to clean, having to cook. I also tidy up my clothes like, wash clothes, tidy up clothes, but then my child gets fussy. When I start to work in front of my laptop, my kid cries, she doesn't want her mother to work, she wants me in the bed with her. Honestly, I got emotional and confused. Oh My God! I hope my kid understands me, I'm alone and breadwinner now (Respondent 3, Mrs. LN).

Mrs LN has a toddler so she still needs her as mom, even though there is a figure who can help, such as a grandfather or grandmother. Her kid always tries to get her attention, it reduces her rest time and makes her respond negatively to her kid's behavior.

"Sometimes I'm tired. I want to rest; I want to sleep. When my kid wants to pee, she wanted me to clean up her. When I'm exhausted, it made me angry. I said ask help from your grandpa or grandma, mommy's tired. Mom is tired. Finally, I got angry, I ask her to understand, even though it's impossible. I know it's a mistake to make little kid understand my situation. I knew she just wants to be with her mother (Mrs. LN, respondent 3).

Table 2. Aspect of Emotional Exhaustion

Aspect	Subject 1 ES	Subject 2 RO	Subject 3 LN
Emotional Exhaustion, Emotional and physical fatigue from fulfilling the role of a parent.	- Feeling exhausted from the moment of waking up until late at night working to earn money. -In addition, she has to take care of the children and clean the house.	- Feels the double burden of having to work and deal with children's issues, such as education, parenting, and managing the household. - Another source of tiredness comes from her worry about other people's opinions as a single mother.	- Feels exhausted because she has to work and deal with a child who tends to be spoiled towards her. - She hopes that her child understands her exhaustion.

Contrast to the Parent's Previous Self

The second aspect of parental burnout is viewing their parenting or parental roles different from their previous wishes. Mrs. ES had a wish to send her kids to university level, she hoped that her kids can get higher level of education and better life. In fact, she could not manage to send her kids to university because she has financial limitation. This is in accordance with her statement:

"I and my husband hoped to educate our children, but I felt that I was unable to give my children everything they wanted. I have financial and income limitations. My job cannot produce a steady income. When my child needs money for school, I have to try to cover these needs." Mrs ES (Respondent 1)

Previously, as full time house wife, she just focused to do parenting duties and best care for her children. As a wife, she had to give social support for her husband. When she divorced, she had to manage her time to working and parenting. She had a limitation to give the best care for her children

such as vitamin, quality time and good facilities to them. She felt bad about her limitation, she decided to make substitution to support her children’s care.

“Yes, it is very far from the ideal parenting style as a mother. In terms of time, I have to manage my time, I can't manage vacation time like other parents. While the other children were studying, I took my child out of town to work, we went on holiday. From an academic standpoint, other moms print worksheets for their kids, but I don't. Meanwhile, I can only monitor my child's assignments at least once. I don't think I look like a perfect parent in food or nutrition. I can only make a home for my children. Unlike other mothers, they can buy vitamins A, B and C which are expensive and good for their health and brain. I can't afford it, I can only provide enough vegetables, fruit, milk to eat. This is what I can do for my children. (Respondent 2 Mrs. RO).

Based on the results of the interview, Mrs. RO views her parenting as less than optimal, different from her hopes and what she has done. He compared other mothers who gave maximum care to their children by providing vitamins and much better facilities. He was unable to cope, giving rise to the perception that he was not a good parent.

“I know psychology so I know the most ideal parenting style. Sometimes I give strict, harsh discipline to my child, but on the other hand I have to soften and provide concessions within reasonable limits. "This means that when something is important for the child's development, then I will give concessions, but if it has more negative impacts, of course I will be strict about giving limits to my child" (Responden 3 Mrs. LN).

She realized that when she experienced a state of fatigue, she had excessive emotions, so she behaved irrationally. She expected her child to understand her fatigue. She knows that this condition was wrong, she admitted that as a parent she should show an attitude of apology, she hoped that she will set an example to be a responsible person. This is in accordance with her statement:

“Sometimes I scold my child, I ask him to understand me. Even though that was a mistake, because small children don't understand either. He just wants to be with his mother, that's all.” (Respondent 3, Mrs. LN).

“There's still a lot, sometimes it's emotionally draining, for example, today I am angry, I try to be a responsible parent, a parent who knows herself. This means that in the past, maybe parents, if they finished getting angry at their children, maybe they would just do that, forget it and move on. I studied psychology and I know no parent is perfect, no parent is always right either. When I'm wrong, there's nothing wrong with me apologizing to my child. As a mother, I try to be a good and forgiving mother. I am not ashamed to apologize to anyone, including my child.” (Mrs. LN, respondent 3).

Table 3. Aspect of Contrast to the Parent's Previous Self

Aspect	Subject 1 ES	Subject 2 RO	Subject 3 LN
Constrast with previous self, interpreted as a role as a parent and her parenting style does not match the ideal image as expected.	- She could not provide the ideal care and best needs for her kids. -She could not able to send his children to universitu level.	- She perceived herself could not effort quality time with her kids like used to do. - She felt she could not give best treatment and facilities for her kids, such as giving vitamin, and facility to study.	-She perceived she had done best ideal parenting according to psychology. -She was aware that sometimes she did irrational things, such as hoping that her kid understands her situation.

Feeling being Fed Up

Feeling fed up is interpreted as a sensation of being fed up and fed up being a parent due to the monotonous routine and chronic minor stress in parenting. Respondent 1 admitted that there was boredom from carrying out the daily routine of working to earn a living and taking care of the children's needs as well as doing their own care. She is able to realize the point of feeling bored so she tried to overcome it. She has social support from her fellow organizations, apart from that she has a group with a background as a single mother. This is in accordance with the respondent's statement:

"When I'm so over doing chores, I invite my friends to refresh and hang out. We do karaoke or we go out on a picnic. If I have one day off, I don't sell or don't do activities for organization or house. I joined single parents' community. I feel like we are family and very close. I have friends in the same situation so when we were both bored because it had been three months since our last meeting, we hang out to relax together. We're getting some air outside." (Response 1, Ms.ES).

Respondent 2 is the breadwinner, resolves parenting conflicts and provide for the child's needs. The burden that she considered heavy made her experience negative emotions, especially since her ex-husband tend not to care anymore about their kid's need. She understood that the negative emotions will have a bad impact to her kids. She has awareness not to take them out on her children. Therefore, she has a solution to the problem to avoid boredom with the role of parent and parenting. Before she went home, she stabled her emotion by going to the gathering with her friends. When she can stabilize her emotion, she returns home. This condition is in accordance with the respondent's statement:

"In the early days after divorcing, I was still not accepting it. I was sad, annoyed, and angry. But I don't know, I'm afraid of taking it out on my children. So, I decided to go outside, then when I'm calm, I go back home. When I'm at home, I have quality time with my kids (Mrs. RO, Respodent 2).

The third respondent, Mrs. LN admitted that she felt bored with the routine of being a parent, working and caring for children. She realized that when she was bored, she will be much more sensitive and easily respond emotionally to the child's behavior.

"My father is quite sensitive with my condition. My father understands that I'm tired, my emotions explode easily. When My kid rebels to me, I become more sensitive and emotional. My emotions became explosive, so that made me quite sensitive. My father took my kid, separeted us for a moment, so I can have time to rest. I go to my room to reduce the negative emotions that I have. Usually, I would stay in my room and be quiet. I'm playing my handphone or soaking in bathroom. Later when I came out of the bathroom, my condition was really better than before I entered the bathroom, usually like that. When my emotion became stable, I do my duty such as cleaning, feeding my kid and others " (Mrs. LN, respondent 3)

Table 4. Aspect of Being Fed Up

Aspect	Subject 1 ES	Subject 2 RO	Subject 3 LN
Feeling fed up is the condition of being fed up with the routine roles and actions of parenting	"Recognizing the feeling of boredom with housework, the solution is to gather with fellow single mothers and engage in recreational activities."	Boredom with the role is felt to trigger negative emotions such as anger and frustration, but it is not shown to the child. She makes an effort to come home in a calm state.	She realizes that when she is tired, it triggers explosive emotions towards her child's behavior. So, she separates herself from the child for a moment to calm down. Once she feels her emotions are more stable, she resumes her routine of caregiving and cleaning the house.

From this statement, researcher found that the three respondents are aware that there are moments when they feel bored with their role as a single parent and in parenting. They recognize that

negative emotions can impact their behavior toward their children. Each respondent has their own way of regulating their emotions before interacting with their children.

Emotional Distance from Children

Emotional distance from children can be interpreted as the behavior of maintaining emotional distance with the child. Parents try to avoid close emotional bonds with their children, although they still provide instrumental support while keeping an emotional distance (Mikolajczak et al., 2019). Respondent 1 considers time with her child something she looks forward to, so she makes an effort to find time to be with her child despite the work. When preparing food to sell, she has the opportunity to spend time with her child. When at home, she tries to make time to help with her child's homework or discuss some issues.

"Because it's the time spent with my child that I look forward to. Every day, since I work as a freelancer, I'm rarely at home. When I am home, it's around 6 PM, and by that time, I'm often already tired. So, by 8 PM, I'm already heading to bed. My child comes home from work around 9 PM or sometimes even 10 PM, so we end up not seeing each other much. Rarely do we meet. When my child comes home from work, I'm already asleep. And when my child leaves for work, around 1 PM or sometimes 12 PM, I'm already gone by 8 AM. So, there's rarely time for a conversation. On holidays, when my child is off work, I also have some free time. That's the time I look forward to, when we can eat together" (Respondent 1, Mrs. ES).

"Actually, it's at home where I spend a lot of time with my child. When making pempek (a type of food), my child helps out, or just assisting. My kids are always helping with the process of making it and preparing it for sale. They help with everything because we are all at home. I'm at home from morning until the next morning. We only go to the market to deliver the pempek. So, we're always at home. If my child has homework or assignments, we do it together at home. We discuss things at home, and we can eat together at home, especially before I became an active community worker" (Respondent 1, Mrs. ES).

Her busy schedule as a freelancer, along with her child's commitments—working and attending school—makes it difficult to find time together. As a result, she considers time spent with her children as an opportunity to pamper them by gathering together and preparing their favorite meals.

"Because my child works in the private sector, her day offs are determined by the company. Sometimes it's on Monday, sometimes on Wednesday. When my child has a Wednesday off, sometimes I also don't have any activities planned. So, this gives me a chance to cook, allowing us to enjoy a home-cooked meal together. I can also cater to my child's preferences by preparing whatever dish they want that day" (Respondent 1, Mrs. ES).

In the case of the second respondent, Mrs. RO, she admitted that she did not experience conditions that would make her maintain emotional distance from her child. On the contrary, she feels that the time spent with her child has decreased, so when she has a day off from work, she views it as an opportunity to be with her child. Even when that's not possible, she makes an effort to spend time with her child.

"I wonder what my kids think when I'm off work—that it's time for them. It's very challenging for me to manage my time between work and family. I try to explain to them that mommy is working now, and that they need to accept their mom as a working woman" (Respondent 2, Mrs. RO).

Mrs. LN, has a close relationship with her child because she is primarily responsible for the caregiving. When she is out of town, her child will ask when she will return and waits for her to come home. While she is away, she tries to maximize her time to complete tasks, as she also feels sad when separated from her child for several days.

"How close are we? Very, very close. If I were to describe the intensity, I'm always with my child at home. Right now, my child's school ends at 12 PM, so in the morning, after school, when she comes home, she usually just takes a nap with me. In the afternoon and evening, we spend time together as well. After Maghrib (evening prayer), I take her to Quran study, which is luckily not far from our house. Then, before Isya (night prayer), before 7 PM, she's back with me and stays with me until the next morning. So, how close is it? Very close, because every day, her time is always with me. If I'm at home, we are always together" (Respondent 3, Mrs. LN).

Table 5. Aspect of Emotional Detachment

Aspect	Respondent 1 Ms. ES	Respondent 2 Ms. RO	Respondent 3 Ms. LN
Emotional detachment, tendency to maintain emotional distance from the child	There's no emotional detachment. She enjoys spending time with her children, doing activities together, and making the children's favorite food.	There's no emotional detachment. After working, she does her parenting duties for her kids, such as checking their homework and asking about their day. She feels sorry that she doesn't have much time for them. She tries to explain that their situation is different now compared to before	There's no emotional detachment. She feels close to her child because they spend a lot of time together. She is the one who takes the child to school, stays with them during nap time, takes them to Quran study, and is always with the child."

This study is a qualitative research aimed at exploring the condition of parental burnout among single mothers. The credibility of this research is ensured through triangulation and prolonged observation with follow-up and repeated interviews. This process continues until the interview data reaches saturation. The dependability of this research is maintained by stabilizing the questions, repeating the same questions at different times, and providing verbatim results for verification by the study respondents.

Based on the study of three respondents who experienced parental burnout, there were differences in the process of acceptance in becoming a single mother. Respondent 1 and Respondent 3 became single mothers due to the sudden death of their husbands. This situation caused the respondents to react with shock, confusion, sadness, and not knowing what to do, as it was beyond their expectations. Respondent 2 became a single mother due to divorce, and there was a period of time for relationship reconciliation before ultimately becoming a single mother. This situation suggests that there are differences in reactions to becoming a single mother due to divorce and death. For single mothers due to divorce, there was a time gap during the divorce process, which allowed them to make personal plans and accept themselves as single mothers.

The results of this study showed that all three respondents experienced parental burnout. In the aspect of exhaustion, they suffered from chronic excessive fatigue due to routine work and double burdens. As the breadwinners of the family, single mothers face financial pressures similar to those of male breadwinners. Cultural views state that mothers are still responsible for caregiving, even though they are also responsible for earning a living. Single mothers have a dual responsibility to act as both father and mother simultaneously (Primayuni, 2019). Single mothers are vulnerable to high financial risks; they sacrifice their own well-being for the basic needs of their children and household

(Stack & Meredith, 2018). In this study, all three respondents carried out dual roles, working all day to earn money, then coming home to care for their children, and performing household tasks such as preparing meals or cleaning the house. Another finding shows that the main stressor for single mothers is the financial pressure of raising children (Arumugam, 2023; Jain & Mahmoodi, 2022).

In the second aspect, parent's previous self, all three respondents had an ideal form of parenting they hoped for their children. They were aware of their limitations in providing the same facilities that other children typically receive, such as education, healthcare, and enough time. Respondent 3, Mrs. LN, admitted that her parenting still aligned with her ideal expectations. This was because her child was still in the toddler stage, so the needs were not as many compared to children who are of school age. Previous research has shown that, in the second aspect, respondents tend to blame themselves and consider themselves an ineffective parent (Roskam et al., 2018). What is unique among the three respondents is that they realize they have not yet been able to be the ideal parents they hoped for, but they still have a realistic view of their lives. Respondents 1 and 2 hoped that their children would receive the best education and the best facilities. They tried their best, but did not push themselves too hard. This shows that the respondents have a realistic view of parenting expectations. Unrealistically high parenting expectations can decrease life satisfaction, and increase stress and depression (Kawamoto & Furutani, 2018). The desire to be a perfect parent can lead to excessive attention to the child's worries, self-blame, and self-doubt, which impacts parental burnout (Lin et al., 2021).

"Being fed up" refers to a sense of frustration with the parental role and caregiving due to the monotonous routine. All three respondents admitted to feeling fed up with daily parenting activities, but each of them had their own ways to cope with it. Respondent 1 has a community of other single parents, allowing them to share experiences and spend time together. Respondent 2 chooses to return home in a stable condition by spending time with friends before going home to take care of household duties. Respondent 3 prefers to calm herself alone in her room, and after her emotions settle, she resumes caring for her child. From this, it can be concluded that all three respondents have good emotional regulation skills, being able to recognize negative emotions, manage them effectively, and return to a positive emotional state. The support system seems to be the key to alleviating the "being fed up" condition. Several research findings indicate that social support plays a critical role in reducing burnout.

In the third aspect, emotional detachment, no indications of this aspect were found. All three respondents enjoy spending time with their children and make it a point to have quality time together. Single mothers face challenges in time management because they need to balance work and caregiving (Arumugam, 2023). Other studies have shown that parental behaviors that distance themselves from their children were not found in research from Asia (Arikan et al., 2020; Gannagé et al., 2020). Indonesia, as one of the countries in Asia, has values where children live with their parents and are dependent on their parents' roles. In the case of the three single mothers who also work, their busy schedules as employees make them strive to optimize their work time so they can be with their children. It seems that the limitation of time becomes a driving force for parents to be closer to their children. This condition is similar to previous research on working mothers, where time with children becomes part of the dilemma, causing mothers to try to add quality time with their children (Wardiyah; et al., 2023; Milkie et al., 2010).

Belief in a religion can influence an individual's perspective on situations of parenting that are considered stressful (Henderson et al., 2016). Islamic teachings strongly emphasize the responsibility of parents toward their children in providing care. The results of this study showed that

emotional detachment was not experienced by the respondents. Similar research identifying parental burnout in predominantly Muslim countries like Turkey, Iran, and Lebanon found that the emotional detachment subscale had lower scores compared to other aspects (Arikan et al., 2020; Gannagé et al., 2020; Mousavi et al., 2020). Religious beliefs play a role in reducing parental burnout. Research reports from Lebanon show that understanding religious teachings prevents parents from experiencing emotional detachment (Gannagé et al., 2020). This condition contrasts with research in Hispanic countries, which indicates that parental burnout leads to thoughts of escaping from parenting (Millones et al., 2022).

The findings indicate that all three mothers experienced both emotional and physical exhaustion, yet they were still able to manage it, maintaining realistic expectations for parenting and coping with the feelings of burnout from the routine of being a parent. The weakness of this study is that it is less able to explain the dynamics of the role of Islamic beliefs on parental burnout conditions. Suggestions for further researchers are to add variables of Islamic religious beliefs on parental burnout in single mothers.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that all three respondents experienced parental burnout due to the dual burden of being the primary earners for their families and handling caregiving responsibilities. The three respondents admitted to feeling tired, frustrated, and unable to be the ideal parents they hoped to be. However, they made efforts to cope with these challenges so that it did not affect their caregiving effectiveness. The recommendation for future research is to examine Islamic religious beliefs that could reduce parental burnout in single mothers.

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