

How Does the Indonesian Labour of the Sandwich Generation Not Get Squeezed?

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Abstract. This study analyses labour force participation in efforts to break sandwich generation through social and economic factors. The urgency of this study is to determine the factors that impact sandwich generation so that it can prepare demographic bonuses with positive perceptions regarding human resources and economic conditions. One of the demographic phenomena in Indonesia is the peak of the demographic bonus, which is predicted to occur in 2030. There is a negative perspective on demographic bonuses, including the increase in sandwich generation. The sandwich generation is financially higher than the non-sandwich generation. Previously several previous studies stated that efforts to get out of the sandwich generation were only sought by female labours. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on transforming workforce participation. A shift in gender labour participation could have broader implications. Changes in work relationships can also affect working couples. This study uses logistic regression analysis of 2022 National Socioeconomic Data (SUSENAS 2022). The research results show that the characteristics of the Indonesian labour participating in the non-agricultural sector can be caused by living conditions, gender, education level, digital conditions, access to finance and the guarantee of protection from the government.

1. INTRODUCTION

The sandwich generation is still a problem in some countries because it can impact the welfare received by each individual in a household. One of the demographic phenomena in Indonesia as a developing country is the peak of the demographic bonus, predicted to occur in 2030. There is a negative perspective on demographic bonuses, including the increase in sandwich generation. Labour of the sandwich generation continue striving to get out of the crush of layered financial burdens, one of which is choosing the economic sector that supports it. Some sandwich generation labours have undergone structural transformation from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector. There is an opportunity to get higher wages compared to the agricultural sector. However, supporting factors are needed to enter the non-agricultural sector, such as geographical factors of origin, individual abilities, and other supporting facilities. This study analyses labor force participation in efforts to break sandwich generation through social and economic factors. The urgency of this study is to determine the factors that impact sandwich generation so that it can prepare demographic bonuses with positive perceptions regarding human resources and economic conditions.

Labour of the sandwich generation often feel they need economic capabilities. The sandwich generation is a term used for the younger generation with family dependents, including parents and biological children (Pierret, 2006). The financial value of sandwich generation tends to be higher when compared to the non-sandwich generation (Rari et al., 2022). Previous research has sought to reveal the impact of sandwich generation on socioeconomic conditions in households, such as financial, health, and time allocation (Chassin et al.; Sherman, 2010; Papastavrou et al.; Karayiannis, 2012; Zehner Quesada et al., 2014; Ahmad et al., 2016). The sandwich generation phenomenon can often impact happiness and mental health (Miller, 1981).

The sandwich generation phenomenon continues to grow and develop in Western countries and Asian groups. The phenomenon in Western countries related to the sandwich generation is supported by the aging of the population, which tends to be rapid and increasing due to a longer life expectancy (Pagani et al., 2008). Drives the increased need for every child to care for parents (Meeks et al., 1999). The phenomenon of demographic change regarding increasing age groups of parents also occurs in Asian countries (Noor & Isa, 2020). According to Selvarathnam (2010) norms and religion, every child should care for parents and children simultaneously. Indonesia is no exception, as one of the countries in Southeast Asia with different economic conditions for each population.

A structural shift has been experienced by labours of the sandwich generation. The shift can be seen by selecting sectors from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector. Labours switch to the non-agricultural sector due to higher income to guarantee job security (Chand, 2022). Furthermore, the factors for working in the non-agricultural sector are also influenced by internal and external factors. The internal factors include education level, gender, and other driving factors. Meanwhile, external factors include technological changes, laws and regulations, and the work environment. However, if classified, the motivating factors for labours included in the sandwich generation to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector, namely (i) individual factors, (ii) factors of geographical origin, and (iii) supporting facility factors. The quality of human resources or conditions in individuals can be a driving factor for working in the non-agricultural sector. The quality of such human resources can be influenced by gender and education level. After the pandemic, female labor force participation in the non-agricultural sector increased. Empowering women in the non-agricultural sector positively impacts income and future sustainability (Buvinić & Furst-Nichols, 2016; Maligalig et al., 2019; Van den Broeck & Kilic, 2019). A shift in gender labor participation could have broader implications. Shifts in employment relationships can also impact working couples (Thompson & Walker, 1989). On the other hand, the level of education is also a significant driving factor for choosing the non-agricultural sector. A workforce that has a high level of education will be directly proportional to the level of innovation produced so that it can affect creativity and productivity (Moura et al., 2019).

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Education is also crucial in the structural transformation from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector (Kundu & Das, 2020).

The shift in labor selection from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector is caused by driving factors from rural areas and pull factors from the urban side, following previous research which states that the agricultural sector is a driving factor and the non-agricultural sector is a pull factor (Zou, 2005). At first, the majority of rural labours worked in the agricultural sector. However, technological, information, and communication developments encourage these labours to move to urban areas and work in the non-agricultural sector (Cai et al., 2008; Gai et al., 2014). The selection of labor to work in the non-agricultural sector can also be encouraged by the ability of technological adaptation (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). That is, a workforce that is adaptive to the development of technology, information, and communication has an excellent opportunity to shift to the non-agricultural sector.

The selection of sandwich generation labours in Indonesia has experienced a tendency to structural transformation by choosing to work in the non-agricultural sector. As one of the provinces in Indonesia with the largest regional gross domestic product supporting sector is the non-agricultural sector, East Java Province is one of the choices for labours to try to get out of poverty and end the sandwich generation. However, the sandwich generation still tends to be high in East Java Province, both in terms of female and male labor. This study is different from other previous studies that have tried to discuss that only the female workforce (sandwich generation) actively participates in the family. Previously several previous studies stated that efforts to get out of the sandwich generation were only attempted by women. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the transformation of labor force participation (Emerson, 2011) and (Kleykamp & Wan, 2014).

This research analyzes labor force participation in efforts to break sandwich generation through social and economic factors in the 2022 National Socioeconomic Survey (SUSENAS) data. The analysis was conducted using independent variables by considering (i) the quality of human resources and (ii) environmental background. This research also pays attention to the role of the development of technology, information, and communication, which is one of the supporting factors for labor force participation in every household in the digital era. Based on the analysis of factors influencing the sandwich generation workforce to choose the non-agricultural sector, it is expected to provide an overview of household decisions to end poverty and end the sandwich generation.

2. METHOD

This study used data from the 202 National Socioeconomic Survey (SUSENAS). SUSENAS collects individual data on several indicators such as demographics, education, social, and economic. This survey is conducted annually by the Central Statistics Bureau and is one of the primary media that can be used to monitor the socioeconomic dynamics of the population. The number of observations in this study was 34,143 respondents, who were labours of the sandwich generation in East Java Province, Indonesia. The criteria for labor included in the sandwich generation are married status and living with parents. It can lead to higher labor dependents who must support themselves and their families.

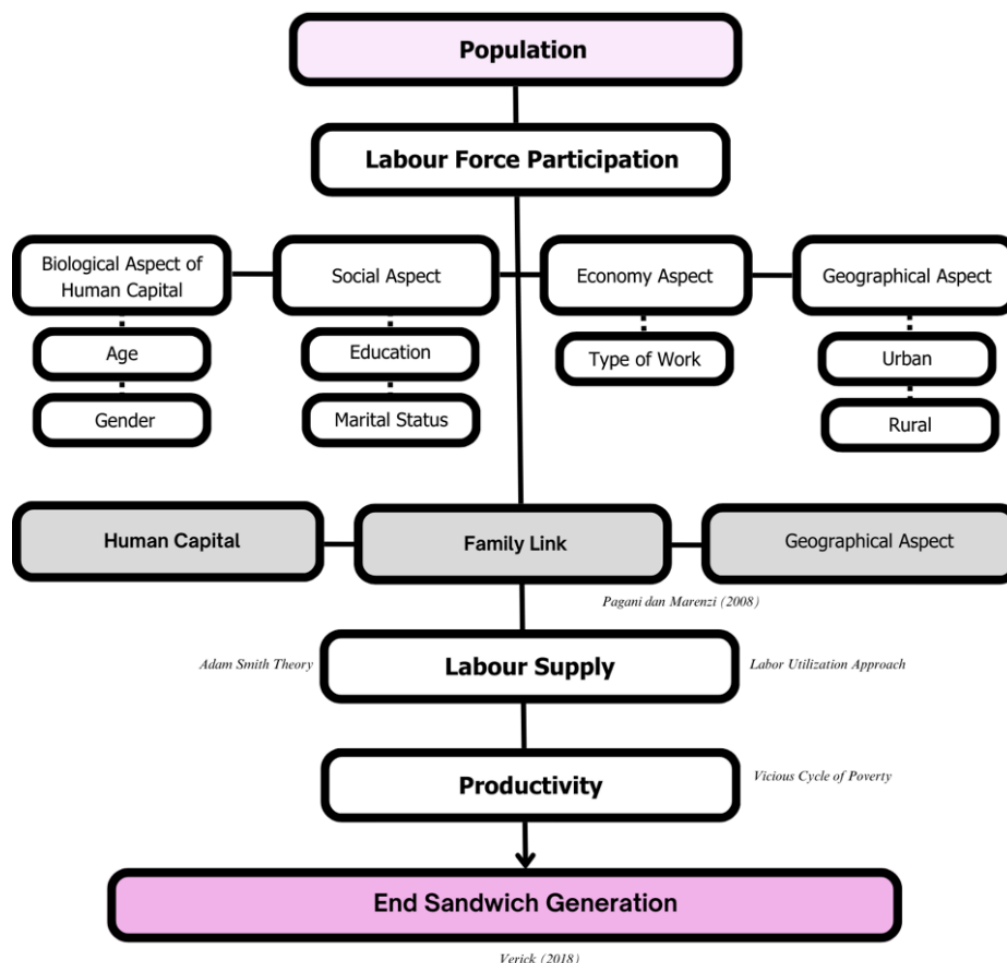


Figure 1. Research Framework.

The empirical model in this study is based on the argument that the workforce of the sandwich generation seeks to end poverty by carrying out structural transformation or working in the non-agricultural sector. It is inseparable from the pull and driving factors in each individual's decision to work in the non-agricultural sector. The factors in question include (i) the quality of human resources and (ii) environmental background. The quality of human resources can be affected by gender and the level of education—meanwhile, environmental background, including conditions of origin such as rural or urban. Furthermore, the environment can also be described through adaptation to the development of technology, information, and communication to the government's role in supporting each household's needs.

Most labours in East Java Province work in the non-agricultural sector. According to Elena (2020), non-agricultural activities include manufacturing and other accumulative, adaptive industries with higher commercial value. The number of labours in the non-agricultural sector cannot reduce the poverty rate or end the sandwich generation in East Java Province. One of the causes is internal factors in individuals who have not been able to compete in the world of work, so needs tend to be higher than income. This study analyzes the factors that drive labor selection in the non-agricultural sector to end sandwich generation in East Java Province. The equation used in this study, ie.

$$Sectors_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 Gender_i + \gamma_2 Education_i + \gamma_3 Telephone_i + \gamma_4 Internet_i + \gamma_5 Government_i + \gamma_6 Urban_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Based on this equation, it can be seen that the sector variable is a dummy variable. If the sandwich generation workforce works in the non-agricultural sector, it is one; if it works in the agricultural sector, it is 0. The factors that influence the selection of sectors by labor include gender, education level, telephone use, internet use, and assistance facilities from the government. Next, the equation is estimated using logistic regression analysis. As a comparison, the equation in this study was also estimated using multiple linear regression and probit regression analysis. Furthermore, the definition of variables used in this study is as follows.

Table 1. Description of Independent Variables

Type of Variables	Variables	Description
Human Capital	Gender	1 = Male Labours 0 = Female Labours
	Education	0 = Not Completed in Primary School 1 = Elementary School 2 = Junior High School 3 = Senior High School 4 = College
	Telephone	Using a Telephone (Dummy)
	Internet	Using an Internet (Dummy)
Background	Government	Government Assistance (Dummy)
	Urban	1 = Urban 0 = Rural

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

The estimation in this study was carried out through three methods: Ordinary Least Square (OLS), logistic regression analysis, and probit regression analysis. Three methods are used to determine the factors that determine the decision of labour of the sandwich generation to work in the non-agricultural sector in East Java Province, Indonesia. Based on the estimated results, it can be seen that the three methods, both OLS, logistic regression analysis, and probit regression analysis, show the same tendency of results in the model used. However, the use of Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression still has various weaknesses, one of which cannot accommodate the heterogeneity of the data owned. Meanwhile, the weakness of probit regression analysis is that it cannot estimate variables with two categories. Therefore, this study tends to use the results of logistic regression analysis.

The equation in this study aims to determine the factors that drive sandwich generation labours' decision to work in the non-agricultural sector. The estimation results show that there are factors that influence the decision of sandwich generation labours to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector, namely (i) gender, (ii) education, (iii) use telephones, (iv) government facilities or assistance; and (v) the geographic of labor (rural or urban). Meanwhile, the variable use of the internet showed that it did not influence the decision of sandwich generation labours to work in the non-agricultural sector. That is, the sandwich generation workforce in East Java Province has the same tendency between labours using the internet and not. In more detail, the results of the estimated factors that influence the sandwich generation labours' decision to work in the non-agricultural sector can be found in Table 2, as follows.

Table 2. Estimation Result.

Variables	Ordinary Least Square (OLS)	Logistic Regression Analysis	Probit Regression Analysis
Dependent Variable			
Non-Agricultural Sectors			
	Koef	Koef	Koef
Konstanta	-0.124157*	-10.23788*	-5.434594*
Gender	0.0411384*	0.3137037*	0.1891823*
Education	0.1025791*	2.466889*	1.316305*
Telephone	0.1081154*	2.030218*	1.050335*
Internet	-0.0420287	0.0969821	0.0009566
Government	0.0152129*	0.2888169*	0.1576193*
Urban	0.0448176*	0.5622709*	0.3005588*

Note: *sig <0.05.

The positive factors that influence the decision of the sandwich generation workforce to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector come from internal human resources and environmental background as supporting factors. First, the factors of human

resources that influence the decision to work in the non-agricultural sector are gender and education level. That is, male labours have a higher tendency to work in the non-agricultural sector when compared to female labours. Such is the case with the last level of education of the workforce. The educated workforce tends to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector when compared to the workforce that has a lower level of education.

The second factor influencing sandwich generation labours' decision to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector consists of geographical factors, supporting facility factors, and government contributions. Sandwich-generation labours in urban areas have a higher tendency to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector. Meanwhile, supporting facilities and government contributions from sandwich generation labours are also directly proportional to the decision to work in the non-agricultural sector. That is, labours who own and use telephones at the same time who get government assistance have a higher tendency to work in the non-agricultural sector compared to labours who do not have supporting facilities and do not receive assistance from the government.

Quality human resources are one of the primary needs in the non-agricultural sector, especially the industrial sector, in line with previous research, which shows that the higher the quality of human resources, the higher the tendency to work in the non-agricultural sector (Bjerke & Johansson, 2022). One of the indicators of the quality of human resources is the level of education. Previous research suggested that a high level of education or investment in education could increase employment opportunities in more established sectors, namely the non-agricultural sector (Huffman, 1980; Yang, 1997). Higher education of female can increase employment opportunities to reduce dependence socially and culturally (Becker, 1962; Van Ham & Büchel, 2006; Maletta, 2008; Matas et al., 2010; Noback et al., 2013; Akram, 2018; Castellano & Rocca, 2018; Singh & Pattanaik, 2019).

Human resource indicators influence the decision to work in the non-agricultural sector in terms of education level and gender. The proportion of the male labor force in the total labor component significantly and positively influences the probability and timing of non-agricultural labor supply (Lu et al., 2019). Gender-line opportunities to work in the non-agricultural sector are still dominated by male labors (Kabeer, 2001; Karim, 2011). Meanwhile, female opportunities to work in the non-agricultural sector tend to be lower (Amin, 1997). Thus, the male workforce has a higher tendency to work in the non-agricultural sector.

The results of previous studies also stated that external factors or environmental background can influence the decision of the workforce to work in the non-agricultural sector. Sandwich-generation labours in urban areas tend to prefer to work in the non-agricultural sector (Lewis, 1954; Ranis & Fei, 1961; Zhao & Jiang, 2015; Zhao et al., 2020). The growing sector in urban areas often comes from the non-agricultural sector. Furthermore, the characteristics of the workforce in urban areas have been adaptive to the development of technology, information, and communication to be close to the facilities provided by the government. Thus, labours who have used telephones and received government assistance especially in urban areas have a tendency to work in the non-agricultural sector.

3.2. Discussion

Labours in the non-agricultural sector tend to have the opportunity to get a higher level of income and welfare when compared to labours in other sectors. As a secondary and tertiary sector, the non-agricultural sector is one of the indicators used to determine the country's economic progress (Papola, 2012; Soni & Subrahmanya, 2020). In micro terms, employment in the non-agricultural sector can not only reduce poverty but also encourage economic growth and urbanization (Lim-Applegate et al., 2002; Luo et al., 2014; Imai et al., 2015; Mahendra Dev, 2017). The industrial sector offers actual wage levels that tend to be higher to provide economic capabilities for each workforce (Kundu & Das, 2020).

The offer of more decent wages for the non-agricultural sector for the workforce is trying to be a pull factor, especially for labours in the non-agricultural sector. However, a higher quality of human resources is needed to get the opportunity to work in the non-agricultural sector, especially in education. Labours with low education will naturally be eliminated and choose to work in the agricultural sector. Thus, efforts are needed to improve the quality of human resources in terms of opportunities to get higher education. Not only in terms of education level, vast opportunities must also be given to female labours. The previous research conducted by Hämäläinen & Tanskanen (2021), entitled Sandwich Generation: Generational Transfers towards Adult Children and Elderly Parents, seeks to discuss the relationship between sandwich generation and the workforce. Conditions in the United States show that female and male labor contributes to parents and families.

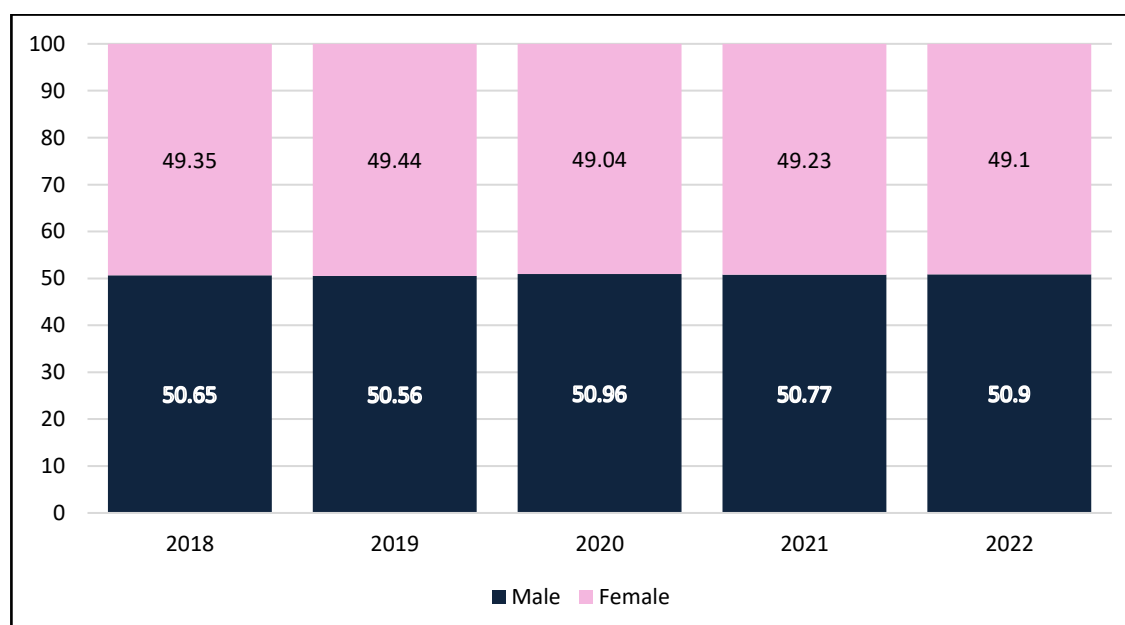


Figure 2. The Proportion of Formal and Informal Sector Labours Based on Gender.

Increasing opportunities for female labours in the non-agricultural sector still requires massive efforts. Based on data in Indonesia, the proportion of employment opportunities for female labours still tends to be low, both in the formal and informal sectors. Therefore, to support opportunities for each workforce, it is also necessary to optimize supporting facilities, especially for labours in rural areas. The supporting facilities in question can be in the form of optimizing ownership and use of telephones for productive activities. In addition, one of the genuine efforts of the government to support the workforce and end the sandwich generation is to assist in the protection of every labour. Thus, the welfare of the workforce can increase, not only in terms of income but also in terms of social protection received, so that it can increase the acceleration to end poverty and get out of the sandwich generation.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results using data from the 2022 National Socioeconomic Survey (Susenas), this study revealed that internal and external factors can influence the decision of sandwich generation labours to choose to work in the non-agricultural sector. The internal factors in question are gender and level of higher education. Male labours with higher education levels tend to have more opportunities to work in the non-agricultural sector when compared to female labours. Meanwhile, external factors supporting the decision to work in the non-agricultural sector are the origin of labours' residence in urban areas, telephones, and government assistance or protection.

The results of this study can be a reference for parties to synergize to increase opportunities or participation of sandwich generation labours in the non-agricultural sector. Efforts can be made to provide opportunities for higher education for male and female. That is, to improve family welfare, gender equality is also needed. Furthermore, supporting facilities are also needed as support for facilities and infrastructure for the sandwich generation workforce. The government can provide assistance and protection for every labour in urban and rural areas. Thus, efforts to get out of sandwich generation can be made by optimally optimizing labor participation in the non-agricultural sector.

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