

Mindful Parenting Mothers with Middle Childhood Age during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. Accompanying children school from home for mothers with middle childhood age is one of the most challenging tasks for mothers, leaving them vulnerable to physical and psychological exhaustion. Mindful parenting is one way to reduce negative parenting. This study aims to obtain an overview of mindful parenting in terms of demographic factors. Research respondents are mothers with middle childhood age of 242 respondents using accidental sampling technique. The research instrument used a mindful parenting scale consisting of 31 items, with descriptive and chi square data analysis. The results showed that the mother's demographic factors, including age, education level and employment status of the mother could not predict the mother's mindful parenting.

Keywords: *mindful parenting, education level, age, employment status*

Abstrak. Mendampingi anak sekolah dari rumah bagi Ibu dengan anak usia *middle childhood* merupakan salah satu tugas Ibu yang penuh tantangan, sehingga Ibu rentan mengalami kelelahan fisik maupun psikis. *Mindful parenting* merupakan salah satu cara untuk mengurangi pengasuhan yang negative. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendapatkan gambaran *mindful parenting* Ibu ditinjau dari factor demografis. Responden penelitian adalah Ibu dengan anak usia *middle childhood* sebesar 242 responden dengan menggunakan tehnik *accidental sampling*. Instrumen penelitian menggunakan skala *mindful parenting* terdiri dari 31 aitem, dengan analisis data deskriptif dan *chi square*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa factor demografis Ibu, meliputi usia, tingkat pendidikan dan status pekerjaan Ibu tidak dapat memprediksi *mindful parenting* Ibu.

Kata kunci: *mindful parenting, tingkat pendidikan, usia, status pekerjaan*

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Introduction

The School from Home (SFH) policy during the pandemic is still a problem in Indonesia. The success of SFH requires the cooperation of all parties, teachers, students and parents. With the implementation of the SFH policy, teachers are required to be more creative in preparing and delivering learning materials (Basori, 2017), as well as for parents to have a responsibility to help and assist children in learning from home (Iftitah & Anawaty, 2020).

In general, parenting is the duty of a mother, as stated by Bornstein (2013) that mothers spend about 65-80% of their time with their children. This statement is reinforced by the culture in Indonesia, which adheres to a patriarchal system, where the task of nurturing is the duty of a woman, while earning a living is the duty of a man (Bemmelen, 2015). Thus, it can be said that the task of a mother during a pandemic will be more complex, not only focusing on domestic tasks as a housewife (Effendy, 2004), but also acting as a school teacher during a pandemic (Iftitah & Anawaty, 2020).

Various problems of school from home, especially for mothers who accompany children while online learning. Such as; Mother's lack of understanding about children's subject matter, low interest and motivation in children's learning, parents are less able to divide time between work and accompanying study simultaneously because they have to work (Rofi'ah, 2021; Wardani & Ayriza, 2021), and lack of patience in accompanying children to learn (Wardani & Ayriza, 2021). This difficulty is also experienced by mothers who have middle childhood age children (Palupi, 2021).

Age Middle childhood is an age that is often neglected (Del Giudice, 2014) and forgotten (Mah & Ford-Jones, 2012), even though this age is a crucial phase in human development. Erikson (in Papalia & Feldman, 2012), the middle childhood period is a period of the emergence of industry vs. inferiority (Feist et al, 2013). In this phase, children have a high interest in socializing with the environment outside the family (Bornstein, 2002). Middle childhood school environment and the environment

outside the family are very important. Interacting with the outside environment, children begin to learn cooperation, skills and other activities that are in accordance with community values.

Study results about school from home policies have an impact on middle childhood age, such as Cachon-Zagalaz et al (2021) revealing that there has been a change in children's physical activity and daily routines, they tend to play gadgets more often than outdoor activities, though that children's socialization decreases and eventually children easily feel bored, angry and frustrated. In addition, school closures also affect children's learning to read activities (Liu et al, 2020), Liu et al (2020) explain that there has been 31% decline in the development of children's reading skills during the early Covid-19 pandemic. In the middle childhood phase, if the child's ability to get support, appreciation and trust from parents, then a sense of persistence children are increasing. On the other hand, if parents respond to their child's abilities with neglect, resistance or punishment, then parents will increase the child's self- inferiority (Santrock, 2006). With these characteristics, it is certainly a challenge for mothers who have children middle childhood age.

The magnitude of the challenges of parenting during the pandemic for mothers who have children middle childhood age, not only accompanying children to study at home but also having to create creative parenting, then children are still able to explore their social world during a pandemic. This obviously can trigger physical and psychological fatigue in the mother, then it can trigger negative parenting, for example parenting with verbal and physical violence (Rahman & Khoirunnisa, 2021). This is in line with the SIMFONI PPA data (*Sistem Informasi Online Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak*), there have been recorded acts of violence of 3,087 cases during the period January to June 2020. This report makes it more clear that parents who lack parenting skills are at greater risk for violence against children (Knerr, Gardner, & Cluver, 2013).

One of the intervention programs to reduce the level of parenting stress is mindful parenting (Bögels et al. 2013; Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 2021). According to

Kabat-Zinn and Kabat-Zinn (2021), mindful parenting is not an attempt to create "better" children or become "better" or "optimal" parents, but to realize mindful parenting from time to time. Mindful parenting is an ongoing process, not an end point. This parenting involves an awareness of the parents, without any judgment on themselves and on the child, being more open to experience at all times. Awareness includes thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, child behavior, family and culture.

Mindful parenting is related to parenting stress, quality of parent-child relationships, and child welfare (Gouveia et al, 2016). The study described by Gouveia et al (2016), shows that high mindful parenting is a predictor of the application of a high authoritative parenting style, and has a low level of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles, and is able to reduce parenting stress. There are 3 elements of mindful parenting according to Kabat-Zinn (1997), namely a) control, parents are able to control themselves and attitudes in responding to children's behavior. The application of control over children without involving coercion of the will, but based on the fact that children have freedoms that need to be respected but need to be directed; b) empathy, parents have sensitivity to children's needs, have a broad view, then they are able to understand the child's condition and understand themselves; and c) acceptance, parents are able to accept the feelings, conditions that occur to them as well as accept the child's feelings and everything that happens to the child. Acceptance does not mean agreeing with the entire child's behavior, but without being reactive when giving a good or bad assessment that is displayed by the child.

From the description above, the purpose of this research is to get an overview of mindful parenting in mothers with middle childhood age during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of mother's age, mother's education level and mother's employment status.

Method

This research is a type of descriptive research with a cross sectional approach. The research subjects are mothers who have children in middle childhood age, with

a total of 242 research samples. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling. The research instrument used a mindful parenting scale, referring to the mindful parenting aspect proposed by Myla and Kabat-Zinn (1997), and totaling 31 items with a reliability scale of 0.859.

The data analysis technique use two ways, namely a) univariate analysis which aims to obtain a description of the research data including, age, education level, and employment status of the subject; b) bivariate analysis, using Chi Square test to determine the relationship between variables.

Result

Univariate Analysis.

a. Subject's age

Table 1.

Mother's Age

Mother's Age	Frequency	Persentase
Early Adult	191	78.9 %
Middle Adult	51	21.1 %
Total	242	100 %

The age of the research respondents was mostly in the early adult age range of 191 respondents (78.9%), and the rest were middle adulthood as many as 51 respondents (21.1%).

b. Subject's Education Level

Table 2.

Mother's Education Level

Level of education	Frequency	Persentase
Junior High school	10	4.1 %
Senior High School	54	22.3 %
Associate Degree	30	12.4 %
Bachelor Degree	124	51.2 %
Master Degree	21	8.7 %
Doctoral Degree	3	1.2 %
Total	242	100 %

The highest level of mother education in this study was the education level of Bachelor Degree with 124 respondents (51.2 %), then Senior High School education level with 54 respondents (22.3%) and so on.

c. Subject's employment status

Table 3.

Mother's Employment Status

Job status	Frequency	Persentase
Work	98	40.5 %
Does not work	144	59.5 %
Total	242	100 %

Most of the respondents in this study were mothers who had children in middle childhood age with the status of housewives or not working as many as 144 respondents (59.5%), and mothers with working status there were 98 respondents (40.5%).

d. Mindful parenting Mother

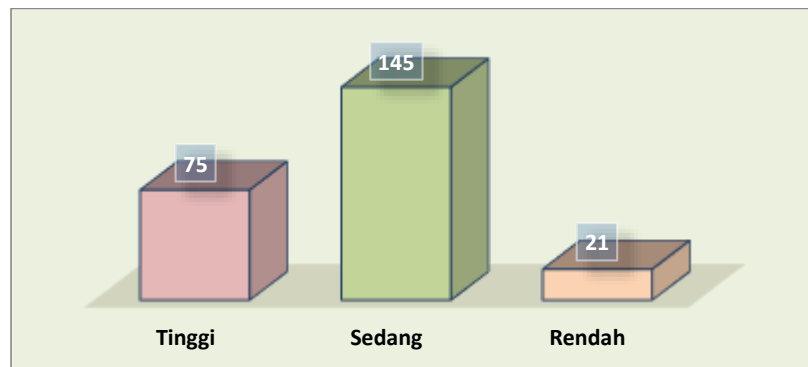


Figure 1. (Category of Mindful Parenting Mothers with middle childhood age)

Based on the figure 1, it can be concluded that the respondents in this study have a moderate mindful parenting category as many as 145 respondents, with a high category of mindful parenting as many as 75 respondents, and low category as many as 21 respondents.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 4.

Analysis of the relationship between mother's age, education level and employment status with mindful parenting during the Covid-19 pandemic

	Mindful Parenting Mom						P-Value
	Low		Moderate		High		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Mother's Age							
• Early Adult	15	71.4%	116	79.5%	60	80%	0.675
• Middle adult	6	28.6%	30	20.5%	15	20%	
Mother's Education Level							0.193
• Junior High school	0	0%	3	2.1%	7	9.3%	
• Senior High School	6	28.6%	37	25.3%	11	14.7%	
• Associate Degree	4	19%	16	11%	10	13.3%	
• Bachelor Degree	9	42.9%	77	52.7%	38	50.7%	
• Master Degree	2	9.5%	12	8.2%	7	9.3%	
• Doctoral Degree	0	0%	1	0.7%	2	2.7%	
Mother's Employment Status							0.961
• Does not work	13	61.9%	86	58.9%	45	60%	
• Work	8	38.1%	60	41.1%	30	40%	

The table 4 shows mindful parenting Mothers who are in early adulthood are mostly in the moderate category by 116 respondents (79.5%), while for middle-aged mothers there are 30 respondents (20.5%) who have moderate mindful parenting categories . When viewed from the mother's education level, for example, Bachelor Degree there are 77 respondents (52.7%) in the moderate mindful parenting category, 38 respondents (50.7%) in the high mindful parenting category and 9 respondents (42.9%) in the low mindful parenting. In addition, the table 4 also explains that mothers who do not work are 86 respondents (58.9%) in the moderate mindful parenting category and 45 respondents (60%) in the high mindful parenting category.

In table 4, it is explained that there is no significant relationship between the variables of age (sig 0.675> 0.05), education level (sig 0.193>0.05) and employment

status (sig 0.961 > 0.05) on mindful parenting in mothers who have children with middle childhood age.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that mothers with middle childhood age have moderate mindful categories (145 respondents) and high (21 respondents) mindful categories, this means that research respondents in general have applied caring and mindful parenting, have good emotional regulation when interacting with children and have high self-efficacy as a component of mindful parenting (McCaffrey, Reitman, & Black, 2017). This is further strengthened by the explanation of Gouveia et al (2016), that biologically and evolutionarily, women are better in terms of parenting than men. Women tend to be willing to care for, full of warmth, affection and attention to their children. Other findings also reveal that, in terms of cognitive function, women are much better at observing details so it is possible for them to be more aware of the emotions of their thoughts (Alispahic & Hasanbegovic-Anic, 2017).

The data in table 4 explained that mothers who are classified as early adults get higher scores on mindful parenting than those who are in the middle adult age group. This finding is in line with Utami, Khasanah, Mubarak and Sartika (2019), mothers who are younger in age show higher mindful parenting compared to older mother. However, the results of this study are not same with previous research which showed that high mindfulness was influenced by increasing parent's age. Alispahic & Hasanbegovic-Anic (2017), explained that older people are better able to manage and regulate their emotions. With increasing age means that there is a change in maturity, indicated by the ability of parents to be more present to their children because they are not disturbed by intense emotions.

In terms of mother's educational background, it was found that the value of the "high" *mindful parenting category* was obtained by mothers with Bachelor Degree. As explained by Hidayati, Rahayu and Khasanah (2019) that *mindfulness is* influenced by educational factors, the higher the education level of parents, the higher their

ability to manage their routines. With this education, parents are considered to be better able to obtain accurate information about child care and development supported by advanced technology.

For the employment status of mothers, from table 4 it can be seen that mothers who does not work tend to score "high" compared to mothers who work. This is possible because working mothers are susceptible to parenting stress, they have to leave home and leave their children for about 8-10 hours while working mothers (Bhattacharjee & Tripathi, 2012). Further explained by Greaves et al (2017), working mothers are prone to emotional exhaustion due to the multiple roles they play. When you have a high workload, it makes it difficult for you to manage your time and emotions between work and household.

Furthermore, one of the interesting findings from this study is the mindful parenting of mothers with children aged middle childhood is not related to the mother's age, education level and employment status. This result contradicts the findings of previous research, namely Lo et al (2019) explaining that the age of parents has a correlation with the application of mindful parenting, where the older the parents, the more mindful parenting increases. Likewise, according to Alispahic & Hasanbegovic-Anic (2017), the older the parents, the more awareness they will apply in parenting. Previous research has also explained that the mother's level of education affects mindful parenting (Gouveia et al, 2016). Furthermore, Gouveia et al (2016) suggest that parents with higher educational backgrounds are associated with greater opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills in parenting and parent-child relationships.

The findings of this study are same with the results of research by Kumalasari and Fourianalistyawati (2021), that mindful parenting in mothers in Indonesia cannot be associated with demographic factors, such as age and education level. However, it needs to be related to individual subjective factors such as parenting cognition. The difference between the results of this study and previous studies is thought to be due to differences in research respondents. The respondents of this study were mothers

who had children in middle childhood age, whereas in previous research conducted by Lo et al (2018) involved a wider range of research respondents, ranging from mothers with pre-school age children, elementary school age to middle school age, thus allowing the age range of respondents to be wider than the age range of respondents in this study.

This difference is also predicted because the respondents in this study focused only on mothers, while the research conducted by Gouveia et al (2016) involved respondents from both parents, namely father and mother. In addition, the results of this study are not same with previous research, it is possible because in the current era, it is easier for parents to get knowledge about positive parenting, for example, parents can participate in parenting programs (Mubarok, 2016; Nooraeni, 2017; Akhyadi & Mulyono, 2018; Lestari, 2019). Positive parenting programs can provide effective results to improve three aspects of mindful parenting skills, namely listening attentively, emotional awareness of self and children, and self-control and children without judgment (Mubarok, 2016).

Conclusion

The results of this research about mindful parenting on mothers who have children with middle childhood age found that the category of "moderate" and "high" mindfulness. Mindful parenting Mothers who are classified as "high" are mothers with early adulthood, bachelor degree and employment status as Housewives. Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that the mother's age, education level and employment status cannot predict mindful parenting in mothers with middle childhood age.

Suggestion

Suggestions that can be given to further researchers can use a wider range of respondents, for example the age range of respondents or the location of research respondents who can represent all of Indonesia.

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