

Mindful Parenting:

Study on Parents of Preschool Children

Ayu Tuty Utami*, Andhita Nurul Khasanah, Ali Mubarak, Sarah Sartika

Faculty of Psychology
Universitas Islam Bandung
Bandung, Indonesia
*ayu.tutyutami@unisba.ac.id

Abstract—Parenting needs a calm and aware state regarding what parents might be facing at that moment. Also, it requires parents to be mindful; thus, they are more aware of their emotions, accept situation, and improve quality of their interaction. This is called mindful parenting. This type of parenting becomes more understood by parents today. More evidence supports mindfulness in parenting, this study analysed and described mindful parenting of pre-schoolers' parents in Bandung City, Indonesia. The total of 163 parents completed self-reported questionnaires using Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire developed by McCaffrey, Reitman, and Black [1]. The demographic data, including age, sex, education background, monthly income, and number of children were reported by respondents. Sample of this research was preschools in centre region of Bandung. The range of mindful parenting was divided into "high" and "low". Most of parents with preschool children had high level of mindful parenting. Total of 12 fathers had high mindfulness in parenting and 123 mothers were also categorized high on mindful parenting. Previous research found that parents' age becomes one of several factors affecting mindfulness, particularly in period of late adulthood. This result was in contrast with data which found that higher score of mindful parenting was distributed in all range of ages. In line with age, education was found as one contributing factor in mindful parenting. According to this result, high score of mindfulness in parenting was spread in all range of parents' education, starting from elementary school to master's degree.

Keywords: *mindful parenting, preschool children*

I. INTRODUCTION

Majority of parents will experience stressful conditions in parenting which are caused by many responsibilities taken by parents [1]. Parents change their lifestyle and create an adjusted regulation to be able to raise their children well. Emotional, physical, and behavioural issues in children often increase parents' stress on children's rearing and fatigue which can potentially affect their lives and behaviour [2].

Ability to manage parents' stress will have an impact on their psychological condition which will become calmer and more focus in daily situation. This is commonly called as the context of childcare. Furthermore, clear, calm, focused and present state of mind is what commonly referred to as 'being present'. In addition, mindfulness is a state where an individual displays behaviour without giving any judgment on what

happens [3]. Mindfulness is based on an increased awareness which constantly monitors state of one self and external environment. Also, focused attention is necessary to produce more open and fuller awareness of parents' experiences [4]. In parenting, this state was introduced by Kabat-Zinn as Mindful Parenting which means "paying full attention to children and there are number of ways to conduct parenting, such as being conscious, being at the moment, and not judging" [5].

Mindful parenting is considered helpful to reduce parental reactivity and increase their patience, flexibility, responsiveness, consistency, goals and values adopted in parenting. Mindful parenting allows parents to stop destructive cycle of negativity and choose effective parenting strategies [6].

Mindful parenting will be accomplished if parents become more aware of parental dysfunction condition and habits that are activated under states of stress and automatic strong emotion [7].

Previous studies found that individuals with a mindful state experience less stress and self-compassion, decrease anxiety or depression, obtain countless inspiration, and feel happier, grateful, and satisfied with their lives. A high state of mindfulness is also related to individual's awareness of self-emotions, self-acceptance, and better ability to correct uncomfortable feelings [5]. Numerous positive things obtained when parents are mindful which inspire researchers to conduct this research which aims at obtaining a clear picture of parents' condition in the city of Bandung. The results are expected to illustrate whether parents who have pre-school children in Bandung are in the state of mindful parenting or not. Furthermore, this study used Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire (MIPQ), compiled by McCaffrey, Reitman and Black [8]. They tested 2 dimensions, namely mindful discipline and being in the moment with child. The range of scores used in this study is in group norm. By doing so, the results cannot be generalized or compared to other groups. The highest score in this group was 132 while the lowest one was 63. Two ranges were used in explaining mindful parenting, "high" and "low".

In addition to the use of MIPQ measurement tool, the researchers conducted an analysis of demographic factors related to mindful parenting.

Theoretically, the obtained data will add references to factors and aspects influencing mindful parenting.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Population of this research is parents who have pre-school age children based in the city of Bandung.

B. Data Collection and Analysis

The sample was sorted by systematic random sampling technique. Thus, kindergarten/PAUD/KOBER/RA in Bandung were the target sample of this study.

Based on the number of kindergartens available in Bandung, 442 schools were chosen as samples. The estimated number of students in each school is 40-60 students. In addition, the number of sampled schools were 12 schools with 480 respondents. However, only 9 schools wanted to be samples with a total of 163 respondents.

The data was analysed by description methods from the questionnaires and demographic data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Data

TABLE I. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Variable	Category	%
Age	21-30	25%
	31-40	53%
	41-50	19%
	51-60	0,6%
	61-70	0,6%
Education	Elementary school	5%
	Junior high school	16%
	Senior high school	31%
	Associate degree diploma	10%
	Bachelor's degree	33%
	Master's degree	3%
Ethnic Group	Sundanese	41%
	Javanese	11%
	Bataknese	1%
	Minangnese	2%
	Betawis	0,6%
	Javanese-Balinese	0,6%
	Other	41%
	Income	<< 3 million rupiah/month
3-5 million /month		21%
5-10 million /month		8%
More than 10 million /month		4%
Other : _____/month		0,6%
No response		51%
Number of children	1 child	33%
	2 children	42%
	3 children	16%
	4 children	5%
	6 children	0,6%
	No response	1%
	Total N	163

In regards to age variable, based on Table 1. 53% respondents are generally in their 30-40, while in ethnic variable, the most common respondents were Sundanese with a total of 41%. Then, variable of income showed that most of no response related to the average amount of parents' monthly income.

Majority of respondents reported that they have more than 1 child who are Sundanese. However, over 30% of respondents did not reveal their ethnicity and monthly income.

B. An Overview of Mindful Parenting of Pre-schooler Parents in Bandung

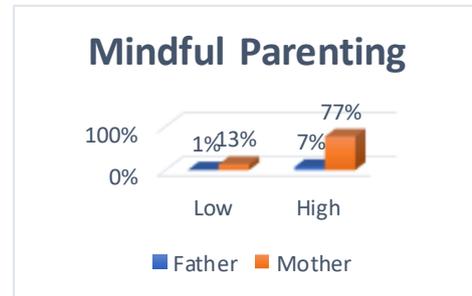


Fig. 1. Graphic of mindful parenting.

Based on data in Figure 1. the highest data distribution is in 'high' range with the total of 77% mothers and 7% fathers. According to these data, the majority of respondents are mothers and generally both mothers and fathers is in state of mindful parenting. Furthermore, the domination of 'high' category of mindful parenting indicating that parents in Bandung are able to demonstrate attitude of being in the moment with their children as well as possess high self-efficacy as one of components in mindful parenting based on previous studies found in [8]. These results also suggest that since woman are biologically and evolutionarily better prepared than men in the role of child rearing, they tend to be more willing to adopt and implement warmth, compassion, and mindful attitudes towards their children [9].

Others findings also revealed that gender differences could be explained by cognitive functioning. Women generally are much better in observing details so it is highly likely for them to be more aware with their emotions and minds [10].

C. Results of Demographic Data Analysis

The data in Table 2. Reveal that adults in the early age group obtain higher score on mindful parenting compared to those in the late age group. This result is in contrast with previous findings demonstrating that higher mindfulness is influenced by the increasing age of parents. Alispahic & Hasanbegovic-Anic found that adults are more able to manage and regulate their emotions [10]. Increasing age means maturation change indicated by parents' ability to be more present because they are not interrupted by their intense emotions.

TABLE II. MINDFUL PARENTING AND AGE SCORE

Age range	Low Mindful Parenting Score	High Mindful Parenting Score	Total
21-30	5	37	42
31-40	15	72	87
41-50	4	28	32
51-60	1	0	1
61-70	1	0	1
Total	26	137	163

Furthermore, regarding educational background of parents, “high” mindful parenting score is obtained by those who studied at least from high school to master's program. This is reinforced by Sudarsono's findings which revealed that mindfulness is influenced by factor of education. It is because the higher parents’ level of education, the higher their ability to manage their daily routine [11].

TABLE III. MINDFUL PARENTING AND EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Education	Low Mindful Parenting Score	High Mindful Parenting Score	Total
Associate Degree Diploma	3	14	17
Bachelor’s Degree	3	50	53
Master’s Degree	0	5	5
Senior High School	10	40	50
Junior High School	13	20	19
Elementary School	3	5	8
No Response	1	3	4
Total	26	137	163

From the data above, it was found that parents with at least high school background are related to higher literacy awareness. In addition, they are also considered to have higher ability to obtain proper information regarding child care and development which is supported by advanced technology.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this study, it was found that mindful parenting of parents with preschool age children in the city of

Bandung is high. In addition, age factor is not directly related to high mindful parenting, whereas higher education shows higher mindful parenting score. Furthermore, other factors need to be further investigated because they may have a greater contribution to mindful parenting.

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