



The Influence of Parenting Stress towards Parental Well-Being in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era

Vivi Irzalinda[✉], Devi Nawangsasi, Sugiana

DOI: 10.15294/ijeces.v10i2.50989

Universitas Lampung, Lampung, Indonesia

History Article

Submitted Oct 2021

Revised Dec 2021

Accepted June 2022

Keywords:

Parenting stress; Parental well-being; Early childhood; Covid-19

Abstract

The Covid 19 pandemic has hit Indonesia for the last 1.5 years. This pandemic impacts various aspects of life in society, including economic, educational, socio-cultural, technological aspects. Various changes caused several problems from different systems, and one of them is family education. Better system in the family management needs to be done, such as the management of parenting stress, which will improve the parental well-being, thus creating family resilience in facing the covid 19 pandemic. This study aims to find out the effect of parenting stress on parental well-being. The research method using quantitative methods and research design is survey. The number of samples used in this study was 70 parents, with the characteristics of having a child aged 1-6 years. The sample was elderly people living in Bandar Lampung City and Lampung Regency. Data retrieval technique using questionnaires from google form distributed through Whatsapp group of early childhood education teachers. The technique used to analyze the data was simple linear regression analysis. The results showed that parenting stress had an effect on the parental well-being ($\beta = 0.428$, $p = 0.005$), and effective contribution = 42.8%). It means the higher parenting stress will lowering parental well-being, with an effective contribution of 42.8 percent. It shows that 42.8 percent of the parental well-being of parents is influenced by parenting stress, and other variables on the parental well-being influence the remaining 57.2 percent.

How to cite

Irzalinda, V., Nawangsasi, D., Sugiana. (2022). The Influence of Parenting Stress towards Parental Well-Being in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era. *Indonesia Journal of Early Childhood Education Studies*, 11(1), 68-74.

[✉]Correspondence Author:
E-mail: viviirzalinda@fkip.unila.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia affected all aspects of people's lives, including the economy, health, social, security and education. During the last 1.5 years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indonesian government issued a policy to work from home, learning from home and online learning. So that the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic affects various aspects, one of which is the family and school system. The risk of the Covid-19 pandemic from the educational aspect has resulted in parents working together with teachers to carry out online-based home education. Government regulations regarding social distancing and online learning at home make students spend their time studying at home. Thus, parents need to increase multitasking between work and parenting or accompanying school children at home. In addition, parents may feel an additional burden to supervise and accompany learning at home (Choi, Tessler, & Kao, 2020).

According to Kandedes (2020), violence cases against children and women increased by around 50 percent from March 2020 to April 2020. Two factors that make children vulnerable to becoming victims of violence during the pandemic include parent-child conflict due to disharmony and family economic problems due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The high cases of violence against children and women are caused by parents who do not have good parental well-being and the increased stress during the Covid 19 pandemic. The parental well-being of families becomes important during the pandemic because it is related to raising children, maintaining relationships and a sense of security, negotiating family rules or traditions, dealing with uncertainty in family life, and family upheaval (Prime, Wade, & Browne, 2020).

Meanwhile, few previous studies have examined the parental well-being of parents from the parenting aspect due to the Covid-19 crisis, which only affects parents. Research on parental well-being is important, because it will impact children's development when parents raise children. However, past research has only focused on general declines in well-being as a result of fear of the virus and its economic impact (Di Renzo et al., 2020; Lyu, Xu, Cheng, & Li, 2020) or loneliness as a result of social distancing during lockdowns (Armour, et al. 2020; Brodeur, Clark, Fleche, & Powdthavee, 2020; Hamermesh, 2020). However, very few studies have looked at its specific impact on parents or investigated the role of parenting responsibilities (Etheridge &

Spantig, 2020). Nevertheless, parental well-being is an important outcome, both in itself and as a determinant of children's negative behaviour (Camehl, Spiess, & Hahlweg, 2020; Spinelli, Lionetti, Pastore, & Fasolo, 2020), and adherence to measures put in place to stop the spread of Covid-19 (Krekel et al., 2020). In addition, the subjective well-being of parents (parental well-being) affects parenting skills and parental sensitivity, which affects children's development (Wilson & Durbin, 2010). Parental well-being is important during the first years of a child's life since the child begins to develop social skills during infancy and toddlerhood (Brownell, Svetlova, Anderson, Nichols, & Drummond, 2012). According to (Brownell et al., 2012), parents who experience high levels of depression and anxiety affect the prosocial development of toddlers.

Other problems faced by families during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as social distancing, sheltering at home, quarantine, the closing of child care and schools, financial instability and social relations, and lack of social interaction, have increased parenting stress and psychological pressure on parents who caring for children around the world (Brooks et al., 2020). Risk factors from economic instability and parenting stress from parenting will impact the risk of child abuse being exacerbated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (Humphreys, Myint, & Zeanah, 2020). Parenting stress significantly increases the risk of parenting behaviours such as psychological aggression, corporal punishment, and negligent parental behaviour (Lee, Perron, Taylor, & Guterman, 2011). Psychological aggression is defined as passing on information to a child that is worthless, unloved, unwanted, or threatened with psychological violence. Corporal punishment includes the use of corporal punishment that aims to improve or control a child's behaviour. Negligent behaviour is defined as that which does not meet the child's basic needs or rights, resulting in a hazard to the child's well-being (Proctor & Dubowitz, 2014).

Based on the literature study above regarding the importance of parental well-being, which will have an impact on the development of early childhood, the researchers suspect that there is an influence of parenting stress on the parental well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, this study aims to analyze the effect of parenting stress on the parental well-being of parents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHOD

This study is quantitative research with the type of survey research. The research sample is parents who have early childhood aged 1-6 years. The sampling technique used was a google form distributed through the WhatsApp group of early childhood education teachers in Bandar Lampung City and District. The number of parents who were sampled was 70 people.

The data collection techniques use a form of a questionnaire. It consists of two questionnaires, namely the parenting stress questionnaire and the subjective well-being questionnaire of parents. The parenting stress questionnaire was instrumented based on the Parental Stress Scale by Nærde & Hukkelberg (2020) with modifications. Meanwhile, the parental well-being questionnaire for parents uses a questionnaire from the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by Hills & Argyle (2002) and Kashdan (2004) with adaptations and modifications. The reliability of the parenting stress variable with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.775. The reliability of the variable of parental well-being with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.795.

The measurement of the parenting stress variable consists of 18 questions. Each question is given a scale with the following conditions: strongly disagree is given a score of 1, disagree is given a score of 2, agree is given a score of 3, and strongly agree is given a score of 4. The measurement of the parental well-being variable consists of 15 questions. Each question is given a scale with the following conditions: very dissatisfied is given a score of 1, dissatisfied is given a score of 2, satisfied is given a score of 3, and very satisfied is given a score of 4. The scores for each dimension of each variable are added up, and a total score is obtained, and then each score is transformed into index form. The overall variables used cut-off points with groups: high (> 66.1%), moderate (33.1% - 66.0%) and low (\leq 33.0%). Data analysis was carried out descriptively and inferentially using the SPSS application. The data analyzed descriptively include parental well-being and parenting stress. Inferential data analysis technique using simple linear regression analysis with F test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Parenting Stress

The results of the item level analysis stated that as many as 67.1 percent of respondents were quite satisfied with their role as parents during

the Covid-19 pandemic. However, as many as 10 percent of respondents said they were dissatisfied with their role as parents during the Covid-19 pandemic. As many as 31.4 percent of respondents stated that they suffered and could not carry out their role as parents during the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, as many as 40 percent of respondents stated that they did not suffer and were desperate to carry out their role as parents during the Covid-19 pandemic. More than half (75.7%) of respondents stated that they still enjoy spending time with their children. However, the remaining (24.3%) of respondents did not enjoy spending time with their children during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is stated that parents become more busy managing the burden of home, care and work.

In addition, as many as 28.6 percent of respondents stated that they had enough time for themselves outside of their parental role. However, the remaining 71.4 percent of respondents stated that they did not have time for themselves outside of their parenting role. More than half (77.1%) of respondents stated that they find it difficult to balance the role of parenting with other responsibilities. Half (50%) of respondents stated that they could support their family financially during the Covid-19 pandemic. As many as 58.6 percent of respondents stated that they found it difficult to spend time together during the pandemic, whether to play, study, or tell stories. Meanwhile, as many as 74.3 percent of respondents feel uncomfortable leaving their children alone to study at home. In addition, more than half (73.1%) of respondents stated that they were more depressed while accompanying children to study online at home during the Covid-19 pandemic.

When analyzed using categories, it is known that 74.3 percent of respondents have parenting stress in the moderate category. As many as 15.7 percent of respondents stated that they had parenting stress in the high category. Meanwhile, only 10 percent of respondents have parenting stress in the low category. Based on the analysis results, it is known that the average percentage (50.8%) of respondents stated that they had parenting stress in the moderate category. It means that the respondent's parenting stress during the Covid-19 pandemic is in the moderate category. The percentage of parenting stress that is quite a lot in the moderate category must be followed up immediately, so it will not cause high stress or cause depression in parents. Thus, the role of parenting for children will not run optimally during this Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by category of parenting stress

No	Category	n	%
1	Low	7	10,0
2	Middle	52	74,3
3	High	11	15,7
	Total	70	100,0
	Mean ± Std	50,8 ± 16,7	
	Min – Max	7,4 – 100	

Parental well-being

From the item level analysis results, it was stated that 40 percent of respondents were not happy with the parenting way. On the other hand, during the Covid-19 pandemic, it shows that 54.3 percent of respondents felt uninterested in other people. In addition, 61.1 percent of respondents stated there is a gap between what they want to do and what they have been done. As many as 45.7 percent of respondents felt unhappy. As for other things, respondents also stated that 64.9 percent of respondents said they always felt mentally alert. As many as 56.1 percent of respondents can not have fun with other people. In addition, as many as 44 percent of respondents said they felt mentally unwell.

On the other hand, respondents also stated that as many as 61.5 percent of respondents did not have a certain meaning and purpose in life in life. Furthermore, as many as 45.7 percent of respondents said they did not think they looked attractive. In addition, respondents also stated that 37.2 percent of respondents could not control their own life specifically during the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, 67.1 percent of respondents stated that they did not have good memories of the past during Covid-19 and made them anxious. Meanwhile, 41 percent of respondents stated that they did not find many funny things that made them happy for the past year.

When analyzed by category level, it is known that the most significant percentage (67.1%) of respondents have parental well-being in the medium category. A total of 28.6 percent of respondents have parental well-being in the high category. However, only 4.3 percent of respondents have parental well-being in the low category. When averaged as a whole, it is known that the average percentage (59.1%) of respondents has parental well-being in the medium category. It means that the parental well-being of respondents during the Covid-19 pandemic is at a moderate level. Only a few respondents have parental well-being at low and high levels.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents based on parental well-being categories

No	Categori	n	%
1	Low	3	4,3
2	Middle	47	67,1
3	High	20	28,6
	Total	70	100,0
	Mean ± Std	59,1 ± 11,3	
	Min – Max	24,1 – 86,9	

The effect of parenting stress on the parental well-being

The analysis results show a significant negative effect between parenting stress and parental well-being ($\beta = 0.428$, $\text{sig} = 0.000$). It means the higher parenting stress will lowering parental well-being, with an effective contribution of 42.8 percent. It shows that 42.8 percent of the parental well-being of parents is influenced by parenting stress, and other variables on the parental well-being influence the remaining 57.2 percent.

Table 3. The effect of parenting stress on the parental well-being

Variabel	Parental well-being		
	Beta	Standardized	T Sig.
<i>Parenting stress</i> (skor)	0,428	-	0,000 ***
Df	70		
F(p)	15,291 (0,000)		
R ²	0,428		
Adj R ²	0,284		

DISCUSSION

From the results of a simple linear regression test, it is known that there is a significant negative effect between parenting stress and parental well-being. It means that the higher the parenting stress in the parents, the lower the parental well-being. The results of this study are in line with Fitri & Nashori (2021), which show a significant negative contribution from Islamic religious coping and partner support to parenting stress for mothers who accompany children to school from home in the COVID-19 pandemic situation. This research is also supported by Sumakul & Ruata study (2020), which states that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the psychological well-being of participants. The psychological conditions experienced were stress, fear, and anxiety related

to the dangers of Covid-19 transmission and the “stay at home” condition caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the study by Sunarti, Kamilah, Almas, & Pitriani (2021) revealed that female health worker respondents had low subjective well-being, lower marital interactions, and work and family problems among female workers with shifts.

The results of this study revealed that the average subjective well-being was in the moderate category. That is, respondents have relatively good subjective well-being. However, there are still some respondents who have subjective well-being in the low category. It will be the focus of the government’s attention in the future. Subjective welfare is considered important because the parents will take care of and care for their children during the Covid-19 pandemic. If parents do not have subjective well-being or good life satisfaction, it will impact the child’s development later. The results of this study are supported by a study in German families, which found that the pandemic crisis decreased the subjective well-being of parents with children, especially for parents with young children, and parents with junior high school children. The results also suggest that public policy measures to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic can significantly affect family well-being, with implications for child development and parental labour market outcomes (Huebener, Waights, Spiess, Siegel, & Wagner, 2021).

From the analysis results, it is known that the average parenting stress score is 50.8 percent. It means that parenting stress is relatively moderate. It can be seen in the number of respondents who answered high scores on negative statements and low scores on positive statements. The results of this study are slightly higher than the results of the study of Malhi, Bharti, & Sidhu (2021), which revealed that as many as 35.7 percent of respondents from the total variation of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire had parenting stress with negative and positive effects. It means that parents respondents have higher stress levels in Bandar Lampung City and District than in India. It happens due to many internal factors and external factors of each research. Many internal and external factors, such as differences in the number of respondents, respondent characteristics, culture, and education, caused stress levels in this study to be slightly higher than in India.

In addition, based on the study results, it was revealed that parents during the pandemic became more stressed in terms of home arrangements, family economy, accompanying children to study at home and dividing parental work with

homework. The results of this study are in line with Lilawati (2021), who stated that the role of parents at home includes assisting children in learning, being a motivator for children, and facilitating children’s education. However, in addition to parents experiencing many stress factors during this pandemic, parents have difficulty assisting children’s learning at home. It can be seen from the results of research that parents have difficulty in terms of technology or online learning applications for children, teaching children to make homework or assignments. The results of this study also support previous research (Harahap & Purwanta, 2021), revealing that facilities and infrastructure, time sharing and mastery of applications are the main problems in the learning implementation in PAUD.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study results, there was a significant negative effect between parenting stress and the subjective well-being of parents. Respondents stated that most of the percentage (74.3%) had parenting stress in the moderate category. Meanwhile, the most significant percentage (67.1%) of respondents had the subjective well-being of their parents in the medium category. It also shows that the average respondent has parenting stress in the medium category, and the subjective well-being of parents is average in the medium category. Suggestions that can be given based on the results of the research are as follows; conduct training and counselling from academics, NGOs, and the government regarding the importance of improving coping strategies against parenting stress and training on the subjective well-being of parents during the pandemic, in order to make a family resilience with implications for child development.

REFERENCES

- Armour, C., McGlinchey, E., Butter, S., McAloney-Kocaman, K., & McPherson, K. (2020). *Understanding the longitudinal psychosocial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United Kingdom; a methodological overview of The COVID-19 Psychological Wellbeing Study*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/9p4tv>
- Brodeur, A., Clark, A. E., Fleche, S., & Powdthavee, N. (2020). COVID-19, lockdowns and well-being: Evidence from Google Trends. *Journal of Public Economics*, 193, 104346. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104346>
- Brooks, S. K., Webster, R. K., Smith, L. E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Greenberg, N., & Ru-

- bin, G. J. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it : rapid review of the evidence. *The Lancet*, 395(10227), 912–920. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30460-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30460-8)
- Brownell, C. A., Svetlova, M., Anderson, R., Nichols, S. R., & Drummond, J. (2012). Socialization of Early Prosocial Behavior: Parents' Talk About Emotions is Associated With Sharing and Helping in Toddlers. *Infancy*, 18(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7078.2012.00125.x>
- Camehl, G. F., Spiess, C. K., & Hahlweg, K. (2020). The Effects of a Parenting Program on Maternal Well-Being: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial. *B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*, 20(4), 191–200. <https://doi.org/10.1515/bejeap-2020-0084>
- Choi, M., Tessler, H., & Kao, G. (2020). Arts and crafts as an educational strategy and coping mechanism for Republic of Korea and United States parents during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Review of Education*, 66(5–6), 715–735. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-020-09865-8>
- Di Renzo, L., Gualtieri, P., Pivari, F., Soldati, L., Attinà, A., Cinelli, G., ... De Lorenzo, A. (2020). Eating habits and lifestyle changes during COVID-19 lockdown: An Italian survey. *Journal of Translational Medicine*, 18(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12967-020-02399-5>
- Etheridge, B., & Spantig, L. (2020). The gender gap in mental well-being during the Covid-19 outbreak: Evidence from the UK. *Covid Economics: Vetted and Real-Time Papers*, 1(33), 46–72.
- Fitri, R. K., & Nashori, F. (2021). Islamic Religious Coping, Partner Support and Parenting Stress On Mothers Who Accompany Their Children Study From Home in a Covid-19 Pandemic Situation. *Psikis : Jurnal Psikologi Islami*, 7(1), 45–61. <https://doi.org/10.19109/psikis.v7i1.7906>
- Hamermesh, D. S. (2020). Lockdowns, Loneliness and Life Satisfaction. *NBER Working Paper*, April. <https://doi.org/10.3386/W27018>
- Harahap, S. A., & Purwanta, E. (2021). Problematika Pembelajaran Daring dan Luring Anak Usia Dini bagi Guru dan Orang tua di Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 5(2), 1825–1836. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v5i2.1013>
- Hills, P., & Argyle, M. (2002). The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: A Compact Scale for the Measurement of Psychological Well-Being. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 33, 1073–1082.
- Huebener, M., Waights, S., Spiess, C. K., Siegel, N. A., & Wagner, G. G. (2021). Parental well-being in times of Covid-19 in Germany. *Review of Economics of the Household*, 19(1), 91–122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-020-09529-4>
- Humphreys, K. L., Myint, M. T., & Zeanah, C. H. (2020). Increased Risk for Family Violence During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Pediatrics*, 145(4). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-0982>
- Kandedes, I. (2020). Kekerasan terhadap Anak di Masa Pandemi Covid 19. *Jurnal Harkat Media Komunikasi Gender*, 16(1), 66–67.
- Kashdan, T. B. (2004). The assessment of subjective well-being (issues raised by the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire). *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36(5), 1225–1232. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(03\)00213-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(03)00213-7)
- Krekel, C., Swanke, S., Neve, J. De, Fancourt, D., Pothavee, N., Prati, A., ... Pinchuk, K. (2020). ARE HAPPIER PEOPLE MORE COMPLIANT? Are Happier People More Compliant? *Global Evidence From Three Large-Scale Surveys During Covid-19 Lockdowns 1 London School of Economics University of Oxford University College London Draft 1 : ARE HAPPIER PEOPLE MORE*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/65df4>
- Lee, S. J., Perron, B. E., Taylor, C. A., & Guterma, N. B. (2011). Paternal Psychosocial Characteristics and Corporal Punishment of Their 3-Year-Old Children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 16(1), 71–87. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260510362888>
- Lilawati, A. (2021). Peran Orang Tua dalam Mendukung Kegiatan Pembelajaran di Rumah pada Masa Pandemi. *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 5(1), 549–558. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v5i1.630>
- Lyu, K., Xu, Y., Cheng, H., & Li, J. (2020). The implementation and effectiveness of intergenerational learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from China. *International Review of Education*, 66(5–6), 833–855. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-020-09877-4>
- Malhi, P., Bharti, B., & Sidhu, M. (2021). Stress and Parenting During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Psychosocial Impact on Children. *Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, 88(5), 481. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12098-021-03665-0>
- Nærde, A., & Hukkelberg, S. S. (2020). An examination of validity and reliability of the Parental Stress Scale in a population based sample of Norwegian parents. *PLoS ONE*, 15(12 December), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242735>
- Prime, H., Wade, M., & Browne, D. T. (2020). Risk and resilience in family well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. *American Psychologist Association*, 75(5), 631–643. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000660>
- Proctor, L. J., & Dubowitz, H. (2014). *Child neglect: Challenges and controversies. In Handbook of Child Maltreatment.*
- Spinelli, M., Lionetti, F., Pastore, M., & Fasolo, M. (2020). Parents' Stress and Children's Psychological Problems in Families Facing the COVID-19 Outbreak in Italy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11(July), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01713>
- Sumakul, Y., & Ruata, S. C. N. (2020). Kesejahteraan Psikologis dalam masa Pandemi COVID-19.

- Journal of Psychology "Humanlight,"* 1(1), 1–7.
- Sunarti, E., Kamilah, D., Almas, H., & Pitriani, S. (2021). Family Subjective Well-Being of Health Workers Women During The Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Family Sciences*, 5(2), 103–120. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jfs.v5i2.33152>
- Wilson, S., & Durbin, C. E. (2010). Effects of paternal depression on fathers' parenting behaviors: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30(2), 167–180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2009.10.007>