



**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STRESS LEVEL
AND THE TENDENCY TOWARD VIOLENT BEHAVIOR IN CHILDREN**

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ABSTRACT

Parental stress is often associated with the occurrence of child abuse, as stress may lead parents to engage in violent behaviors under the guise of discipline. Such violence can significantly affect children's developmental outcomes in a lasting manner. This research aimed to ascertain the relationship between the level of parenting stress and violent behavior in children. This quantitative study used a cross-sectional design. Data was collected by 79 mothers with first-grade students at Muhammadiyah 9 Elementary School in Banjarmasin using total sampling. The bivariate analysis with Spearman's rank correlation showed a significant relationship between parenting stress level and violent behavior in children (p -value= 0.000, $\alpha < 0.05$), with a correlation coefficient of 0.698. The results showed that there was a strong positive correlation. It means that lower levels of parenting stress are associated with reduced violent behavior in children. Effective stress management and a good parenting approach are recommended to minimize the risk of violence for children.

Keywords: behavior; children; parenting stress level; violence

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INTRODUCTION

Child abuse remains an underreported phenomenon, with the visible manifestations of violence against children representing only a fraction of the actual extent of the problem (Pramono & Dwiyantri Hanandini, 2022). Verbal violence and physical violence usually occur in childcare both intentionally and unintentionally. These forms of violence include intimidating, belittling, and hurtful speech; cursing; pinching; and even hitting children (Novita, 2021). This is often a result of the stress experienced by parents due to the challenges of parenting, which can lead to the use of violent discipline methods (Sary, 2023). As indicated by data from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Latin America and the Caribbean, the prevalence of violence within the home is 80% higher than in Haiti, Jamaica, and Suriname (UNICEF, 2022). In November 2022, there were 23,099 cases of child abuse in Indonesia (SIMFONI-PPA, 2022). In the province of South Kalimantan, the number of cases of child abuse increased to 499. Similarly, there was an increase in cases of child abuse in Banjarmasin, with 82 cases of domestic violence. The East Banjarmasin region witnessed a notable surge in child abuse cases between 2020-2022, with 23 documented incidents. While other regions of Banjarmasin also exhibited an uptick in this phenomenon, the observed increase remained within a relatively stable range (DPPPA Kota Banjarmasin, 2022).

One of the most frequently occurring cases in Banjarmasin involved a five-year-old girl with the initials KN. She was subjected to physical abuse and compelled to engage in commercial activities on the sidewalk of the Ahmad Yani Road area. The perpetrators of this violence

were KN's parents. Her father was employed as a parking attendant in the Ahmad Yani area and as a night watchman. This incident is reported to have been perpetrated by the child's mother, who was allegedly under the influence of alcohol (Jumahudin, 2022). The information was obtained from Banjarmasin daily news sources and identified parenting stress as a significant contributing factor, particularly in the context of economic status and work-related pressures. Two factors have been identified as causes of violence against children within the family: internal factors, including the knowledge and education level of parents, and external factors, including the environment and economic level (Sari et al., 2023). Additionally, Suyanto (2019) has identified other factors, including family problems, divorce, children born outside of wedlock, parenting stress, psychological problems, and violations of children's rights.

The occurrence of violence in children will have significant and long-lasting effects on their developmental trajectory. One of the consequences experienced by children has an impact on their health, particularly in terms of their mental and physical well-being. Social consequences related to interaction and the economy can also be detrimental to children affected by violence (Bungsu & Lukitasari, 2021). If left unchecked, parenting stress will hurt parents and children alike. This affects the care provided by parents, rendering it ineffective and influencing children's behavior (Nurlatifah & Fikrie, 2022). The findings of the study conducted by Fitriani et al (2021) indicate that parents who experience parenting stress are more likely to engage in neglectful behaviors, including ignoring their children and even committing acts of violence. High parenting stress has an impact on the relationship between parents and children, resulting in a poor relationship and parenting that is less responsive, abusive, and even authoritarian (Chung et al., 2020).

Parents play a very important role in teaching and guiding children to behave according to the norms that exist in society (Tauhidah & Noorhasanah, 2022), especially in children entering elementary school age with parenting demands on children stemming from higher academic demands and increased social demands. The academic demands placed upon children necessitate their ability to read, write, and perform mathematical calculations. The result of these demands is that parents must devote more attention to their children in order to facilitate the mastery of additional academic skills. Furthermore, additional tasks are frequently cited as a source of distress for parents, particularly in relation to their children's academic performance. This parental pressure can contribute to an increase in parenting stress experienced by mothers (Kumalasari & Gani, 2020). The stress experienced by mothers in their role as parents can be mitigated through the development of effective parenting skills. This is addressed in the concept of mindful parenting, which outlines strategies for providing positive and adaptive care to children. The application of mindful parenting in daily life has been shown to enhance parents' capacity to regulate emotions and problem-solve effectively (Gani & Kumalasari, 2019). Furthermore, the prevention of child abuse can be achieved through the provision of education to the appropriate target groups (Anggeriyane et al., 2023).

The results of the interviews with 10 mothers indicated that the mothers experienced stress due to their children's behavior and the demands of household chores or unresolved problems. During childcare, all mothers reported having used physical discipline, including hitting, pinching, and scolding their children. 5 out of 10 mothers reported having threatened their children, 3 out of 10 mothers reported having blamed and snapped at their children, and 4 out of 10 mothers reported having called their children names. All mothers were aware of the violent behaviors that occurred in children. However, during the parenting phase, mothers perceived these actions as a form of discipline, typically employed in moderation.

Consequently, this research aimed to ascertain the relationship between the level of parenting stress and violent behavior in children at Muhammadiyah 9 Elementary School in Banjarmasin.

METHOD

This quantitative study used a cross-sectional design. The population in this study were 79 mothers with first-grade students at Muhammadiyah 9 Elementary School in Banjarmasin. The sample in the study used non-probability sampling technique with total sampling. The research location was at Muhammadiyah 9 Elementary School in Banjarmasin in July 2023. Researchers used the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) questionnaire instrument developed by Judy Berry and Warren Jones (1995) translated by Muniroh (2022) containing 18 questions to assess parents' feelings about parenting and explore the positive and negative aspects of parental roles. Researchers also used a violent behavior tendency instrument that was modified by researchers from research by Nugrahani (2015) and Raras (2021) which consisted of 42 questions covering four aspects of violence, namely physical violence, psychological or verbal violence, sexual violence, and neglect. In this study, univariate analysis was performed using frequency distribution, while bivariate analysis with the Spearman rank correlation test (Rho). Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires along with informed consent and explanation of the research to respondents. Respondents signed the informed consent and the researcher accompanied the respondent while filling out the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected after the respondents completed all questionnaires. The data collection protocol was approved by the ethics commission of University of Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin, see certificate number 347/UMB/KE/V/2023.

RESULT

The study included 79 mothers, the majority of whom were between the ages of 26 and 35 (49.4%), had obtained a bachelor's degree (54.4%), and were employed full-time (63.3%). The average workday for these mothers lasted 7-8 hours (53.2%). The majority of mothers had children of the female gender (55.7%), with the majority of children aged seven years (74.7%), and the parity was the first child (55.7%). Additionally, the number of children cared for was as many as two (44.3%), and the majority of mothers did not have parenting assistance (69.6%). The duration of time spent engaging in guidance and play with children exceeded three hours (58.2%), the level of physical discipline, when it occurred, was classified as light (51.9%), and the area of the body that was most frequently struck was the legs (36.7%). Comprehensive data on the characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Respondent characteristics (n= 79)

Respondent characteristics	f	%
Age		
17 – 25 Years	1	1.3
26 – 35 Years	39	49.4
36 – 45 Years	34	43
46 – 55 Years	5	6.3
Education		
Junior High School	1	1.3
Senior High School	18	22.8
Diploma III	11	13.9
Bachelor	43	54.4
Professional Education	2	2.5
Magister	4	5.1

Respondent characteristics	f	%
Work		
Doesn't work	29	36.7
Work	50	63.3
Parity		
The first child	44	55.7
The second child	21	26.6
The third child	9	11.4
The fourth child	1	1.3
The fifth child	4	5.1
Child gender		
Male	35	44,3
Female	44	55,7
Child age		
7 Years	59	74,7
8 Years	20	25,3
Duration with children		
< 3 hours	23	29.1
3 hours	10	12.7
> 3 hours	46	58.2
Duration of working mothers		
Doesn't work	22	27.8
< 7 - 8 hours	15	19
7 - 8 hours	25	31.6
> 7 - 8 hours	17	21.5
Parenting Assistance		
Yes	24	30.4
No	55	69.6
Hit intensity		
Not hitting	30	38
Mild	41	51.9
Moderate	8	10.1
Severe	0	0
Targeted Body Part		
None	30	38
Shoulders	4	5.1
Butt	10	12.7
Feet	29	36.7
Hands	5	6.3
Upper back	1	1.3

Table 2.
The relationship between level of parenting stress and the tendency for violent behavior in children (n= 79)

Parenting Stress	Tendency for violent behavior							
	Low		Moderate		High		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Mild stress	75	94,9	2	2,5	0	0	77	97,5
Moderate stress	0	0	2	2,5	0	0	2	2,5
Severe stress	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	75	94,9	4	5,1	0	0	79	100

p Value = 0,000
r = 0,698

The results of the study indicate a correlation between parenting stress and the propensity for violent behavior in children. In total, 97.5% of respondents reported experiencing mild parenting stress, with 94.9% exhibiting low violent behavior tendencies and 2.5% demonstrating moderate violent behavior tendencies. Additionally, 2.5% of respondents indicated experiencing moderate parenting stress and exhibiting moderate violent behavior

tendencies. The results of the analysis using the Spearman rank correlation test indicate that the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be statistically inferred that there is a relationship between the level of parenting stress and the tendency of violent behavior in children, with a Spearman correlation value of 0.698. This correlation is positive and strong (Table 2).

DISCUSSION

Parenting stress

The influence of parenting stress is multifaceted, encompassing age, number of children, education, employment, economic status, parenting competence, health conditions, and developmental delays in children (Basir et al., 2023; Koamesah et al., 2021; Maghfiroh & Wijayanti, 2021). Table 1 indicates that 49.4% of respondents are in early adulthood (26-35 years old). This suggests that the age of the respondents is relatively mature and that they possess the capacity to provide care for their children. Adults tend to have experience and access to information, which enables them to manage the stress associated with parenting. This is in contrast to the findings of Maghfiroh & Wijayanti (2021), which indicate that individuals under the age of 40 are more likely to experience parenting stress. This discrepancy may be attributed to a lack of competence in child care. Therefore, parents in the middle adulthood (40-60) and late adulthood (elderly) age groups possess greater knowledge about parenting. This age range of parents exhibits maturity and a wealth of experience in parenting.

The data indicate that 54.4% of respondents have a good education, which provides them with a wealth of information acquired through the learning process. This enables respondents to gain valuable experience and a mature readiness regarding parenting. As Basir et al. (2023) have indicated, there is a positive correlation between the level of education of the mother and her level of readiness to become a parent. This implies that the more educated the mother, the greater her capacity to anticipate and address potential challenges related to childcare. Other studies have indicated that parents who engage in less reading and information-seeking activities will possess less knowledge than parents who frequently engage in reading and assiduously seek information. Consequently, their knowledge is more comprehensive (Jeniu et al., 2017, as cited in Maghfiroh & Wijayanti, 2021). The results indicated that the majority of respondents had a higher education background. However, one respondent reported experiencing moderate stress, which is inconsistent with the aforementioned explanation that parents with higher education tend to have a level of readiness to become parents who are prepared to address challenges associated with child care. The moderate stress experienced by mothers with higher education may be attributed to other factors, such as occupational demands. This study also identified one respondent with a moderate stress level who had completed high school. This finding aligns with the existing literature.

As illustrated in Table 1, approximately 63.3% of working mothers dedicate more time to activities outside the home. As Sefira (2017) notes in Basir et al. (2023), there is a correlation between maternal employment and the level of parenting stress. This is because working mothers must reconcile the demands of childcare with the responsibilities of their professional lives. The results of the study indicate that one working respondent experienced moderate stress. Working mothers are subject to considerable pressure, including demands for commitment, high dedication, and excessive workload. This can result in mothers experiencing difficulty in overcoming physical and mental fatigue as a consequence of their work, which also has an impact on their role as parents. Furthermore, one housewife respondent reported experiencing moderate stress, which was attributed to a lack of

information regarding effective parenting strategies for children. This finding is corroborated by the research of Basir et al. (2023), which indicates that housewives often have limited access to information about effective parenting practices for children and may be influenced by other factors, such as the number of children in the household. The large number of children is a significant contributing factor to parenting stress. As the number of children increases, so does the burden of care and the demands placed on parents, which in turn creates pressure on parents (Lestari, 2018, in Maghfiroh & Wijayanti, 2021).

Table 1 illustrates that 55.7% of respondents had children who were their firstborn. This can be interpreted as an indication that mothers lack experience in parenting, which may contribute to the prevalence of stress experienced by mothers due to the absence of previous parenting experience. Basir et al. (2023) posited that parents who have had previous experience caring for children tend to exhibit greater relaxation and preparedness in their parenting role. Conversely, if parents lack competence in caring for children, they may be more susceptible to experiencing parenting stress. Parenting stress experienced by mothers can be overcome if they are able to adapt to the stress they feel. The body will naturally carry out self-defense mechanisms to maintain stability and adapt to the surrounding environment. If the stress felt cannot be overcome by homeostasis, the mother can adapt her behavior in a number of ways, including attacking, withdrawing, compromising, rationalizing, diversifying her attention, compensating for the stress, identifying with the situation, repressing the stress, suppressing it, and denying it.

Tendency to violent behavior

This study did not find respondents with a high tendency of violent behavior, but in this study found a tendency of violent behavior in low to moderate limits. The tendency of low violent behavior was evidenced by 88.6% of mothers never slapped their children, 98.7% of mothers never slapped their children, all mothers never kicked their children, 88.6% of mothers never told their children to leave the house if they did not obey the rules, all mothers never insulted their children by calling them lazy, stupid or other names. In addition, 93.7% of mothers never touched their children's intimate body parts when joking and 91.1% of mothers always took care of their children when they were sick or injured. Andini et al. (2019) in Cahayanengdian & Sugito, (2022) asserted that physical violence perpetrated against children is predominantly manifested in forms such as pinching, punching, and other forms of physical assault. Conversely, instances of jambakan, encouragement, and slapping are observed to be less prevalent. This finding aligns with the results of the aforementioned research, as evidenced in Table 1. It illustrates that 51.9% of mothers engage in mild physical violence against their children, while 10.1% of mothers engage in moderate physical violence against their children. This indicates that mothers are prone to perpetrate physical violence against their children, even though the severity is within mild to moderate limits.

The findings of this study indicate that, on average, mothers engage in a greater number of instances of verbal violence and neglect than other caregivers. Verbal violence perpetrated by mothers is typified by the use of nicknames or taunts by 16.5% of mothers, the comparison of their children with friends or siblings by 41.8%, the issuing of threats by 50.6%, and the prohibition of cellphone use or outdoor play and the encouragement of academic pursuits by 87.3%. In accordance with the findings of Radja et al. (2016) in Afifah et al., (2021), which indicate that ridicule is a prevalent form of verbal violence experienced by children, this is often employed as a means of disciplinary education. Neglect by mothers based on the results of the questionnaire shows that 67.1% of mothers spend more time outside the home. This is evidenced in Table 1. which shows that 29.1% of mothers only spend less than three hours

accompanying their children to learn or play, and 12.7% of mothers spend three hours or more accompanying their children to learn or play. A total of 31.6% of mothers spend 7-8 hours working, 21.5% of mothers spend > 7-8 hours working, and 19% of mothers spend < 7-8 hours working per day. This may also indicate a lack of supervision of the child when playing with cell phones or outside the house with peers, which could potentially lead to injuries that the mother may not be immediately aware of.

The perpetration of violence by mothers may be attributed to a lack of comprehension and awareness regarding the proclivity for violent behavior in children. The majority of respondents perceive their actions as a form of disciplinary measure for their children. This finding aligns with the research of Utami et al. (2014) in Afifah et al., (2021), which suggests that mothers' use of violence is not driven by hatred towards their children, but rather by a lack of awareness that punishing children can be classified as a form of violence. The tendency of violent behavior can be prevented by understanding the contents of the Quran surah Ali Imran verse 159 and surah Al-Luqman verse 19, which explain that parents must be kind by maintaining good communication with children, apologizing to their children when they make mistakes that cause anger and lead to violent attitudes towards children, carrying out deliberations with children, and refraining from raising their voices or yelling at children. Islam prohibits parents from hitting their children.

The relationship between level of parenting stress and the tendency for violent behavior in children

The study demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation between the level of parenting stress and violent behavior in children. The correlation can be demonstrated by the responses of the majority of respondents who exhibited mild parenting stress. Specifically, 97.5% of respondents demonstrated a tendency towards low violent behavior, while only 2.5% exhibited a tendency towards moderate violent behavior. Additionally, 2.5% of respondents reported experiencing moderate parenting stress with moderate violent behavior tendencies. The 94.9% respondents who experience mild parenting stress with a low tendency of violent behavior may be influenced by factors such as high education and experience in caring for children. Mothers with higher education and experience in caring for children tend to demonstrate a level of readiness to become parents who are prepared to address challenges in childrearing.

It can be posited that the 2.5% respondents who experience mild parenting stress with a tendency to engage in moderate violent behavior may be influenced by the presence or absence of caregiving assistance and the status of the mother as a working professional. This study identified one working mother who received caregiving assistance. This finding suggests that working mothers tend to spend a significant portion of their time outside the home, limiting their interaction with their children. When the mother is present, her fatigue or negative mood may affect the child's behavior, leading to missteps or disobedience. One mother was found to have no parenting assistance and to be a working mother. This allows us to posit that other factors may support mothers in carrying out their tendencies towards moderate violence, beyond the influence of working mothers. For example, the absence of previous parenting experience may be a factor, and working mothers with higher education may only receive the information provided may assist in the reduction of stress, however, mothers may unintentionally engage in violent behaviors such as rejecting children when they invite them to talk, responding to their children's actions with physical aggression when annoyed, reprimanding children without employing any other form of discipline, and resorting to yelling when disciplining their children.

The study also revealed that 2.5% respondents exhibited moderate parenting stress and demonstrated tendencies toward moderate violent behavior. This can be influenced by a number of factors, including maternal education, maternal employment, and the presence or absence of parenting assistance. The study identified one mother with low education and no employment, who did not receive parenting assistance. This resulted in heightened stress for the mother, leading to an inclination towards exhibiting moderate violent behavior, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The number of children the mother cares for may also be a contributing factor. Furthermore, one mother with a higher education and employment status but with parenting assistance was identified. This parenting stress may be attributed to a significant workload, which not only exhausts mothers at work but also leaves them fatigued in their domestic responsibilities. The study revealed that 5.1% of participants exhibited indications of approaching the upper limits of mild parenting stress. If the stress experienced by the mother is not effectively managed, there is a potential for this mild parenting stress to evolve into moderate parenting stress. Additionally, 2.5% of participants demonstrated low violent behavior tendencies that were nearly at the upper limits. If this tendency persists, there is a possibility that it may escalate into moderate to high violent behavior tendencies.

This research is supported by the findings of Sitti & Asi (2022), which indicate a positive correlation between the parenting stress of caregivers and violent behavior in children. This suggests that an increase in the parenting stress of the caregiver mother is associated with an increase in violent behavior towards the child. Conversely, a reduction in the parenting stress of the caregiver mother is associated with a reduction in violent behavior towards the child. This is supported by research Raras (2021), which demonstrates a positive correlation between parenting stress and violent behavior in children.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study of 79 respondents, it is known that 97.5% of respondents experienced mild stress, 94.9% of respondents had a tendency to violent behavior in children in the low range, and the results of the analysis using the Spearman rank correlation test said there was a relationship between the level of parenting stress and the tendency of violent behavior in children (p -value = 0.000, $\alpha < 0.05$), with a spearman correlation value of 0.698 which shows a positive correlation direction with a strong correlation strength.

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