

Research Article

The Influence of Mother's Occupation and Employment Status on Emotional Behavior of School-age Children

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Abstract.

Women have career opportunities in various sectors of life, thus shifting from the role of mothers in household matters to being involved in the public sector and other social activities. One of the effects is that they spend limited time with children, which will affect their children's emotional development. The aim of this study was to identify the relationship between the mother's employment status and their interaction with their children and the emotional behaviour of preschool-aged children (4-6 years old), and also, to identify the relationship between the mother's occupation with emotional behaviour of preschoolers (4-6 years). The design of this study was a cross-sectional approach with a sampling technique using stratified random sampling (N=46). This research was conducted at TK Aisyiyah 24 Malang on April 22 – 28, 2019. Questionnaire-Revised (PACHIQ-R) and Emotional Behavior Problems (KMPE) instruments were used in this research. Multivariate linear regression was used to know the impact of children's emotional behaviour problems. The results showed only the level of mother-child interaction significantly affected children's emotional behaviour in a negative direction (t count > t table; $-3,419 > 2,013$; p -value=0.01). Meanwhile, the value of F count > F table ($6.965 > 2.42$; p -value = 0.00). $R^2 = 0.465$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.399$. Data were collected using The Parent-Child Interaction instrument. The results showed only the level of mother-child interaction significantly affected children's emotional behaviour in a negative direction.

Keywords: work status, interaction intensity, emotional behavior, preschool age

1. INTRODUCTION

Women have equal opportunities for careers in various sectors of life. This condition shifts the role of mothers not only as caregivers for their children but also involved in household chores, work in the public sector, and social activities. This busyness causes mothers to become quickly tired and stressed so that interactions with children

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are reduced, and the quality of interactions is not optimal (1). Therefore the child feels neglected and does not get more attention from the mother. This lack of attention will lead to behavior that attracts attention by expressing negative emotions, such as being a loner, irritable, easily sad, defiant, and rude, so children become challenging to manage (2).

Working mothers have to leave their children 7-8 hours/day for a week even that time does not include if the mother has to work outside of working hours and is active in various other social activities. The research results by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) state that the average intensity of mothers with their children in Australia is 236 minutes/day. In Europe, it is 21 minutes/day, and in America, it is 94 minutes/day (3). The results of the BPS study in Indonesia are that only 23.62% carry out activities for worship together and 13.48% read story books to children, even 0.93% of parents do not have time in a week for their children (4).

National Statistics Agency (2018) states that in February 2018, the number of female workers increased yearly to reach 50%, or around 46.29 million people, compared to the number of male workers. Data from BPS East Java Province (2018) state that the number of female workers in Malang City is 58.78% or 23,524 people from 40,015 total workers. Children's emotional behavior shows that the number of children with temperament problems is 10.57% due to working mothers (2). WHO (2016) states that 20%-43% of children aged less than 14 years experience emotional problems. National Kids Center (2018) states that emotional disorders in children in the United States in 2015-2016 were 21% or as many as 13,244,266 children (7). The study Depression and Anxiety in Preschoolers: A Review of the Past 7 Years stated that in the United States, as many as 50% of children experience anxiety disorders, and 2% experience depression from parents who work and experience higher stress (8). Other research mentions many as 10.2% experienced Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) (9), and 10.1% of children aged 4-6 years have Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (10).

Mothers who are often with children without interaction or reciprocity, use negative sentences when reprimanding children, and do not give awards or praise to children, will impact child development (11). Children who are often yelled at, scolded, reproached, and humiliated will grow up to be aggressive children towards others and have low self-confidence (12). Meanwhile, children who are given rewards and punishments according to their condition and age are proven to be more disciplined, able to obey the rules, and motivated to continue to behave well (13).

Defense Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of Defense (BALITBANG) from 696 children in Indonesia, 33% of children experience emotional and behavioral

disorders. Data analysis of the Household Health Survey (SKRT) in Indonesia related to mental and emotional disorders in children shows a relatively high number, as many as 259 per 1000 children. In the study on the morbidity of SKRT in Java and Bali, 99 per 1000 people experience symptoms of emotional disturbance (14).

The role of the family, especially mothers, will determine the emotional quality of their children in the future, so they need a proper livelihood and protection (15). This study aims to determine the mother's occupational status and intensity of interaction with the emotional behavior of preschool age children (4-6 years old). This research can detect early emotional behavior and increase the intensity of mother-child interaction to optimize the next child's development.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Materials

Child development refers to changes in all interrelated aspects of life. The pattern of developmental movements occurs dynamically, starting from conception (fertilization) and continuing throughout the human life cycle. Development is grouped into several stages, including the period before birth, infancy, early childhood, late childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and old age (16).

Development is an increase in skills in more complex body structures and functions due to maturation. The process in development is the process of differentiation of cells, tissues, organs, and body systems as a whole to optimize their functions. Emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development resulted in interaction with the environment (17).

Developments in preschool children include physical development (gross and fine motor), social (ability to interact with others), emotional (expressing feelings), and cognitive (problem-solving ability and intelligence). Preschool age is one of the most critical developmental stages because the brain is developing rapidly at that time. Efforts to support children's development require a parenting process with a stable environment and sensitivity to children's health and nutritional needs, protecting children from threats, providing opportunities for children to learn, and interacting in a responsive manner (18).

Children are introduced to their social environment. The role of parents is crucial to monitor the growth and development of children so that there are no deviations (19). Category Development of preschool age children: 1) *Psychosexual Development*. Preschool-age children are called the phallic phase, a condition in which the genital

area becomes an exciting area and is often asked by children to their parents. In this phase, children begin to understand the gender differences between boys and girls. The development in his psychological state, namely the child's egocentrism, begins to decrease (20); 2) *Psychosocial Development*. According to Erikson, the stage of psychosocial development of preschoolers is the initiative vs. guilt stage. Children begin to have the ability to do things, make decisions for themselves, and take responsibility for something they do but still want freedom. The child's decision, if opposed, will make the child feel very guilty. Guilt, if appropriately expressed and does not exceed the sense of initiative, will replace guilt with understanding to solve problems. The situation is the opposite; the child will become indecisive if the error is more than the initiative (21); 3) *Cognitive Development*. Piaget stated that children's cognitive development at preschool is in a transitional phase between conceptual and intuitive thought. Children use the same terms on objects that have similarities; for example, calling grandmother for an older woman occurs in the conceptual phase—intuitive thought phase, where the child can explain his actions. The conceptual and intuitive thought stage is where children still think everyone will have the same thoughts as them (22).

Optimizing Children's Emotional Development. *Give attention.* Another form of giving attention can be done by responding to and understanding the child's feelings, smiling at him, asking about the activities that have been carried out, establishing good communication, listening to answers enthusiastically, hugging, kissing, and giving time for the child.(23). *Introducing Various Emotions.* Emotions can be positive, such as cheerful, happy, and touched, and negative emotions, such as anger, disappointment, and sadness. Teach children in everyday life as well as with media such as videos. The child will also follow the parents' attitude in expressing emotions (24). *Make ends meet.* Feelings of security and comfort can be fulfilled by always paying attention, comforting children when they are sad, giving hugs when children feel anxious and afraid, and taking care of children's health. If the child's emotional needs are met, it will prevent the child from being inferior, anxious, and cowardly (25). *Setting an Example and Creating Positive Behavior.* Habits of greeting when entering and leaving the house, smiling, greeting teachers and friends, giving charity, throwing garbage in its place, and shaking hands as a form of respect and respect when meeting other people. *Giving Reinforcement.* Reinforcement in the form of sanctions must be adjusted to the child's growth. The sanctions must be avoided violence such as slapping, twisting, pinching, and hitting (26). *Giving Children Opportunities for Self-Actualization.* If the child's self-actualization needs experience obstacles, then the child will become a person who is closed, inferior, and anxious (27).

Working mothers will spend half of their time in the office, so time for their children is limited. Conflicts between working mothers have a dual role between workers' interests and their families welfare. Mothers become more sensitive and quickly feel physically and psychologically tired even though their presence is still awaited by the family at home, especially by the children (28). his situation hinders the mother in meeting the child's needs, such as paying attention to the child, caring for, nurturing, and monitoring, especially at the stage of growth and development (29). Children who feel neglected and do not get attention from their mothers will make mistakes to attract attention. Feelings of neglect and abandonment will be processed in the brain in the limbic system through the neocortex, thereby triggering the secretion of endocrine hormones in the hypothalamus to control memory in children (30). his condition causes children to express their emotions negatively, for example, being a loner, irritable, easily sad, rebellious, and rude. Mothers must control the child's emotional outbursts because repeated events shape the child's personality in expressing his emotions (31).

Children who experience emotional behavior disorders are characterized by aggressive behavior, manageable anxiety, withdrawal, excessive fear, frequent defiance, and impulsivity or difficulty delaying desires (32). Working mothers must understand that the problem of limited time with children can be overcome by giving particular time and taking time between work to accompany children (33).

2.2. Methods

The stratified Random Sampling technique is used in this study by identifying the general characteristics of the population, then determining the strata or class of these characteristics. The exclusion criteria in this study were: 1) Children who do not live with their mothers; 2) Mother or child who has a history of chronic physical or mental illness; 3) Refuse to participate in research.

The independent variables in this study were the mother's employment status and the intensity of the interaction, while the dependent variable was the emotional behavior of preschoolers (4-6 years). The Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire-Revised (PACIQ-R) instrument was used to assess the intensity of the interaction. A validity test was conducted on 15 respondents to get the P-value or $r_{count} > r_{table}$ results. The reliability value of Cronbach's alpha (α) > 0.951. In comparison, the Emotional Behavior Problem Questionnaire (KMPE) was used to assess emotional behavior in children.

Univariate data analysis was used to describe the demographic data of respondents. In contrast, multiple linear regression was used to determine the effect of demographic

data and the intensity of mother-child interaction on children’s emotional behavior. Using SPSS (Statistical Product for Social Science) version 26.0 software to analyze the data. The p-value is 0.05 (5%).

3. RESULTS

3.1. Respondent's demographic data

TABLE 1: Demographic Data of Respondents (n = 46).

Items	N	%
Mother's Age (Mean, SD)	33.8	4.83
Mother's Education		
Junior High School	9	19.6
Senior High School	22	47.8
Diploma	6	13
Bachelor	9	19.6
Child Age	5.3	
Child Gender		
Woman	24	52.2
Man	22	47.8
Mother's Employment Status		
Housewife	23	50
Working Mom		
Private employees	13	28.2
Government employees	5	10.9
Businessman	5	10.9
The intensity of mother-child interaction		
High	22	47.8
Moderate	19	41.3
Low	5	10.9
Children's Emotional Behavior		
Normal	28	60.9
Possible Problem	18	39.1

Table 1 is a description of the demographic data of the respondents. The average age of the mother is 34 years, while the age of the children is five years; most of the children are 52.2% female. The majority of mothers are 47.8% Senior High School education background, with 50% background as housewives. The intensity of interaction between mother and child is only 10.9% low, and the possibility of children with emotional problems is 39.1%.

3.2. Cross-distribution table

TABLE 2: Distribution of Work Status and Intensity of Interaction.

Mother's Employment Status	Interaction Intensity					
	High		Medium		Low	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Housewife	14	30.4	8	17.4	1	2.2
Working Mom	8	17.4	11	23.9	4	8.7
Total	22	47.8	19	41.3	5	10.9

TABLE 3: Distribution of Interaction Intensity with Children's Emotional Behavior.

Interaction Intensity	Children's Emotional Behavior			
	Normal		Possible Problem	
	n	%	N	%
High	21	45.7	1	2.2
Medium	7	15.2	12	26.1
Low	0	0	5	10.9
Total	28	60.9	18	39.1

Tables 2 and 3 show that mothers who do not work have a higher intensity than mothers who work 30.4%. The possibility of a child's emotional behavior disorder occurring with moderate intensity is 26.1%. The majority of participants behaved normally with high intensity 45.7%

3.3. Influence of the intensity of mother and child interaction with demographics, emotional behavior of children

TABLE 4: The Influence of Mother's Occupational Status with Demographics, Children's Emotional Behavior.

Items	t	F	R2	B	β	Adjusted R2
Intensity of mother-child interaction	-3.419*	6.965*	0.465	-0.122	-0.469	0.399
Mother's age	0.005			0.00	0.001	
Mother's Education	-1.756			-0.307	-0.213	
Mother's Type of Work	-1.793			0.675	0.234	
Child Gender	0.696			0.267	0.092	

Note: p value = 0.05*

Table 4 is the result of data analysis using multiple linear regression to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Analysts show that

only the intensity of mother-child interaction significantly affects children's emotional behavior, as evidenced by the value of $t_{count} > t_{table}$ ($-3.419 > 2.013$) and $p\text{-value} = 0.01$. The direction of negative influence with less intensity of mother-child interaction will increase the child's emotional behavior. Another finding is the value of $f_{count} > F_{table}$ ($6.965 > 2.42$) with $p\text{-value} = 0.00$. There is a significant effect of the independent variable simultaneously on the dependent variable with a positive direction of influence.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.465, meaning that the independent variable that simultaneously influences the dependent variable is 46.5%, while other factors influence 53.5%. Another finding from the analysis of the coefficient of constant value is 3.383. Regression coefficient (B) intensity of mother-child interaction and mother's education has a negative direction, while the other variables have a positive direction. Mothers with lower education will affect increasing changes in emotional behavior by 30.7%. The type of mother's work that is increasingly complex will affect changes in children's emotional behavior by 67.5%. The independent variable that has the most dominant influence on changes in children's emotional behavior is the intensity of interaction between mother and child ($\beta = 0.469$). Value of Adjusted $R^2 = 0.399$,

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Mother's Employment Status

The majority of mothers work as housewives, where they have more opportunities for interaction with their children. Working mothers spend at least 8 hours/day outside to complete work. The results of this study indicate that mothers choose to work outside the home due to economic factors and have high academic education to maintain the career that has been obtained. Working mothers have a dual and active role in improving the family's economy, while homemakers spend their time at home taking care of their children (34). A mother's education affects her desire to work; besides mother's education will affect her mindset and behavior (35). Mothers with higher education tend to want to actualize themselves as active workers earning a living according to their education and skills (36).

4.2. Intensity of mother-child interaction

The analysis results show that most mothers have a high intensity to interact with their children. Working mothers have a relatively short time interacting with their children, but

it can be a barrier to optimizing their child's growth and development (37). Efforts can be made to involve children in every mother's activity, especially when working while still supervising and directing. Meanwhile, homemakers have more time to care for their children, including providing stimulation with a more intensive frequency by having sufficient knowledge to know the type of stimulation and the stage of development that occurs in children.

The interaction between mother and child will affect physical and mental development because children's knowledge is built through interaction with the environment through people around them and will be applied in the form of behavior. The emotional connection between mother and child is psychologically intertwined, binding intact, and inseparable. Giving a sense of security is also related to parent-child interactions, where children will feel satisfied because parents, especially mothers, fulfill their emotional needs (38).

4.3. Preschool-Age Emotional Behavior

The results showed that the average child had normal emotional behavior. This phenomenon is because most of the mothers of homemakers who have much time to interact with their children, mothers as role models for children in behavior, especially in controlling children's emotions. The mother's behavior will be imitated by the child and shape the child's personality in the future (39). Children will learn to adjust to social life. Children who cannot control emotions will quickly get tantrums, cry, and even hurt themselves (17). The ability to control children's self will develop at the age of 4 years when children can be patient, show tolerance, react only to things that are considered disturbing, and obey the rules (26).

4.4. The influence of demographics and the intensity of maternal interactions on emotional development

This study shows that working mothers have moderate intensity in interacting with children. The lack of interaction between mothers and children affects the tendency to change children's emotional behavior. Working mothers will have more limited time than homemakers to monitor their child's growth and development to affect the child's emotional condition (15). Working mothers will have a higher stress level due to multiple roles or responsibilities; when the mother is stressed, it will affect her interaction pattern

with children. The pressure mothers get every day, even though small, will accumulate and increase stress (40).

Another finding in this study is that although the mother's age, education, and occupation affect changes in children's emotional behavior, the intensity of mother-child interaction greatly influences changes in children's emotional behavior. The less interaction between mothers and children will affect the emotional changes of children. Mothers who are busy working so that they rarely take care of their children will result in children not feeling happy and even cause dislike for their mothers. The gap between mother and child interaction triggers children to grow more aggressive and encourages them to take deviant actions (41). Families whose parents work, especially mothers, will affect the quality of child care and relationships in the family (2). The influence of children's gender can also affect children's development; it is known in research that most participants are girls. Girls, compared to boys, have higher subjective stress and higher cortisol stress responses (42).

5. CONCLUSION

A mother's work status greatly influences changes in children's emotional behavior. Mothers working at least 8 hours/day will be outside the home. The effect of working mothers is stress and disrupted interaction patterns due to workload and multiple responsibilities in the family. Mothers with work will find it difficult to divide their time, and they often let their children play alone without assistance.

Children's emotional behavior changes by often reacting negatively, having difficulty concentrating, being hyperactive, often feeling anxious, and difficult to leave. A significant relationship between mother and child interaction on changes in children's emotional behavior. The type of mother's work also affects a child's emotional control.

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