

Sari, U. K. & Sulistiyarningsih, R. (2023). Parenting style to reduce academic stress in early childhood during the new normal. *Indigenous: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 8(1). 82-93. doi: <https://doi.org/10.23917/indigenous.v7i3.19562>

Parenting Style to Reduce Academic Stress in Early Childhood during The New Normal

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Submitted: 15 August 2022

Accepted: 19 September 2022

Published: 31 March 2023

Abstract. *At home, the role of parents is not only as a facilitator but also as a coach and companions in children's activities during the new normal era, especially in learning activities. The purpose of this study is to analyse parenting style to reduce academic stress in early childhood age 3 to 6 years during new normal era. This study uses a method derived from the literature review (SLR), the systematic mapping study (SMS). A systematic mapping study is a systematic literature review that using predetermined protocols and filters. The research conducted an online search on the indexed electronic database of Google Scholar. The Researcher used 14 main articles according to the research topic and matched the keywords. However, other sources that support the theory of child development and parenting style are still needed. The results showed that good parenting through active involvement, responsiveness, caring, sensitivity to children's emotions, communication, and empowerment would ensure positive developmental outcomes during the new normal era. The parenting style to reduce the level of academic stress in early childhood during the new normal by maintaining positive relationships and interactions, facilitating children's needs for remote learning, providing learning assistance, encouraging children to express emotions, creating constructive family rules, showing appreciation to children and parents actively participating in seminars and training on positive parenting. Findings have implications for parents whose children are actively learning and try to use positive parenting style to reduce academic stress during the new normal.*

Keywords: *Parenting style; academic stress; early childhood; new normal; covid-19.*

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease (covid-19) pandemic has been declared finished by the government. Imposition of restrictions on public activities has been lifted, and people are allowed to travel without wearing masks. To keep the virus out of existence, however, efforts were made to anticipate the tular or covid-19 propagation, that is, the application of the new normal. New normal is the social condition/social behaviour of the individual in a society that emerges after the covid-19. Its society has also felt the changes from the effect of this pandemic. This has resulted in people's familiarity with the covid-19 pandemic still occurring in Indonesia, which eventually

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created new life behaviour during the pandemic (Sumbawa & Karmila, 2021).

This new normal is even applied to schoolchildren's learning activities, including early age children from 3 to 6 years old. In the new normal, parents begin to understand that their involvement in child learning is highly needed. A child's education could never abdicate the responsibilities of parents as individuals who must be active in both academic and non-academic success at home and school. Parental behaviour will affect both general learning and the results of early childhood (Cusinato et al., 2020). The role of the parent is associated with maintaining communication, giving gifts, supporting learning, and even making rules in the home so that children can learn self-regulation during a new normal of online study, including the proper use of gadgets (Sumbawa & Karmila, 2021).

During the early months of the pandemic, it is known that children's screen time increased significantly. It made parents prone to stress and affected child-rearing styles and a risk to the children's well-being during the pandemic (Seguin et al., 2021) a child's early infancy child, it is known as the golden age. However, educating students as young as at an early age presents additional challenges as they need active support from their parents to access and use resources to provide distance education (Hernández-Agramonte et al., 2022). At the time, it was discovered that children of an early age focused more on the optimal success of their developing children by fine-tuning their motor and cognitive abilities with a predetermined curriculum. Generally, early childhood learning is done through traditional methods or talks and direct practice such as shaping, writing, colouring, and drawing. However, along with the new normal life, school and learning activities are done online, and teachers should visit students' homes and try to make learning more creative than before (Warmansyah, 2020). So, children do not get bored easily with activities which also interfere with their golden age development while studying at home.

During the new normal, the teacher makes various efforts to face the challenges of teaching early childhood students, such as creating a variety of activities, providing teaching tools, playing media and teaching styles. These were done to maintain good interaction and reduce early childhood academic stress due to the long period of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, learning at home does not mean that children have no obligations. Some learning activities must be obligated. Sometimes, they will get assignments after the online classroom or the daily assignment. Those activities become a source of academic stress among children (Wilson et al., 2014).

Academic stress is a pressure that must be faced by children from learning activities. In general, academic stress will affect negative perceptions of the learning activities due to physical, psychological, and learning performance fatigue. In addition, academic stress can arise due to school demands during certain situations or conditions (Warmansyah, 2020). Furthermore, Tabi'in (2020) also found that problems due to closing schools for early childhood and kindergarten cause academic stress, high emotional sensitivity, easy tantrums, spoiled and deregulation of behaviour. Cusinato et al. (2020) add that the act of isolation caused by the pandemic changed the family's routine, affected significant child psychology, and affected the learning and well-being of all family members. In turn, it was discovered that positive parenting could reduce stress at an early age (Cahyono et al., 2021; Effendi, 2020; Sumbawa & Karmila, 2021).

Pajarianto et al. (2020) found that parental support positively affects academic stress. This means that the role of parents in learning can reduce academic stress levels. By contrast, Subramani & Venkatachalam, (2019) found that there was no significant relationship between parental support and student academics at school. It might be because of the different situations that occurred, which is why they did not face the pandemic or the new normal era. However, the inconsistency of findings about the role of parents in reducing students' academic stress levels needs

to be reviewed for further research.

Based on the findings, the challenges during the pandemic and the new normal faced by children are always related to stress and emotional deregulation, both in academic and daily life. This situation requires parents to provide positive parenting and help the children during isolation and adaptation to the new normal to improve children's learning skills and emotional regulation, including early childhood age. With homeschooled children, learning during covid-19 pandemic needs ample support from parents. Parents play an important role in building positive self-esteem related to home activities, especially in learning (Mulyadi et al., 2016).

Parenting is a parental strategy for children to shape positive behaviour, influence emotional regulation and improve children's welfare during the developmental period to adulthood. Parenting will affect the attitude, way of thinking, intelligence and feelings of children in dealing with the overall development goals, including learning achievement in school. Parenting styles are classified into three categories, such as democratic parenting, permissive parenting and authoritarian parenting (Zhang et al., 2020).

Based on previous empirical studies, positive parenting involving parental support positively affects academic stress. This research aims to help parents whose children are actively learning by using a positive parenting style to reduce academic stress during the new normal. However, we have difficulty finding the sources related to the correlation between parenting style and academic stress in early childhood directly. This research can be a guideline for future researchers to measure the effect of parenting style on academic stress in early childhood with other method.

This research may yield useful data and recommend a suitable id parenting style to reduce academic stress in early childhood during the new normal, which is needed by parents who are facing the challenges of the new normal era. We are using a study literature review (SLR) as a method because SLR research was conducted for various purposes, including identifying, assessing, evaluating and interpreting all available research by topic with focus and specific relevant data. SLR is also helpful as a guide to research topic material and to answer questions with comprehension of previous studies.

METHOD

This research uses the method developed from the study literature review (SLR), namely the systematic mapping study (SMS). This SLR helps the researcher to classify, analyse and interpret the desired topic. SLR also helps researchers to obtain three things, such as a summary of research relevant to the desired topic, identify research gaps and become a reference for further research. Moreover, it could encourage new researches on the topic. SMS is a systematic literature review method using predetermined steps. It maps all the data needed for research in a very systematic and detailed manner. The selection of papers was not done subjectively by researchers but by a predetermined protocols and filters. The SMS data searching steps characterized the selection process data source, implementation strategy for generating search strings, and determination of exclusion and inclusion criteria (Maulina et al., 2019). The search process begins in June to August 2022. Results from data search are shown in Table 1.

The search string used in this research was "Parenting Style" AND "Parenting" AND "Academic Stress" AND "Covid-19", 14 relevant articles were found and all of these articles were used for research material. The keywords used to search the articles through Google Scholar and ScienceDirect must be appropriate to the research theme so that the articles are more suitable and can be used for research.

Table 1.
 Data Search Results

| Source database | Search Intervention | Detected |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| Google Scholar | Search string "Parenting"; "Parenting Style"; "Early Childhood" Academic Stress"; "Covid-19" "New Normal" | 8,500 |
| | Select Research | 25 |
| | Relevant papers | 14 |
| ScienceDirect | Search string "Parenting" AND "Parenting Style" AND "Early Childhood" AND "Academic Stress" AND "Covid-19" AND "New Normal" | 378 |
| | Select Research | 7 |
| | Relevant papers | 5 |
| | Select Research | 0 |
| | Relevant papers | 0 |

Note: Processed data, 2022

The next step is to classify the data into determined categories according to the research criterias (Fauzi et al., 2018). In this study, the following exclusion and inclusion criteria is formulated as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

| Inclusion | Exclusion |
|--|--|
| Research that focuses on research on Parenting Style and Academic Stress | Journals that do not discuss Parenting Style and Academic Stress |
| Indonesian and English | Other languages besides Indonesian and English |
| Usage is limited to conference paper journals and books | Dissertations, theses, work reports, obscure literature. |
| Journals that have been published and or have two. | Duplicated research |

Note: Adapted from "Corporate entrepreneurship in smes : A systematic mapping study" by Fauzi, A. H., Rizal, M., & Arifianti, R, 2018, *Manajemen Pelayanan Publik*, 2(1), p. 57.

Furthermore, the annual trend of publications on relevant topics that could be used in this research are addressed, as shown in Figure 1. In Figure 1, 14 articles were found with the keywords parenting, academic stress, early childhood, Covid-19 and the new normal during the search process, ten articles were published in 2021-2022 and four articles were published in 2020. Hence, we used 14 main articles related to the research topic and matches the keywords. However, other sources that support the theory of child development and parenting style are still needed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During school closures related to Covid-19, many parents and children have experienced various difficulties related to mental health (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Several parenting dimensions significantly affected children, including encouragement of child expression, management of child exposure to information, self-care during pandemic, and realistic parental demands. These acts of

parenting lead to positive parenting (Karki et al., 2020; Pereira et al., 2021). According to various literature studies, positive parenting involving parental support has a positive effect on children behavior and a few studies show that parental support affects academic performance.

Figure 1.
Annual Publication Trends



Note: Processed by researchers, 2022

The parenting style that improves early childhood's overall welfare during learning in the new normal must be supported by positive parenting steps. This study obtained various parenting styles that lead to developing positive behaviours and children's attitudes that can be applied by parents both for daily and educational purpose for early childhood.

Parents should maintain positive relationships and interactions

During the pandemic and new normal, parents describe the difficulty in balancing responsibilities, children's motivation, accessibility, and learning outcomes. Therefore, it takes balanced communication between all family members (Garbe et al., 2020). However, as a system, all family members are interdependent and influence each other in various ways, such as habits, emotional support, espoused values and matters relating to behaviour. Therefore, actions that occur in one system can result in reactions in another. For example, when a child has difficulty bonding with their parents, they may also find it challenging to develop a positive relationship with their teacher (Gadsden et al., 2016).

Providing support for children's activities during the pandemic, especially during learning activities, must involve all elements of the family and establish good communication. During the Covid-19 pandemic, parents working outside the home must spend more time with their children while at home, so they can constantly interact with children who desperately need the presence of adults during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Children during the pandemic will need their parents more than before because it is related to individual adjustment actions to the changing environment (Ribeiro et al., 2021). Moreover, a lot of pandemic information will affect their mentality and way of thinking. To strengthen the relationship between parents and children, parents must always discuss, give attention, and love and often communicate about the needs that children most need to feel safe and comfortable during the pandemic. To support comfortable conditions for children during learning, it is necessary to have good communication between all family members (Dewi & Khotimah, 2020).

Discussions and communication that parents do with children in early childhood must be conveyed clearly. The message must be conveyed gradually and remain polite. Positive communication built by parents intensely can make the family atmosphere more friendly and

comfortable for children, so children do not feel pressured and want to carry out learning activities well during learning. This good communication must also be in harmony with good parenting, such as democratic parenting (Effendi, 2020; Warmansyah, 2020).

Democratic parenting means that parents are actively involved in the needs of their children but still give the right to freedom of opinion while providing rational rules and explanations (Yanti & Tirtoni, 2021). Democratic parenting does not mean freeing children to act arbitrarily because it can make children more spoiled and not independent. Parents should also avoid giving strict or authoritarian rules that can lead to a lack of confidence, feeling stress easily, not expressing their emotions and lacking initiative, especially during the learning period in the new normal (Aryani, 2021). Democratic parenting teaches parents to give responsibility according to their children's abilities. Furthermore, children will also be easier to teach various things if they feel comfortable with the rules that have been made. For children, their parents give rational and warm trust and affection. This is also supported by the finding that parents skilled in parenting in a positive style can help their children adapt and respond appropriately to stress. Good parenting style and positive parental emotions can reduce behavioural and physical health problems in children and strengthen parent-child relationships so that they become better (Aryani, 2021; Dewi & Khotimah, 2020; Pereira et al., 2021; Sumbawa & Karmila, 2021; Tuntipuchitanon et al., 2022).

Different learning conditions between school and home affect the motivation in learning. It is understandable that the learning process at home needs support and communication from all the family members. They should provide the children with the necessary support to gain the best outcome from their learning process (Mulyadi et al., 2016).

Facilitating children's needs for remote learning

Nowadays, early age children are accustomed to online schools since the pandemic. However, most of them still depend on their parents for various things (Aryani, 2021). Support from parents is needed because the existing motivation and enthusiasm for learning in early age children are different from children in a higher school level (Garbe et al., 2020).

Moral and material support for learning at home is also critical. These kinds of support must be fulfilled by parents and must be collaborated with teachers. Parents provide adequate facilities for early childhood development, such as writing tools, drawing tools and other creative media, so that children do not feel bored using laptops or mobile phones (Alharthi, 2021). Moreover, parents should not leave their children to study alone during online learning or when the teacher makes a visits at home (hybrid). Parents need to control the facilities children use in learning, such as laptops, computers, cell phones, internet quota and a comfortable room for learning (Kim et al., 2021).

Provide learning assistance

Online learning is still being applied, even though the Covid-19 pandemic period has ended. Therefore, parents still have to provide suitable learning assistance. Emotional management, learning assistance, and learning understanding through communication with teachers and family members will help the early-age children to be more enthusiastic in doing work assignments (Alharthi, 2021; Dewi & Khotimah, 2020). Parents whose children are actively learning during the new normal can support their children's by teaching them using their textbooks, downloading online educational material, being guide to children's online classes patiently, and finding out how to stay in touch with children's teacher or school to stay informed, ask questions and get more guidance (Karki et al., 2020), monitoring child attention in the classes and school task realisation,

supporting task completion, and ensuring that deadlines are accomplished (Ribeiro et al., 2021).

In addition, Garbe et al., (2020) said parents have to understand their role in helping to the virtual learner, such as: 1) organise and manage children's learning plans, 2) building strong bonding and interactions, 3) cooperation in monitoring and motivating children, and 4) Giving instructions to children when needed. Following all of these kinds of support can help the children's welfare and reduce their academic stress during the new normal.

Encourage children to express emotions

Making children comfortable with academic tasks is the most essential requirement for parents to do. One is by respecting children's opinions in responding to emotions due to academic stress. Parents should not be busy with mobile phones and listen to children's complaints to avoid mistakes that arise during learning activities after the Covid-19 pandemic. Parents should not be allowed to use the authoritarian style with children such as interrogating, ordering, threatening, insinuating, labelling, comparing, or blaming (Sumbawa & Karmila, 2021). When parents are actively involved in supporting and encouraging, children will also have confidence in doing various things, including learning. Positive parental involvement builds confidence such as rewarding learning-related behaviour with praise and motivation, which is empirically associated with children's higher school achievement. By contrast, pressure from parents, by punitive action, criticism or negative emotions, will decrease the child's school performance and learning outcomes. Punishment and parental criticism as a reaction to a child's grades and homework are associated with lower academic achievement (Uma & Manikandan, 2014).

Recent research shows that parents can create activities together to encourage children to express their emotions through using board games, watching movies, singing, painting, reading story books, cooking meals together, and creating activities such as arts, crafts, and indoor stretching to make the children stay active. Parents should allow children to ask questions and discuss feelings about the pandemic and how it affects them. Parents do not need to always have to answer and refrain from false promises but simply be there to listen to children's opinion. It can be constructive for children that their point of view is appreciated (Karki et al., 2020).

Creating constructive family rules

Family rules help children understand what behaviour is allowed or not to do. Positive parenting style is also closely related to making constructive rules (Ribeiro et al., 2021). However, young children, especially early childhood, think at a symbolic level but do not yet use cognitive operations as much as adults do. That means children aged between 3-6 cannot use logic to change, combine or separate ideas in complex ways (Gadsden et al., 2016). Therefore, keep setting reasonable rules while giving reasons and listening to the child's feedback. Even though they will break the rules, parents must actively give support as much as needed (Sciacca et al., 2020). Therefore, for family rules to work properly, everyone needs to know, understand, and follow these rules. Regulation in parenting style provides rules but does not restrain and remains democratic (Cahyono et al., 2021). Existing and rational rules are also considered to be able to develop good attitudes and behaviour (Hapsari & Iftayani, 2016).

The applied rules help children to manage emotions that tend to fluctuate. It is characterised by understanding several types of emotions to express overall well-being during learning in the new normal period, such as shame, tiredness, pride, and guilt. The types of these emotions show that the child can accept the application of specific mutually agreed rules (Brown et al., 2020). For example, the rules for using gadgets during school time, or children are only used for 2 hours a day

(Seguin et al., 2021). Empirical studies from Sciacca et al., (2020) added that the uncontrolled use of digital usage in children would increase stress on parents and children and impact children's daily activities. Therefore, rationale rules are needed when children use digital media for learning or daily activities.

It is essential creating constructive rules for all family members to provide a comfortable space for learning (Pajarianto et al., 2020). Brown et al., (2020) stated that although families experience increased stress due to Covid-19, providing parental support and increasing perceived control may be interventions that can achieve emotional stability and reduce stress in children. Additionally, Karki et al., (2020) said that keeping a healthy use of technology, keeping children hydrated, adopting rational routines, eating healthy foods and promoting physical activity have benefit for children's mental and physical well-being while studying at home.

Show appreciation to children

Giving appreciation is also one of the positive parenting styles. Appreciation relates to an appreciation for the things done, and the responsibilities that children have completed. The appreciation shown by parents or family can be in the form of material or non-material based on both decisions. Appreciation can improve parent-child relationships, increase intrinsic motivation and reduce stress during learning. Moreover, through appreciation, children can express themselves, be willing to listen to others' suggestions, and accept their lack when they made a mistake (Garbe et al., 2020).

Parents actively participate in seminars and training on positive parenting

Parental mental health significantly influences parent-child relations and increases the risk of children's mental health problems (Kim et al., 2021). Therefore, parents must continue actively participating in seminars or psychological assistance from the school or other parties. It will help parents better understand that positive parenting is a need to support children's learning and carry out greater responsibilities because children must do many tasks simultaneously. Online positive parenting programs, either through live interactive video conferencing or with one-way communication applications, increase safe parenting training access during the new normal and produce positive parenting to help parents reduce child behaviour problems in the new normal (Tuntipuchitanon et al., 2022).

Parents who participate in the online positive parenting program will help children towards their healthy life (Tuntipuchitanon et al., 2022). Parents can also give children examples of maintaining cleanliness by washing hands in running water, using soap, and paying attention to the use of masks when going out of the house. In addition, parents need to understand the intake of balanced and healthy nutrition for children to increase endurance and help children concentrate on learning. This education is in line with the implementation of the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), which is self-development through self-regulation. This self-regulation program can be taught to children to realize skills needed in making better behavioral and emotional changes (Dewi & Khotimah, 2020).

The proper stimulation can be used as an indicator of increasing the ability of developmental aspects in children, including self-regulation (Monks et al., 1999). However, suppose parents do not understand the provision of good and appropriate stimulation. In that case, the resulting stimulation will not be in accordance with the positive emotional element that parents want to change (Gadsden et al., 2016). Thus, parents need to understand that the stimulation of positive parenting is needed to realise positive emotions in children (Mashar, 2007), which can be applied

during the new normal.

CONCLUSION

Academic stress during the covid-19 pandemic faced by 3-6 years old children can be minimized through the parental support. According to various literature, positive parenting involving parental support has a positive effect on children behavior and a few studies show that parental support affects academic performance. Positive parenting style influences on children's developmental stage. The role of parents is not only as a facilitators, but also as a coach and companions of children's activities during the new normal, especially in learning activities that focus at home. Good parenting reduces children's academic stress through active involvement, responsiveness, caring, sensitivity to children's emotions, communication, and empowerment. These actions will ensure positive developmental outcomes in early childhood during the new normal.

Furthermore, the positive parenting style reduces the level of academic stress in early childhood during the new normal by maintaining positive relationships and interactions, facilitating children's needs for remote learning, providing learning assistance, encouraging children to express emotions, creating constructive family rules, showing appreciation to children and parents actively participating in seminars and training on positive parenting.

However, some limitations should be noted. First, we had difficulty finding literacy or sources relating to the correlation of parenting style and academic stress directly. Therefore, the discussion requires many sources besides the main articles. Second, there are limited sources related to academic stress during the new normal experienced by early childhood. Third, as we use literature review, we must consider the possibility of missing some important studies that affect the discussion and conclusions.

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