

Volume 04, Issue 09, 2023 | Open Access | ISSN: 2582-6832

Perceptions of Psychological Well-Being of Mothers Who Have Toddler in the Transition Period of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract— The changes that have occurred in every family during the Covid-19 pandemic show a correlation to the emergence of psychological stress which has an impact on decreasing the psychological well-being of each family member. For a mother who has toddler, psychological well-being tends to be lower. Social restrictions, uncertainty regarding condition of the Covid-19 pandemic, the increase of mother's role at home, and demands for implementing health protocols are things that also affect the mental health of mothers. After more than three years the world has been experiencing psychological stress due to pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) finally announced that Covid-19 pandemic is expected to end before the end of 2023. This makes the world enter transition period that will affect the perceptions of mothers who have toddlers. This study is intended to capture disparities in respondents' perception scores regarding their psychological well-being at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and their perceptions during the transition period. Through this research, we can see psychological aspects that play a role in maintenance of mothers' psychological well-being, especially in high stress conditions that last for a long period of time. This study also shows constant aspects according to the respondents' characteristic.

Keywords— Mothers, Psychological Well-being, Toddlers, Transition of Covid-19 pandemic.

I. BACKGROUND

The Covid-19 pandemic at the end of 2019 has changed the lifestyle of people in Indonesia. Government regarding social restrictions, regulations implementation of strict health protocols, as well as application of online interactions both in the aspects of professional work, education, and health consultation facilities make more daily activities carried out from each individual's home (indonesia.go.id, 2020). This condition raises various challenges that may have never been imagined before. The work from home policy during the Covid-19 pandemic made many parents get additional tasks and roles at home, one of which was related to their children's distance learning. Mothers are the ones who get a significant additional role from the implementation of the work from home system and distance learning so that it has the potential to affect their psychological well-being (Kurniati et al., 2020; Putri & Rahmawati, 2021; Yunus et al., 2022; Lestari & Prima, 2021; Citra & Arthani, 2020; Palupi, 2021).

Survey data from National Woman's Commission shows that 96% of 2,285 people reported an increase burden of household work during the Covid-19 pandemic as a result of the implementation of the work from home and children's distance learning systems. This appears especially for working women, which their roles and responsibilities are two times bigger than those

of men (Qibtiyah, 2020). Furthermore, research also shows the role that is carried out tends to be disproportionate so that it has the potential to increase psychological pressure (Limbers et al., 2020).

The description of the psychological well-being of mothers who have toddlers during a pandemic tends to be low. This was also conveyed by Fatwikiningsih & Fajriyah (2021) in their research, pattern of relationships between mothers and her toddler during the COVID-19 pandemic show quite a lot of negative patterns, for example conflict types and dependency. The same thing also emerged from the results of a pilot study interview involving five mothers who have toddlers.

Data from interview shows that throughout the Covid-19 pandemic respondents have difficulty in balancing work at home because toddlers could not be independent yet in their daily lives.

This causes them to often feel alienated, have no social contact, get bored, frustrated, and feel trapped in an uncertainty about health of their family's life. These are linear with the studies related to mother's stress due to raising children in Covid-19 pandemic (Maghfiroh & Wijayanti, 2021; Yuwono, 2020; Marliani et al., 2020; P. D. A. Lestari & Ediati, 2021; Amalia et al., 2022; Yulia Putri Pratiwi & Farida Coralia, 2022).



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The above conditions have been going on for more than three years, until in May 2023 the World Health Organization (WHO) through the Director General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, finally announced publicly that Covid-19 was no longer an emergency global health issue. It is hoped that this pandemic will end before the end of 2023.

Thus, 2023 will be a transitional period from Covid-19 pandemic (who.int, 2023). This study tries to capture the differences of perceptions of mothers who have toddlers, regarding their psychological well-being during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and compared with the perception during transition period in May 2023. It is hoped that this study can capture any factor that show a correlation with low perceptions of psychological well-being in high stress conditions, in this case is Covid-19 pandemic.

This research is also aimed at seeing certain aspects that constantly contribute significantly to low perceptions of psychological well-being, both at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and during this transitional period. Thus, this can be seen as a characteristic of the respondents, mothers who have toddlers and live in the areas of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi (Jabodetabek).

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Psychological well-being is a condition in which a person has a positive view of himself, mastery of the environment, authority over himself, positive relations with others, has a purpose and meaning in life, and feeling to continue to grow and develop (Ryff, 1995). This condition is a provision for achieving the desired goals (Antaramian, 2015).

Psychological well-being is the condition of individuals which can accept their own strengths and weaknesses, have goals in life, develop positive relationships with others, have independent personalities, able to control the environment, and have a good personal growth (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). There are six dimensions as a multidimensional approach to psychological well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995):

A. Autonomy

A person is said to be an individual who has good autonomy when he is able to make decisions alone, not showing dependency on the opinions of others about what decision to take (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

B. Self-Acceptance

Good self-acceptance is seen when a person has a positive attitude towards himself, respects himself, and accepts the good and bad sides of himself. Besides that, they also feel positive things from their experiences (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

C. Positive Relation to Others

Shown through concern for the welfare of others. Able to show empathy, affection, and intimacy (Ryff, 1995).

D. Environmental Mastery

Is a person's ability to creatively change the environment through physical or mental activity (Ryff, 1989)?

E. Purpose in Life

Is a picture in which a person has various meaningful goals in life, such as being productive and creative or able to achieve good emotional integration (Ryff, 1989)?

F. Personal Growth

Someone who has good personal growth can be seen from self-openness to new experiences, has the ability to realize one's own potential, and has knowledge that continues to increase (Ryff, 1995).

Factors That Affecting Psychological Well-being

Based on several studies, there are several factors that affect psychological well-being:

a. Age

Affects autonomy, environmental mastery, life goals, and individual development which will increase with age (Ryff, 1989).

b. Sex

Women tend to have better psychological well-being than men. This is related to the mindset that influences a person's coping strategies and social activities, women tend to have better interpersonal skills than men (Lopez & Snyder, 2003).

c. Social Support

There is a significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being, which social support explains informative support and emotional support (Desiningrum, 2014). Social support from family, especially parents, can also improve a person's psychological well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).



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III. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach through a closed questionnaire aimed at one group of participants. Qualitative deepening was carried out on the content of the responses of each research respondent.

A. Participants/Respondents

Participants in this study were mothers who have one or more toddler, living in Indonesia, in areas of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi (Jabodetabek), and ranging from 25 to 45 years old. Participants in this research were screened using the purposive sampling method and followed by the snowball method, in which participant that involved would direct the researcher to other participants that have the qualifications.

The total number of respondents was 49 people, whose data were processed based on several conditions: number of toddler, presence or absence of nanny, age of the respondent, occupation of the respondent, occupation of the respondent.

B. Measurements

There are seven aspects that build this questionnaire: self-acceptance, positive relationship with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, personal growth, and social support. The questionnaire was prepared using a Likert scale with answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). This method was chosen to avoid central tendency of all participants. Then this questionnaire was compiled in two situations, to describe perceptions of psychological well-being at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and during the transition period. Information included in the respondent's personal data will be grouped and then analyzed separately.

The number of items listed in this questionnaire is 66, breakdown into two parts. 33 items to measure perceptions of psychological well-being during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and 33 items to measure perception during the transition period. The compiled instruments have been tested for validity and reliability. The validity test proceeds using content validity which involving one doctorate in psychology, as well as two psychology masters who have professional qualifications as psychologist with an adult clinical interest.

Measuring reliability using Cronbach's Alpha calculation. The total reliability calculation of the questionnaire is 0.862. The calculation of per-situation reliability is 0.821 for questionnaire part that measure respondents' perceptions of psychological well-being during the peak period of the Covid-19 Pandemic and 0.810 for part that measure respondents' psychological well-being during the transition period. Thus, it can be concluded that this research was carried out with valid and reliable instruments.

C. Data Analysis

All data collected in this study were analyzed using Jamovi 1.2.27, then classified based on the clusters that appeared in the participant's personal data. The analysis was carried out on all data, data per situation, then data per cluster of participants.

Based on questionnaire's result, it appears that overall research data shows a higher median score of psychological well-being during the transition period than at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The aspect of self-acceptance has the highest score in both periods, while autonomy has the lowest score. Aspect that has the most significant score disparity between the two periods is positive relations with other people. This is understandable, bearing in mind that the management of health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic, one of which is physical distancing. Social support was a relatively constant aspect in both periods, which husbands were considered to provide sufficient assistance to carry out respondent's role as mothers.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1. Comparison of Overall Aspect Scores

	Total Score				
	Transition	Pandemic			
Self-Acceptance	4.84	4.44			
Positive relation	4.59	3.95			
Autonomy	4.11	3.74			
Environmental Mastery	4.45	4.00			
Purpose in life	4.49	3.89			
Personal growth	4.74	4.37			
Social support	4.79	4.48			

A. Results Based On Number of Toddler

The data of respondents who have one toddler is compared to respondents who have more than one toddler.



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Table 2. Comparison of Scores Based on the Number of Toddler

	1 Too	ddler	>1 Too	ddlers
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic
Self-Acceptance	4.81	4.43	4.91	4.45
Positive relation	4.61	3.92	4.54	4.02
Autonomy	4.09	3.67	4.14	3.94
Environmental Mastery	4.41	3.99	4.57	4.03
Purpose in life	4.53	3.95	4.38	3.72
Personal growth	4.72	4.36	4.8	4.4
Social support	4.63	4.38	5.23	4.77

From the data presented, it can be seen that the highest score on the psychological well-being aspect of the two groups of respondents during the transition period is self-acceptance, while the score on the lowest aspect is autonomy. The differences can be seen at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the highest score is still on the aspect of self-acceptance, but the lowest score is on the aspect of autonomy (in respondents who have one toddler) and aspect of purpose in life (in respondents who have more than one toddler). The thing that needs

to be observed in this data is that the score calculation in general shows a higher average psychological wellbeing in respondents who have more than one toddler.

B. Results Based on Presence of Caregiver Assistance (Nanny)

The following is a comparison of the groups of respondents who have nanny and those who do not have nanny.

Table 3. Comparison of Scores Based on Presence of Caregiver Assistance (Nanny)

	Nanny		No Nanny		
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic	
Self-Acceptance	4.88	4.5	4.78	4.35	
Positive relation	4.51	4.02	4.7	3.85	
Autonomy	4.21	3.76	3.87	3.7	
Environmental Mastery	4.5	3.94	4.39	54.08	
Purpose in life	4.68	4.07	4.24	3.65	
Personal growth	4.74	4.38	4.74	4.36	
Social support	4.95	4.64	4.57	4.27	

From the data presented, it appears that the highest psychological well-being score is in the self-acceptance aspect. The lowest score of the respondents who have nanny is the aspect of autonomy. Different things emerged in the group that have no nanny. During the transition period, the lowest aspect is autonomy, but during the peak period of the Covid-19 pandemic the lowest aspect is the purpose in life. Another thing that

needs to be observed is that in general the perceived score on psychological well-being appears higher in the group of respondents who have nannies.

A. Results Based on Respondents' Age

The following is a comparison based on age group that seen in the transition period and peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 4. Comparison of Scores Based on Age Group

	Age 26-30		Age 31-35		Age 36-40	
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic
Self-Acceptance	4,71	4,56	4,83	4,38	5	4,53
Positive relation	4,6	3,89	4,56	3,84	4,7	4,45



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Autonomy	3,62	3,53	4,21	3,79	4,23	3,75
Environmental Mastery	4,4	4,02	4,43	4,01	4,6	3,93
Purpose in life	4,38	3,82	4,44	3,87	4,8	4,05
Personal growth	4,93	4,67	4,65	4,28	4,9	4,43
Social support	4,85	4,74	4,71	4,33	5,04	4,79

We can see that in general there is a gradation towards the level of psychological well-being. The older group indicates a higher average score in a number of research aspects.

A significant increase in score can be seen in the purpose in life, which the older group has higher score both during peak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the transition period. Aspect with the highest score for the three age

groups is self-acceptance, while the lowest score is autonomy.

B. Results Based on Respondents' Occupation

The following is a comparison of groups of respondents based on their type of work: housewives, state apparatus (government employees, military, or police), and other professions (private workers, entrepreneurs, or parttimer).

Table 5. Comparison of Scores Based on Occupation

	Housewives		State Apparatus		Others	
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic
Self-Acceptance	4,87	4,37	4,84	4,39	4,82	4,51
Positive relation	4,7	3,9	4,46	3,89	4,63	4,02
Autonomy	4,25	3,88	4,24	3,61	3,92	3,75
Environmental Mastery	4,43	4,13	4,59	4,13	4,36	3,83
Purpose in life	4,48	3,83	4,53	4,04	4,47	3,81
Personal growth	4,68	4,35	4,63	4,3	4,87	4,44
Social support	5	4,33	4,79	4,42	4,67	4,62

It appears that in the group of housewives and state apparatus respondents, the highest aspect of psychological well-being is self-acceptance. Other professions show that the highest score lies in the personal growth aspect. In addition, it appears that social support from spouses shows the highest average score in the housewife respondent group.

C. Results Based on Spouse's Occupation

This part shows comparison of the respondent groups based on the type of work of their husbands: state apparatus (government officials, military, or police), and other professions (private workers, entrepreneurs, or part-timer).

Table 6. Comparison of Scores Based on Spouse's Occupation

	State A	State Apparatus		hers
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic
Self-Acceptance	4,89	4,35	4,79	4,53
Positive relation	4,63	3,99	4,56	3,93
Autonomy	4,17	3,55	4,07	3,89
Environmental Mastery	4,46	3,99	4,47	4,03
Purpose in life	4,4	3,81	4,59	3,97
Personal growth	4,72	4,32	4,8	4,44
Social support	4,84	4,3	4,74	4,62



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We can see that the difference in the average score between the transition period and peak period of the Covid-19 pandemic is significant in the group of respondents who have spouse with state apparatus profession.

D. Results Based on Education Level

The following is a comparison of the scores of three groups based on education level: high school to diploma 3-degree, diploma 4 to bachelor degree, and the master degree.

Table 7. Comparison of Scores Based on Education Level

	High school	High school to Diploma 3		Diploma 4 to Bachelor		Master Degree	
	Degree	Degree		Degree			
	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic	Transition	Pandemic	
Self-Acceptance	4,88	4,5	4,77	4,41	4,95	4,43	
Positive relation	4,9	4,18	4,56	3,82	4,4	4,03	
Autonomy	3,7	3,36	4,1	3,87	4,45	3,75	
Environmental	4,38	4,24	4,42	3,96	4,58	3,9	
Mastery							
Purpose in life	4,42	4	4,44	3,87	4,65	3,85	
Personal growth	4,56	4,26	4,77	4,39	4,83	4,42	
Social support	4,7	4,53	4,75	4,36	4,94	4,72	

In general, the lowest average psychological well-being score during peak of the pandemic can be seen in the group of respondents with Diploma 4 to Bachelor's degree, and the highest is seen in the group of respondents with master's degree. Meanwhile, the lowest average score of psychological well-being during the transition period is in the group of respondents with high school to Diploma 3 degree, and the highest is in the group of respondents with master's degree.

V. DISCUSSION

- a. Results of this study indicate that in general respondents have an adequate level of psychological well-being. The level of psychological well-being at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic tends to be lower than during the transition period.
- b. The difference in scores does not seem too prominent, one of which is influenced by the limited number of respondents. Ideally, this research is conducted with a larger number of respondents so that it can show a clearer score significance. One of the ways to overcome this is by exploring qualitative data in each group of respondents discussed in this chapter.
- c. The fact that research respondents live in big cities in Indonesia has contribution to high score of psychological well-being, considering that professional support, open access to health system, the quality of education, and social support are better than other areas that are more isolated.

- d. Mothers with one toddler show a relatively lower score of psychological well-being compared to mothers who have more than one toddler. The result of the qualitative study shows that the surrounding environment considers mothers with one toddler do not feel a heavy burden in parenting, giving rise to expectations that they can carry out their roles independently. On the contrary, mothers with one toddler feel that they have difficulty facing obstacles and challenges in their life related to their new role as mothers. This group reports that they feel many people control decisions in their lives, so they often feel that they have no control and pride about themselves. On the other side, mothers with more than one toddler rate that their spouses and extended family provide more support and attention compared to the assessment of mothers who only have one toddler.
- e. Mothers who have nannies show a relatively higher score of psychological well-being compared to the group of mothers who do not have nannies. This is interesting because the qualitative analysis shows that mothers who have nannies having the freedom to adjust their interpersonal relationship patterns according to their needs and preferences, but the dominant response that appears in this group is the perception that they do not feel the need to build interaction with other people around them. Having to maintain intimate relationships with other people is considered difficult and make them easily feel frustrated, especially in the peak of the Covid-19

UIJRT ISSN: 2582-6832

United International Journal for Research & Technology

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- pandemic. This is very different from the group of respondents who do not have a nanny. They tend to see that in their daily lives, they have warm and harmonious friendships. These results indicate that the absence of a nanny can be a driving factor for the creation of sustainable interpersonal relationships, although this has potential to reduce independence and freedom in making choices in life.
- f. Mothers with an older age show a higher psychological well-being average score. The qualitative data that characterizes this condition is the difference in the responses of mothers aged 36-40 years. These respondents feel they have an effective way of dealing with stress that arises in their daily lives. This is not seen in other groups of respondents. Furthermore, the aspect of purpose in life appears in different indicators for each group of respondents. In the respondents aged 26-30 years, the aspect of purpose in life is translated as the desire to achieve personal targets. In the respondents aged 31-35 years, the aspect of purpose in life actually appears as something that has nuances of anxiety, they feel they no longer have high and ambitious goals in their lives. In the respondents aged 36-40 years, the aspect of purpose in life emerged as an awareness that they have clear goals in life.
- g. Mothers who work as housewives show the highest average score on the aspects of self-acceptance, positive relations, and autonomy. Mothers who work as state apparatus show the highest average score on the aspects of environmental mastery and purpose in life. Mothers who have jobs such as private employees, entrepreneurs, part-timer, show the highest average score on the personal growth aspect.
- h. Respondents whose spouses work as state apparatus show much lower perception of psychological well-being during peak period of the Covid-19 pandemic, compared to the group of respondents whose spouses work in other professions. There is no concrete supporting data regarding this matter, but it can be assumed that the differences in scores are related to the origin of the spouse's occupation.
- i. Although there is no significant difference in scores, it is seen that respondents with master's degree tend to be more stable in understanding pressure over a long period of time. This can be attributed to their ability to interpret situation that occurs and see the context of the problem comprehensively. They have higher confidence in their personal views and opinions so they show better independence in making steps and decisions in life.

- j. This research was conducted on a limited number of respondents. It's important to carry out further research that accommodates balance proportion of respondents in each region in Indonesia. Thus, it is hoped that the mapping of each region can be seen more clearly.
- k. Follow-up research is needed to provide in-depth study about the influence of cultural factors, related to the fact that Indonesia has a very rich culture, in which most of them adhere to a patrilineal culture. This condition could give a distinctive color to every aspect of psychological well-being of mothers in Indonesia.

VI. CONCLUSION

The aspect of psychological well-being has a unique gradation in each respondent's condition. Nonetheless, it appears that the constant aspect showing the highest average score is self-acceptance. The aspect that consistently shows the lowest average score in this study is autonomy. This is reflected constantly during peak period of the Covid-19 pandemic and the transition period, even though during the transition period the scores appear relatively higher. The data shows that all respondents have a positive tendency to be able to accept the conditions that occur to them. On the other hand, respondents have a negative tendency to make decisions independently, especially in stressful situations.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author expresses deepest gratitude to the experts that gave judgment to the instrument, professional associations, all the respondents, and other parties who have been involved in this research.

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