

## Relationship between Parenting Style, Family Relationship and Emotional Behavioral Problems among Elementary-School Children

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### Abstract

Emotional-behavioral problems in children can manifest as negative behaviors and self-concepts. Parenting patterns and family relationships have an essential role in preventing emotional-behavioral problems in children, and both can prevent their occurrence. An essential role in emotional-behavioral problems in children, and both can prevent their occurrence. and SDN 10) in Penjaringan Subdistrict, North Jakarta. A cross-sectional study was conducted from August to December 2019, involving 231 parents of public elementary school students in the Penjaringan Subdistrict who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data were analyzed by univariate and bivariate analysis using SPSS 22.0. Elementary school students are in grades 4, 5, and 6, aged 10–14 years; 53.2% are male, and 11.7% of children have emotional behavior problems. This study shows that 18.7% of students with exposure parenting have emotional-behavioral problems, and 10.8% of children with extreme family relationships have emotional-behavioral problems. The bivariate analysis test (chi-square test) showed a significant relationship ( $p = 0.000$ ) between emotional-behavioral problems and family relationships. Therefore, parents need to evaluate and increase awareness of the critical role of parents in the physical, psychological, and social development of children, especially in maintaining the quality of family relationships.

**Keywords:** Children, Emotional Behavioral Problems, Parenting, Family Relations, Students

### *Hubungan Masalah Emosi dan Perilaku dengan Pola Asuh, dan Relasi Keluarga pada Anak Sekolah Dasar*

#### Abstrak

Masalah emosi-perilaku pada anak dapat bermanifestasi sebagai perilaku dan konsep diri negatif. Pola pengasuhan dan relasi keluarga memiliki peran penting dalam masalah emosi-perilaku pa, da anak dan keduanya dapat mencegah terjadinya Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara pola asuh orang tua, relasi keluarga terhadap kejadian masalah emosi dan perilaku pada siswa di dua sekolah dasar negeri (SDN 08 dan SDN 10) di Kecamatan Penjaringan, Jakarta Utara. Studi potong lintang dilakukan pada bulan Agustus hingga Desember 2019, dengan melibatkan 231 orang tua siswa SD Negeri di Kecamatan Penjaringan yang memenuhi kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi. Data dianalisis dengan analisis univariat dan bivariat menggunakan SPSS 22.0. Siswa sekolah dasar berada di kelas 4, 5, dan 6, berumur 10-14 tahun, dan 53,2% adalah laki-laki. 11,7% anak-anak dengan masalah perilaku emosional. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa 18,7% siswa dengan pola asuh exposure memiliki masalah emosi-perilaku dan 10,8% anak dengan tipe hubungan keluarga extreme memiliki masalah emosi-perilaku. Uji analisis bivariat (uji chi-square) menunjukkan hubungan yang signifikan ( $p = 0,000$ ) antara masalah emosi-perilaku dengan relasi keluarga. Oleh karena itu, orang tua perlu mengevaluasi dan meningkatkan kesadaran akan peran pentingnya peran orang tua dalam perkembangan fisik, psikologis, dan sosial anak, terutama dalam menjaga kualitas relasi keluarga.

**Kata Kunci:** Anak, Masalah Emosi-Perilaku, Pola Asuh, Relasi Keluarga, Siswa

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## Introduction

The quality of life of children determines by biological, psychological, and social health. If those determinant factors are not well fulfilled, they can manifest into emotional and behavioral problems in children. Children with emotional-behavioral issues are susceptible to experiencing disabilities in daily life functions, especially in learning and socialization. This problem is often so complex for parents to recognize. Hence, children with emotional and behavioral issues often come for treatment in conditions that are pretty severe and have been going through with it for a long time. The emotional and behavioral problems divide into five categories: emotional problems, behavioral problems, hyperactivity, problems with peers, and prosocial behavior (as a protective factor).<sup>1</sup>

Based on the Indonesian Basic Health Research (Riskesmas) 2018 data, the prevalence of mental-emotional disorders, including depression and anxiety, is relatively high at 6% of the 14 million people in Indonesia's population. Meanwhile, in DKI Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, the prevalence of mental-emotional disorders is around 10%, which is higher than the national average of 9.8%, based on the 2018 Riskesdas data.<sup>2</sup> A study by Tjhin in 2010 shows that 33.6% of children who come to mental health care centers have mental-emotional problems, including relationship problems with peers, 54.81%, and emotional problems, 42.2%.<sup>3</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 1 in 5 children aged less than 16 years struggle with mental-emotional problems. As many as 104 out of 1000 children aged 4-15 have mental-emotional problems.<sup>4</sup> A research by Cook et al. in 2017 also shows the prevalence of mental and emotional disorders in children aged 0-16 years as high as 12.5%.<sup>5</sup>

Family is the smallest social unit in society. The family generally consists of a father, a mother, and children. The children's relationship with parents and other family members, which has been applied in their respective families, can be considered an interacting system that directly or indirectly affects the child physically, mentally, and socially through family relationships and parenting styles. Children learn within the family, especially from their parents.<sup>6</sup> The affection and love that a child develops in their social relationships are closely related to what children receive and feel in their families. Children who feel loved will learn to share affection with their

friends. If the child's carer (parents or other family members who interact the most with them) always blames the child, they will learn and behave the same way they have received when they play with their friends. The relationships and interactions built in the family between children and parents are an essential process that can help children form excellent and intelligent characters, both intellectually and morally.<sup>7</sup>

Children with emotional and behavioral problems increase the chance of performing juvenile delinquency and criminal experience and cognitive developmental disorders, suffering from mental disorders in the future due to the negative stigma that makes them have negative concepts due to these environmental exposures. The role of the family in children's education, growth, and development is essential to detect early emotional and behavioral health problems to avoid mental disorders in children. Family is one of the vital keys to seeing emotional and behavioral problems during a child's growth and development. It is also the key to making children successful in building their future and happiness throughout their future careers, lives, and future family.<sup>8</sup> Previous studies discussed the relationship between parenting and its manifestations in children with emotional and behavioral problems, so in this study, the authors wanted to know, apart from parenthood, whether other factors influence a child to have emotional and behavioral problems. One of them, we tried to determine that relationships in the family also have a role in the increasing incidence of behavioral and emotional problems in children. This study aims to determine the parenting styles and family relationship types with emotional-behavioral problems in elementary school students in North Jakarta.

## Methodology

A cross-sectional study was conducted on the parents of two public elementary school students in Penjaringan District (SDN 08 and SDN 10), North Jakarta, from August to December 2019. The data were collected using questionnaires. The samples were selected with eligible criteria for the subjects: all parents of public elementary school students in Penjaringan District, North Jakarta, that fulfill the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Those who refused to participate did not sign the informed consent, did not complete or collect the questionnaires, and were excluded from the study. The questionnaires include demographic questions, SDQ, FACES III, and type of parenting

Styles. In addition, there are four descriptive variables (age, gender, education level, and socioeconomic level), two independent variables (parenting styles and family relationships), and a dependent variable, the emotional and behavioral problems in children.

The demographic questionnaire contains explanatory variables identifying children's age, gender, education level, and family socioeconomic level. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) determines emotional and behavioral problems, consisting of 25 questions including five domains: emotional problems, behavioral problems, hyperactivity, relationship problems with peers, and prosocial behavior. The total score to be measured becomes the total difficulty score consisting of normal values (0-15), borderline (16-19), and abnormal (20-40). SDQ was created and validated in Indonesia by Oktaviana in 2014 with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.773. SDQ has a sensitivity of 63.3%, a specificity of 94.6%, a positive predictive value of 52.7%, and a negative predictive value of 96.4%.<sup>9</sup>

The Family Adaptability Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES III) questionnaire determines the existence of family relationships consisting of 2 measurable dimensions, namely the cohesion dimension and the adaptability dimension, each of which consists of 10 questions, and each question has an answer with a score of 1, 2, 3, 4,5. These two dimensions cannot be separated. The cohesion dimension is the emotional closeness between family members. At the same time, the adaptability dimension is the family's ability to adjust the structure, rules, and roles of family members in dealing with challenges that arise due to unmet needs. The appreciation of the interaction between parents and children is illustrated through these two dimensions. In the end, the formulation of this relationship pattern will determine the functioning of the family at the balanced, midrange, and extreme types. FACES III has been used by more than 200 studies in the United States and Indonesia.

FACES III was created and validated in Indonesia in 2012 with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.864 for each item.<sup>10</sup>

The parenting questionnaire used the type of parenting styles of the parents. This Indonesian-version questionnaire was validated by Ismail with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.8447. The type of questionnaire for parents includes two parts, consisting of 26 questions in group A and six questions in group B. The parent questionnaire has the lowest score of 26 and the highest score of 78. Low scorers tend to be classified as the expected (non-exposure) group, while the higher value indicates the unexpected group (exposure). The type of parenting style that was expected (non-exposure) was type A (democratic), and the type that was not expected (exposure) was type B (authoritarian), C (permissive), and D (inconsistent).<sup>11</sup>

All the instruments used in this study were self-administered questionnaires and were assisted with interviews when necessary. Data analysis included univariate and bivariate analysis using SPSS Statistics 22 for Windows. In addition, a chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between emotional and behavioral problems, parenting styles, and family relationships among elementary school students in Penjaringan District, North Jakarta. The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences study was approved by the Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia Ethics Committee (No. 32/08/KEP-FKUAJ/2019) on August 26, 2019.

## Result

This study invited 251 parents of public elementary school students. Twenty respondents were excluded according to the exclusion criteria. Hence, there are 231 respondents who participated and completed the questionnaires.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (N = 231)

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age (years)</b>		
10	2	0.90
11	75	32.50
12	80	34.60
13	71	30.70
14	3	1.30
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	123	53.20
Female	108	46.80
<b>Education Level</b>		
Grade 4	83	35.90
Grade 5	70	30.30
Grade 6	78	33.80
<b>Parenting Styles</b>		
Non-exposure (type A)	215	93.10*
Exposure	16	6.90
Type B	9	3.90
Type C	2	0.90
Type D	5	2.20
<b>Family Relationship Types</b>		
Balanced	18	7.80
Mid-Range	148	64.10
Extreme	65	28.10
<b>Parents' Income Level</b>		
High-income level	54	23.40
Low-income level	177	76.60

\*Non-exposure = type A = democratic parenting type.

\*Exposure = type B (authoritarian parenting type), type C (permissive parenting type), type D (not consistent parenting type).

This study included 231 parents of public elementary school students aged 10-14 years old. The characteristics of the students are shown in table 1. The majority of study participants had low-income levels and were female. Based on parental perceptions, most parents (93.1%) have implemented a non-exposure parenting style for their children, and 64.10% reported a mid-range

type of family relationship. There are 11.7% of children with behavioral and emotional problems. Among those, 77.8% of the children have emotional problems, 63% have relationship problems with peers, 55.6% are without prosocial behavior, 51.9% are with hyperactivity, and 37% have behavioral problems.

Table 2. The Relationship between Family Factors and Emotional Behavioral Problems

Variables	Emotional & Behavioral Problems		OR (95% CI)	p
	(-) (N%)	(+) (N%)		
<b>Parenting Styles</b>				
Non-exposure	191 (88.8%)	24 (11.2%)	1.837	0.362
Exposure	13 (81.3%)	3 (18.7%)	95% CI: 0.488-6.911	
<b>Family Relationship Types</b>				
Balanced	9 (50.0%)	9 (50.0%)		0.000*
Mid-Range	137 (92.6%)	11 (7.4%)		
Extreme	58 (89.2%)	7 (10.8%)		

\*p < 0.05 = statistically significant

The bivariate analysis test (chi-square test) showed a significant relationship ( $p = 0.000$ ) between emotional and behavioral problems and family relationship types in elementary school children. This study shows that 18.7% of students with exposure to parenting styles have emotional and behavioral problems. In comparison, 11.2% of elementary school students with non-exposure parenting styles have emotional and behavioral problems, but the difference is not statistically significant. Meanwhile, 10.8% of children with extreme family relationship types have emotional and behavioral problems, and 7.4% of children with mid-range family relationship types have emotional and behavioral problems. At the same time, 18 of 231 children with a balanced family relationship have the same results for the presence or absence of emotional and behavioral problems.

## Discussion

This study shows that 93.1% of children had a non-exposure parenting style (based on parental perceptions). Parenting is one of many factors that play an essential role in children's psychological development. The psychological development often manifested throughout their attitudes and behavior in everyday life. The perceived impact of a tolerant parent's attitude allows the child to have a strong ego. Conversely, intolerance, permissiveness, or inconsistent attitudes between parents and their children tend to produce a weak ego, decreased self-esteem, and impaired regulation of behavior, cognition, and self-concept, leading to emotional-behavioral problems.<sup>5,12</sup>

Non-exposure parenting requires children to grow up as independent and free individuals but still provides limits to control children's behavior. Parents must be more sensitive to their children's cues, such as paying attention to their interests, desires, or opinions. Parents should not impose their will as caregivers but give them their whole love and joy by creating a sense of security and comfort. When parents have to provide examples for their children, they should do it without coercion. They should also encourage them to be themselves and give them awards or value them for their success or good behavior; if they cannot do something or make a mistake, provide them with correction, not a threat or punishment.<sup>8</sup>

Exposure parenting styles include authoritarian, permissive, mixed, or inconsistent parenting styles. An authoritarian parenting style requires children to be obedient and submissive to the rules and restrictions given by parents without

the child's freedom of opinion. This authoritative parenting is a type of parenting that allows the child to obey without compromising or calculating the child's condition. In this parenting style, the child is only the object of parenting implementation, whereas parents are the determinants of everything. If the child opposes and argues, then the parents will punish him. This parenting style explains that children's freedom in this style of parenting is minimal. The authoritarian parenting style makes children conduct parental orders out of fear and not because of the child's awareness of what is helpful for his future life, so that children will have a lack of self-confidence. The character of children with authoritarian parenting usually likes to be alone, experiences a decline in maturity, is easily depressed, hesitates in conducting all actions, and is slow in taking the initiative. Children will become less creative if parents invariably prohibit and are too involved in all aspects of their lives.<sup>10,11</sup>

The permissive parenting style is characterized by unlimited freedom for children to behave according to their wishes. Parents never set rules or limits on children, and all decisions are left to the child. Finally, the child does not know whether his behavior is right or wrong because everything he does is according to his wishes. He does not know whether what he is doing is deviant or in harmony with the norms and values that exist in society. In this type of parenting, children are more likely to be naughty, spoiled, weak, childish, and dependent on others. In this parenting style, children feel they are allowed to behave as they wish. Children have greater self-confidence and good social skills but have a low risk for depression, are more easily involved in juvenile delinquency, and tend to have low achievement. A mixed or inconsistent parenting style is a type of parenting style that is a mix of two or more parenting styles.<sup>10,11</sup>

Non-exposure parenting has a positive impact on children's development. It is hoped that implementing the non-exposure parenting style can help children reach their best stage of development. Still, it does not rule out the possibility that children with non-exposure parenting styles would not have emotional-behavioral problems.<sup>10,11</sup> Emotional-behavioral problems in children can also be affected by many confounding factors. They are the family's socioeconomic condition, the children's physical illness, the influence they get from the school and their living environment, and their exposure to technological developments such

as the internet and social media that have become the study's limitations.<sup>6</sup>

The Central Bureau of Statistics of DKI Jakarta Province stated that the population in poverty in DKI Jakarta in March 2019 was 3.47% (365.550 people).<sup>13</sup> The North Jakarta City Central Statistics Agency, according to its latest data in 2017, stated that the North Jakarta area was in second place (5.59%) after Kepulauan Seribu in the percentage level of population poverty.<sup>14</sup> This research also shows that 76.6% of respondents (parents of public elementary school students in Penjarangan, North Jakarta) have low income levels. Socioeconomic problems in the family, one of many factors that can affect children's growth and development mentioned above, can also affect parenting styles and create more stressful conditions in the family that will be implemented through parents' behavior. However, this will not be the only factor directly affecting family members' relationships and impacting children's emotional-behavioral problems.

British and German studies between 1990 and 2011 found that children with lower socioeconomic status in families were two- to three-times more likely to develop mental health problems. Persistently low socioeconomic status over time is strongly associated with high rates of mental health problems. Poverty and low socioeconomic status affect various areas of social life, including access to education, health status, and health services.<sup>15</sup> Duncan et al. stated in their paper that three main theoretical frameworks describe the pathways by which a family's socioeconomic resources can influence a child's development: family and environmental stress, resources and investment, and cultural theory. However, they also stated that we need a solid methodological study to draw more causal conclusions.<sup>16</sup> This shows that emotional-behavioral problems in children are a multifactorial problem that requires many further studies. The family's socioeconomic status is only one of many factors that can influence the formation of emotional behavior problems in children.

This research also shows that 64.10% of children have moderate family relationships. Research by Vito Masagus Junaidy in Penjarangan District, North Jakarta, shows that the most common type of family relationship is mid-range (66.7%).<sup>10</sup> Family is the leading and first pillar in the development of children physically, psychologically, and socially. The relationship between parents and children is built early in their lives and will continue throughout their lives.

Sakinah's study stated the importance of good family relationships between parents and their children.

Parents' positivity with their children in family relationships would positively impact their future. Sakinah also quoted from Olson in 1993 that two dimensions describe family relationships, namely cohesion and adaptability. The cohesion dimension is the emotional closeness between family members. The adaptability dimension is the family's ability to adjust its rules according to the changing situation. Midrange families are defined as family relationships with extreme scores on cohesion and adaptability. Both dimensions of a family relationship indicate positive interaction and communication between parent and child. The extreme family relationship suggests that both cohesion and adaptability have low scores. That means they are less able to deal with challenges due to unmet needs. An extreme family relationship can negatively impact interaction and communication among family members.<sup>17,18</sup> Children who grow up with extreme family relationships also tend to be in conditions of rigid relationships between family members, less harmonious, and lack communication.<sup>18</sup> Those conditions, coupled with harmful exposure to the environment, will increase the chance of juvenile delinquency and criminality, experiencing cognitive development disorders, and suffering from mental disorders in the future.

This research also shows that 11.7% of 231 elementary school students have emotional-behavioral problems. They include 77.8% with emotional problems, 63% with relationship problems with peers, 55.6% without prosocial behavior, 51.9% with hyperactivity, and 37% with behavioral problems. Prihatiningsih's study, conducted in 2019, of 222 respondents and parents of students in primary schools in Central Java shows 54.5% of children have behavioral and emotional problems, including 81.5% with relationship problems with peers, 33.8% with behavioral problems, and 30.6% with hyperactivity problems.<sup>19</sup> A study by Tjhin in the psychiatric clinic of children and adolescents at RSUPN Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo (RSCM) Central Jakarta showed 53.4% of children had emotional and behavioral problems, including 63.9% relationship problems with peers, 56.5% behavioral problems, and 54.9% hyperactivity problems.<sup>3</sup> Research by Yulianti in Central Jakarta shows that of 154 children aged 6–12 years, as many as 11.0% had emotional and behavioral problems, including 13% relationship problems with peers, 8.4% behavioral

problems, 4.5% emotional problems, and a hyperactivity problem.<sup>20</sup> Emotional problems, such as depression and anxiety, are mostly found in children aged 9–14. Children aged 9–14 are looking for and forming identity, experiencing hormonal changes that make them irritable, sensitive, and easily influenced by their surroundings, such as peers, excessive use of gadgets, and social media.<sup>21</sup> Peers for children aged 9–13 years can affect children's daily lives other than parents. The existence of relationship problems with peers can have an impact on children's daily interaction functions. Children's difficulties in socializing can make them less accepted in the play environment and limit their active interaction with peer groups.<sup>3,17</sup> Hyperactivity is a problematic behavioral pattern; children cannot stay still, are impulsive, difficult to control, restless, run continuously, are noisy, naughty, and others. Children's behavioral problems are opposing, hostile behaviors, violating social norms or the rights of others, and often fighting. Behavioral problems in children and adolescents can occur because of life challenges, including challenges at school that are getting bigger. Children internalize emotional problems and externalize them in behavioral problems and relationships with their peers.<sup>22</sup>

This research shows that 10.8% of children with extreme family relationship types have emotional and behavioral problems, and 7.4% of children with mid-range family relationship types have emotional and behavioral problems. At the same time, 18 of the 231 children with a balanced family relationship in this study have the same presentation for emotional and behavioral problems as those without these problems. This study's bivariate analysis test (chi-square test) showed a significant relationship between emotional and behavioral problems and the type of family relationships ( $p = 0.000$ ). As the smallest unit in social life, as mentioned above, the family significantly influences the development of a child's identity and personality. In addition to fulfilling emotional and affection needs, family relations also function as a means of primary education in raising and directing children's development.<sup>22</sup> Parents who support their children can create strength and good quality relationships, increase self-esteem for their children, and be a helpful prevention strategy for the whole family in facing challenges in daily life.<sup>23</sup> Extreme family relationships can affect child development and cause psychopathology, or emotional and behavioral problems. Extreme family

relationships, communication, and interactions between parents and children indicate negative communication, a lack of parental support, and parental appreciation for their children's achievements. Extreme family relationships can also affect children's confidence in decision-making and their freedom to choose what is important and meaningful to them.<sup>22</sup> However, family relationships alone cannot simply make a child have or not have emotional and behavioral problems. The occurrence of these problems in children requires several other factors that also have a negative impact on their emotional development and behavior.

## Conclusion

This study reports a relationship between emotional and behavioral problems with the family relationship in elementary school children in Penjaringan District, North Jakarta. In this study, 18.7% of students with exposure to different parenting styles have emotional and behavioral problems. In comparison, 11.2% of elementary school students with non-exposure parenting styles have emotional and behavioral problems, which is not statistically significant. 11.7% of children have emotional and behavioral problems, most of which (77.8%) are emotional. Meanwhile, 10.8% of children with extreme family relationship types have more emotional and behavioral problems than children with mid-range family relationship types with emotional and behavioral problems. 7.4%. At the same time, 18 of the 231 children with a balanced family relationship in this study have the same presentation for emotional and behavioral problems as those without these problems. The bivariate analysis test (chi-square test) showed a significant relationship ( $p = 0.000$ ) between emotional and behavioral problems and family relationship types in elementary school children. Emotional and behavioral problems are other influential factors in children's psychological development. Problems of psychological development often manifest in the attitudes and behaviors of daily life. Hence, parenting and relationships between family members are just two factors that play an essential role in children's psychological development. They cannot stand alone as the factor preventing children not to have emotional-behavioral problems. They must be supported by other healthy environmental, physical, and psychological factors. This study concluded that family plays an essential role in

children's physical, psychological, and social development.

### Recommendation

This study concluded that family plays an essential role in children's physical, psychological, and social development. However, it has to be supported by other factors to maintain excellent health physically, psychologically, and socially for our children. Therefore, early detection of emotional and behavioral problems in children and increasing parents' awareness of their essential role, especially in maintaining a balanced relationship among family members, can be considered necessary parts of a healthy child's growth and development.

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