

## The Effect of Smart Parenting Training on Increasing Parental Self-Efficacy of Working Mothers with Toddlers

Mirna Ayu Irapdila<sup>1\*</sup>, Eva Meizara Puspita Dewi<sup>2</sup>, Dian Novita Siswanti<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

[ayuirpdl@gmail.com](mailto:ayuirpdl@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [eva.meizara@unm.ac.id](mailto:eva.meizara@unm.ac.id)<sup>2</sup> [dian.novita@unm.ac.id](mailto:dian.novita@unm.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

Corresponding Author: [ayuirpdl@gmail.com](mailto:ayuirpdl@gmail.com)\*

**Abstract:** Parental self-efficacy is an important predictor that influences the positive behavior of parents in parenting. This study aims to determine the effect of smart parenting training on increasing parental self-efficacy of working mothers with toddlers. This study used a quasi-experimental design with the untreated control group design with dependent pretest and posttest samples. A total of 14 participants were divided into two groups, namely seven participants in the experimental group and seven participants in the control group. Smart parenting training uses experiential learning models and e-learning video-based methods. Measurements in this study used a short version of the Self-efficacy for Parenting Tasks Index-Toddler Scale (SEPTI-TS). The results of data analysis using the Mann-Whitney U show that there is a significant difference in parental self-efficacy ( $p=0.002$ ) in the experimental group and the control group, and based on the Wilcoxon sign rank test shows that there is an increase in parental self-efficacy in the experimental group ( $p=0.018$ ) after receiving smart parenting training, whereas in the control group participants ( $p=0.680$ ) there was no increase in parental self-efficacy. The results showed that smart parenting training affected increasing parental self-efficacy for working mothers with toddlers.

**Keywords:** Toddler, Working Mom, Parental Self-Efficacy, Smart Parenting

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Parents are the main principle in the care and personal formation of a child, in this case, the father and mother play a separate role in caring for the child. Parents' knowledge, especially mothers, plays an important essential children's behaviour and forms optimal growth and development. Children's attention and observation cannot be separated from parents' attitudes and behaviour (Nielsen, 2012).

The quality of the relationship between mother and child plays a vital role, with the role of a good mother in providing care, can have a good effect on the child at every stage of their development. The relationship's quality is influenced by the interaction and time together between mother and child (Handayani et al., 2017). However, today many mothers have dual roles as housewives and as workers so that mothers do not fully have the time to take care of their children's growth and development.

Working mothers have a positive and negative impact on the parenting process that they carry out. Singh (2019) argues that the positive impact of working mothers affects improving the family economy and supporting children's welfare, especially in fulfilling nutrition, providing quality care, and the best education.

Anderson (2006) suggests that working mothers' negative impact tends to be more prone to higher pressure. Mothers also tend to become irritable and easily experience fatigue after a long day of work. Working mothers also often bring experiences from work into the home with adverse feeling conditions (Crouter & McHale, 2005). This impacts the reduced capacity of mothers to use time, energy, and attention in carrying out the childcare process after returning from work.

The dual role that working mothers play often brings their dilemma, making mothers feel less confident about the care they carry out, especially when the child is still a toddler. Korabik (2015) states that working mothers often feel unable to carry out parenting roles properly and are overwhelmed by feelings of guilt for leaving their children to work. Feelings of guilt and insecurity about the care they do indicate low parental self-efficacy.

Antawati and Murdiyani (2013) suggest that Parental Self-efficacy (PSE) is a parent's perception of their capacity to influence children's behaviour and development positively. These perceptions can influence how parents display care following their characteristics and need to support children's growth and development optimally.

One of the factors that influence parental self-efficacy in working mothers is the complex workload and roles. The research results from Khofiannida and Hardjanta (2012) suggest that working mothers have higher intrapersonal conflicts than non-working mothers. The dual role of being a working mother often creates intrapersonal conflicts due to various demands both in childcare and the demands of the work she is doing.

Parental self-efficacy (PSE) is an important thing needed in mothers' care, including mothers who work and have toddlers. Coleman & Karraker (2003) suggest that the most challenging parenting phase is when the child is in toddlerhood because it is very active, attractive, and difficult to define boundaries. Murdiningsih and Komariah (2019) suggest that toddlerhood is a golden age, so in this case, children need more attention. Child development will be optimal if the interaction is made according to the child's needs at the stage of development.

Therefore, working mothers who have toddlers have unique conditions and situations. Based on preliminary data from research conducted on 30 working mother participants who have toddlers in Makassar City, it is shown that 40% of mothers have low PSE, 43.3% of mothers have moderate PSE, and only 16.7% of mothers have high PSE.

Coleman and Karraker (2003) suggest that parents who have low parental self-efficacy tend to feel burdened by their parents' responsibilities and are prone to stress. On

the other hand, parents with high PSE tend to be more likely to carry out the process of nurturing and stimulating children's development as a challenge rather than a threat. Sansom (Rahmawati & Ratnaningsih, 2018) suggest that parents with high PSE tend to be more optimistic about their parenting abilities, show persistence in facing difficulties, and can cope with stress in facing demands as parents.

Oktavianto et al. (2019) suggest that parental self-efficacy can be increased by being influenced by supporting factors in the form of knowledge. When individuals have limited knowledge about parenting, it tends to cause self-doubt in caring, thus indicating a low PSE. Conversely, individuals who have good knowledge of parenting will improve their attitudes and skills in carrying out the childcare process. By increasing attitudes and skills, PSE will also increase.

In this study, the researcher chose to provide "Smart Parenting" training interventions to increase working mothers' parental self-efficacy. The "Smart Parenting" training has the principle of balancing working mothers' role with optimal parenting processes. Therefore, it is hoped that working mothers with toddlers can balance their roles as workers and have a high PSE in carrying out their care and carrying out the childcare process optimally.

The "Smart Parenting" training in this study applies an experiential learning model using video-based e-learning method. The training program designed by researchers refers to the principle of "Smart Parenting" put forward by Hayati and Febriani (2019), where the research aims to validate the effectiveness of the "Smart Parenting" module and show significant results on increasing parental self-efficacy of working mothers in Bantul City, Yogyakarta.

Therefore, based on some of the above explanations, the researcher is then interested in further examining the effect of smart parenting training on increasing parental self-efficacy of working mothers who have toddlers in Makassar City. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that there is an effect of smart parenting training on increasing parental self-efficacy of working mothers who have toddlers.

## **2. METHODS**

### **Research Participants**

The total number of research participants was 14 people divided into two groups, namely seven people in the experimental group and seven people in the control group. The sampling technique in this study used purposive sampling, which is sampling by determining special considerations based on population characteristics.

The characteristics of this study are as follows: (a) the mother works full time and is tied to working hours (at least 7 hours a day and five days a week) in Makassar City; (2) have toddlers (12-36 months) who live together; (3) has a low and / moderate parental self-efficacy threshold; (4) have never attended any smart parenting training.

### **Research Instruments**

#### **a. SEPTI-TS Scale Short Version**

The data collection technique was carried out using a short version of the Self-efficacy for Parenting Tasks Index-Toddler Scale (SEPTI-TS) scale adapted from Van Rijen et al. (2014). This research uses a Likert scale type. The logical validity in this study uses the Aiken's V formula to assess three expert validators. Based on the Aiken's V formula on this research scale, it is known that the V value is 0.75 for 26 items.

The item discrimination power results were 21 valid items with the distribution of the item-total correlation coefficient score moving between 0.347 to 0.824. CFA testing was carried out using the Statcal application. The CFA test results show that four items fail because they have a standardized loading factor value of less than 0.50, while valid items with a standardized loading factor of more than 0.50 are 17 items. Furthermore, the results of reliability testing obtained an Alpha Cronbach's value of 0.933. These results indicate that the reliability level of the short version of the SEPTI-TS scale is excellent.

#### **b. Reaction Evaluation Questionnaire and Knowledge Test**

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006) suggest that reaction evaluation is a participant's assessment of the implementation of training activities that have been carried out. Knowledge tests are used to measure the knowledge of research participants before and after the material is given. The knowledge questionnaire was prepared by researchers based on the material presented in training. This questionnaire contains eight questions that have closed answers, namely true or false.

## **Research design**

This study used a quasi-experimental design with The Untreated Control Group Design with Dependent Pretest and Posttest Samples. The division of the group of participants in this study was based on the willingness to take part in the entire series of training at a predetermined time so that working mothers who were interested and willing to participate in the entire training series were finally included in the experimental group.

## **Research Procedure**

The implementation of smart parenting training consists of four stages. The first stage, a pre-test, was carried out by providing a short version of the SEPTI-TS scale to measure the level of parental self-efficacy (PSE) in working mothers. The PSE results at the low and moderate levels will be used as research participants who are then divided into two groups of participants, namely the experimental group and the control group, to give informed consent.

The second stage, namely the provision of smart parenting training on the first day using the video-based e- learning method to the experimental group consisting of four sessions. Training in sessions one to three is the provision of material using instructional video media. The speakers on the instructional videos are experts in related fields. Each session contains two materials so that in three sessions, there are six materials and each video material is about 25 to 45 minutes long. The fourth session held on the second day was a sharing session to facilitate participants in expressing their experiences and feelings and sharing solutions to the parenting constraints they were carrying and reflecting on the participants' understanding of the previously provided materials.

The third stage in this research is the daily activity checklist given after the training as a follow-up form. The daily activity checklist lasted for six days for the experimental group. The fourth stage is the post-test by giving back the short version of the SEPTI-TS scale to determine changes in PSE levels in the experimental and control groups and given a debriefing at the end of the stage.

## **Data Analysis**

The data analysis technique in this study used descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing, which was carried out through non-parametric statistics, namely the Mann-Whitney U test and the Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test

### 3. RESULTS

#### Reaction Evaluation Results

In this training, the presenters and trainers are Novita Maulidya Djalal, S.Psi., M.Psi., Psychologist and TriSugiarti. S.Psi., M.Pd. Seven participants in the experimental group who took part in the training provided an assessment of the material, presenters, and overall training implementation as follows:

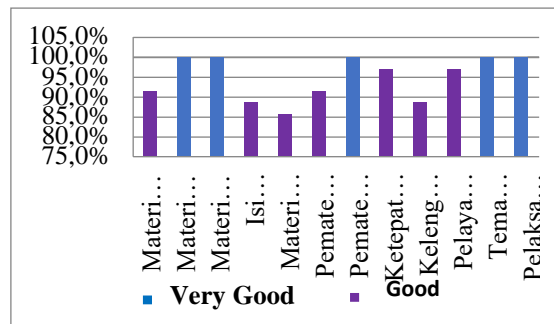
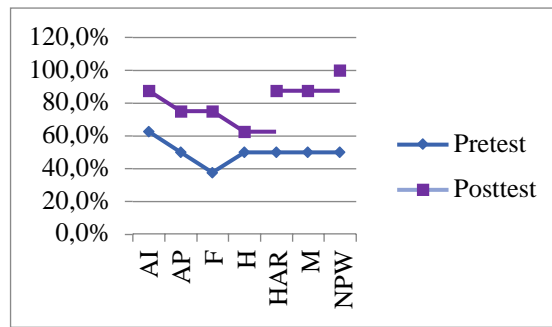


Chart 1. Reaction evaluation result

The highest assessment in the excellent category, namely the statement of attractive training material and according to needs has a percentage of 100%, training materials help increase knowledge has a percentage of 100%, interactive presenters with training participants have a percentage of 100%, training themes have a percentage of 100%, and assessment of the overall training implementation has a percentage of 100%.

Assessment with a suitable category, namely the statement of the material delivered according to the training theme has a percentage of 91.4%, the content of the material is easy to understand has a percentage of 88.6%, the material delivered systematically has a percentage of 85.7%, the speaker master the material presented has a percentage 91.4%, timeliness has a percentage of 97.1%, completeness of the material as a percentage of 88.6%, and evaluation of service providers has a percentage of 97.1%.

## Knowledge Test Results



**Chart 2.** Knowledge test result

There was an increase in the knowledge test results for all experimental groups based on the pre-test and post- test results. AI participants had a pre-test percentage of 62.5% and an increase in post-test to 87.5%. AP participants had a pre-test percentage of 50% and an increase in post-test to 75%. Participant F has a pre-test percentage of 37.5% and an increase in post-test to 75%. Participant H had a pre-test percentage of 50% and had the lowest post-test increase to 62.5%. HAR and M participants had a pre-test percentage of 50% and an increase in post-test to 87.5%. NPW participants had a pre-test percentage of 50% and experienced the highest post-test increase to 100%.

## Descriptive Analysis Results

**Table 1.** Empirical statistical data

	Groups	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
<i>Pre</i>	Expe	7	36	57	44,57	7,807
	Control	7	37	61	48,43	8,677
<i>Pos</i>	Expe	7	60	75	65,29	5,187
	Control	7	35	61	48,29	9,050

**Table 2.** Hypothetical statistical data

N item	Xmin	Xmax	Range	Mean	SD
17	17	85	68	51	11,3

**Table 3.** SEPTI-TS descriptive analysis categorization

Formula	Score Term	Category
$X < (\mu - 1,0\sigma)$	$X < 40$	Low
$(\mu - 1,0\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1,0\sigma)$	$40 \leq X < 62$	Moderate
$(\mu + 1,0\sigma) \leq X$	$62 \leq X$	High

**Table 4.** Categorization result (Experimental group)

N	Initials	Pre Score	Category	Post Score	Category
1	AI	57	Moderate	63	High
2	AP	38	Low	60	Moderate
3	F	47	Moderate	65	High
4	H	52	Moderate	67	High
5	HAR	39	Low	60	Moderate
6	M	36	Low	67	High
7	NPW	43	Moderate	75	High

**Table 5.** Categorization result (Control group)

N	Initials	Pre Score	Category	Post Score	Category
1	AD	53	Moderate	51	Moderate
2	AH	37	Low	38	Low
3	CB	51	Moderate	51	Moderate
4	IR	37	Low	35	Rendah
5	NA	50	Moderate	54	Moderate
6	NI	50	Moderate	48	Moderate
7	RA	61	Moderate	61	Moderate

Table 4 shows that the experimental group's pre-test results found that 43% of participants had parental self-efficacy in the low category, and 57% of the moderate category. The post-test results showed an increase in the score for each participant in the experimental group. It is known that 71.4% of participants were in the high category, and 28.6% of participants were in the medium category.

Table 5 shows that the control group's pre-test results showed that 28.6% of participants had parental self-efficacy in the low category, and 71.4% of the moderate category participants. The post-test results showed no significant increase in scores for each participant in the control group. There are stagnant results where 28.6% of participants remain in a low category, and 71.4% of participants remain in the moderate category.



## Hypothesis Test Results

### a) Mann-Whitney U test

**Table 6.** Mann-Whitney U test results

Groups	$\rho$	Mean	
		Pretest	Posttest
Expe	0,018	44,6	65,3
Control	0,680	48,4	48,3

Based on the Mann-Whitney U test analysis results, the significance value of the gain score in the experimental and control groups was  $\rho = 0.002$  ( $\rho < 0.05$ ). It can also be seen that the experimental group has a higher mean rank than the control group (11 > 4). The mean rank difference indicates that the parental self-efficacy level of the experimental group participants is higher than the control group. This shows that there are differences in parental self-efficacy in the experimental group given treatment with the control group that was not given treatment.

### b) The Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test

**Table 7.** Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test results

Groups	Mean Rank	Sig. Gain Score
Expe	11	
Control	4	
Experiment and Control		0,002

Based on the results of the Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test analysis, it was found that the significant value in the experimental group was  $\rho = 0.018$  ( $\rho < 0.05$ ) with a mean pre-test 44.6 and post-test 65.3. This shows an increase in parental self-efficacy in the experimental group participants after receiving smart parenting training. Meanwhile, the control group obtained a significance value of  $\rho = 0.680$  ( $\rho > 0.05$ ) with a mean pre-test of 48.4 and post-test of 48.3. This shows that there is no increase in parental self-efficacy in the control group participants.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The main criterion in this study is full-time working mothers who have toddlers. The most stressful and challenging parenting phase is when the child is in toddlerhood because it is very active, attractive, challenging to define boundaries, easy to tantrum, and demands much attention (Coleman & Karraker, 2003; Sigelman & Rider, 2018). Coleman and Karraker (1997) suggest that individuals tend to have low parental self-efficacy (PSE) when they are still at an early age and tend to experience an increase in PSE as the child gets older. Rahmawati and Ratnaningsih (2018), based on their research results, show that mothers who have school-age children have a higher PSE than mothers who have toddlers.

Participants in this study were mothers who worked full time and were tied to working hours. Handayani et al. (2015) stated that working mothers who generally have children under five years of age have difficulty dividing attention between work and family, so they feel a burden and conflict within themselves. Coleman and Karraker (1997) suggest that working mothers who have intensive activities every day tend to have a low PSE due to constant fatigue or what is called fatigue.

Individuals who have low parental self-efficacy (PSE) tend to feel unsure of their ability as parents, so they appear unable to carry out parenting tasks by their knowledge, experience high emotional stimulation, are easily stressed, and do not show persistence parenting. (Coleman & Karraker, 2003; Jones & Prinz, 2005).

Smart parenting training is a form of a parenting intervention program that aims to improve parental self-efficacy for working mothers with toddlers. Smart parenting training has the principle of increasing the mother's knowledge in balancing the role of a worker and the mother's role with an optimal parenting process. Oktavianto et al. (2019) suggest that parental self-efficacy (PSE) can be increased by being influenced by supporting factors in the form of knowledge through a parenting intervention program. When individuals have good knowledge of parenting, it tends to generate confidence in caring and affect PSE level.

The evaluation of learning through the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group showed that all participants experienced an increase in parenting knowledge. Likewise, the short version of the SEPTI-TS scale's post-test results showed that all participants in the experimental group experienced an increase in parental self-efficacy (PSE). In contrast, in the control group, there was no increase in PSE.

Therefore, it is known that smart parenting training can increase knowledge related to parenting, and has a significant effect on increasing parental self-efficacy (PSE) in working mothers with toddlers. Tomczewski (2009) suggests that there is a relationship between parenting knowledge and PSE. Individuals who have self-confidence and are knowledgeable about parenting will show more positive interactions with children. This is also corroborated by Bandura's (1997) opinion, which states that individuals who have extensive knowledge of parenting have a higher PSE than those who are less knowledgeable. Knowledge is the primary indicator for individuals to provide an assessment of their efficacy.

Based on the hypothesis testing results using the Mann-Whitney U test, the significance value of the gain score in the experimental and control groups was  $\rho = 0.002$  ( $\rho < 0.05$ ). This shows that there are differences in parental self-efficacy (PSE) in the experimental group given treatment with the control group that was not given treatment. The results of a further analysis using the Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test obtained a significant value in the experimental group of  $\rho = 0.018$  ( $\rho < 0.05$ ). This shows an increase in PSE in the experimental group participants after receiving smart parenting training. Meanwhile, the control group obtained a significance value of  $\rho = 0.680$  ( $\rho > 0.05$ ). This shows that there is no increase in parental self-efficacy in the control group participants. Based on the Mann-Whitney U test series and the Wilcoxon Sign Rank Test, it can be seen that the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that smart parenting training affects increasing parental self-efficacy of working mothers with toddlers.

The concrete experience (CE) phase is carried out to provide material based on the work-family balance theory and the specific domain of care for toddlers. There are six materials given and delivered by the training trainers, namely Novita Maulidya Djalal, S.Psi., M.Psi., Psychologist and Tri Sugiarti, S.Psi., M.Pd. The provision of material in this training uses the video-based e-Learning method. Noe (2017) argues that the implementation of training using the

video-based e-Learning method has several advantages including visual and audio elements that can influence individuals to capture information better, flexibility in receiving material, and convenient features. However, the video-based e-Learning method affects the concrete experience (CE) phase's shortcomings because it does not allow direct training role play.

The reflective observation (RO) and abstract conceptualizing (AC) phases were implemented through a sharing session. In this session, participants were asked to tell each other about their parenting experiences that had been carried out, talk about the obstacles and concerns in parenting as working mothers, and tell about the successes in the care that had been done. This is also a form of reflection on the extent to which the participants are confident in their ability to carry out parenting so far. Bandura (1997) suggests that enactive mastery experiences or experiences of mastering something in the past are sources that can shape PSE. In this sharing session, the participants shared their successful experiences in parenting and shared inspiration. Bandura (1997) suggests that PSE can also be formed by vicarious experiences or sources of other people's success experiences by observing real models.

The active experimentation (AE) phase is implemented through independent assignments that also serve as a follow-up after implementing the training. Independent assignments are given in the form of a daily activity checklist also make it possible to support the increase in PSE of participants in this smart parenting training. The follow-up results on independent assignments show that all experimental group participants were relatively routine in carrying out independent tasks. The independent task given helps shape the interaction of mother and child so that they are involved in quality and fun activity and the limited time for the mother as a worker. Coleman and Karraker (1997) suggest that the real interaction between mother and child is an indicator in increasing PSE.

Another factor that may influence the success of this smart parenting training program is the trainer's characteristics. Holladay and Quinones (2008) suggest that the right trainer's characteristics can improve learning outcomes and affect the effectiveness of training. The trainer in this study was an educational psychologist and early childhood practitioner. In this case, the participant's trust in the trainer was due to academic experience and work experience and the trainer's parenting practice.

## 5. CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

This study shows that smart parenting training affects increasing parental self-efficacy (PSE) of working mothers who have toddlers. Based on this study's results, it is suggested that smart parenting training in this study can be used as an educational program and intervention related to promotional efforts to increase parental self-efficacy in the surrounding community, especially working mothers. This smart parenting training is easy to understand, so it is easy to give to the general public. Future researchers interested in a similar theme suggest that they explore other factors that influence parental self-efficacy in working mothers through qualitative research. Future researchers can also continue this research on single parents with low income and parents who have children with autism.

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