

Mindfulness and Parental Well-Being: Gender differences on parental mental health

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Introduction

This research was conducted in hopes of discovering the impacts that mindfulness and mindful parenting have on parental mental health and well-being. It is predicted that practicing mindfulness and implementing mindful parenting in an individual's daily routine would decrease the negative symptoms of stress on their mental health. Various studies have concluded that parental mindfulness promotes positive parenting skills and a better parent-child relationship as well as lower signs of depression and anxiety in parents. Because of this, many parent organizations are looking to implement mindful practices in parental activities to decrease signs of postpartum depression and parental anxiety/depression, ultimately bettering parental mental health. The results will also examine any relationship between parental gender and mental health, including how being a mother or father impacts anxiety, depression, parenting stress, life satisfaction, and general happiness. This study aims to establish a correlation between mindful parenting and parental well-being, as well as investigate the impact that serving the role of a mother or father has on parental mental health. With these conclusions, we hope to spread awareness of the benefits of parental mindfulness and how it can help alleviate the negative mental health symptoms that may accompany parenthood.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dep_Raw	Man	42	11.35	6.8
	Woman	61	5.49	6.7
Anx_Raw	Man	42	11.09	7.6
	Woman	61	5.49	6.5
Stress_Raw	Man	42	12.64	6.4
	Woman	61	7.93	4.9
PS_Raw	Man	42	48.88	11.4
	Woman	61	41.85	10.4
MP_Raw	Man	42	33.52	4.6
	Woman	62	35.12	2.9

Methods

- To collect data for this project, a Qualtrics survey was created containing demographic questions such as age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and marital status, as well as questions that assessed parents' mental health, well-being, and mindful parenting practices. This was done to observe positive or negative correlations among the various study variables.
- After getting the IRB approved, we started with the recruitment process, creating an Excel sheet to keep track of each organization/facility we contacted for participation. To incentivize completion of the survey, participants were granted the opportunity to enter their email in a separate survey for entry into 10 different raffles for a \$25 gift card each. We limited participants to any biological, adoptive, step, and foster mothers and fathers with at least one child under the age of 18, aiming for at least 150 respondents. This will limit the data to only allow those with children they are currently caring for to answer the questions and be considered in the analyses.
- Once all the data was collected, statistical analysis using SPSS was conducted to analyze associations found within the data, and t-tests were run to consider differences between mothers and fathers.

		Stress_Raw	Anx_Raw	Dep_Raw	GH_Raw	SWL_Raw
PS_Raw	Pearson Correlation	.748**	.7**	.696**	-.397**	-0.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	0.42
	N	102	102	102	103	102
FMI_Raw	Pearson Correlation	.202*	.348**	.296**	.399**	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.041	<.001	0.002	<.001	<.001
	N	103	103	103	109	105

Recruitment Spreadsheet to track the facilities we have contacted and their responses

Annsworth Academy	joni@annsworth.com	850.668.9072	yes
A Great Beginning DayCare Center		(850) 577-1177	no
Circle of Support - Postpartum group for moms	danielle@daniellebfoster.com		no
Scottsdale Academy (Mahan and Southwood Location)	info@scottsdaleacademy.com	M: 850.219.2400	no

Results

- Parenting stress was positively associated with anxiety, depression, and overall stress and negatively associated with genuine happiness.
- Mindfulness was positively associated with genuine happiness and life satisfaction. Interestingly, mindfulness was also positively associated with stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Fathers reported more depressive symptoms and parenting stress than mothers *did not pass Levene's test.*
- Fathers reported more anxiety and stress than mothers.
- Mothers reported more mindful parenting practices than fathers.

Mindful Practices

Can include but are not limited to:

- Mindful parenting - the effort to bring attention and awareness to parenting practices and interactions with one's children
- Breathing exercises
- Muscle relaxation
- Mindful walking
- Mindful movement (yoga, qigong, tai chi)
- Meditation

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