

Mindfulness, Work-Life Balance, and Psychological Well-Being in Working Mother

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Abstract. Being a working mother is not easy because she must be able to share the roles equally. The best condition that a working mother can achieve in order to be able to carry out her role is to have psychological well-being which illustrates that a healthy mental state will affect various aspects of life. The purpose of this study was to determine the correlation between mindfulness, work-life balance, and psychological well-being in working mother. Participants in this study were working mother aged 25-54 years, full time employee in corporate or office, married, have children, and live in Semarang. This study using accidental sampling technique with a sample of 80 people. The research data were taken using psychological well-being scale, five facet mindfulness questionnaire, and work-life balance scale. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis. From the results of these studies, it can be concluded that the hypotheses in this study were accepted. This research can be used as additional information for working mother regarding the factors that influence their psychological well-being so that they can carry out their various roles to the fullest.

Keywords: *mindfulness, work-life balance, psychological well-being, working mother.*

Introduction

Mental health is currently given more attention, and many people are starting to prioritize their mental well-being, including individuals who work to meet their daily needs. Tasks from work or pressure from various parties can make someone feel overwhelmed, which sometimes disrupts their activities. This is even more challenging when a person has to take on multiple roles at once, such as a working mother.

Currently, with gender equality, women are no longer confined to managing family, children, or household duties; they have the right to pursue education and work, similar to men. According to Meriko and Hadiwirawan (2019), there are three significant roles in women's social lives: marriage, employment, and child-rearing. A new mindset has emerged, especially during economic hardships, where women also work alongside men. The roles undertaken by working mothers can lead to stress due to additional time and energy demands, balancing career and family, role conflicts between

work and home, competitive dynamics between spouses, and concerns about adequately meeting children's needs (Santrock, 2002).

Andajani, Hadiwirawan, and Sokang (2016) found that women often struggle to balance the demands of domestic roles as mothers and public roles as workers. Society expects women to succeed in both roles, and they are considered unsuccessful if they cannot balance them effectively. No matter how well a woman performs in her public role, she is still seen as failing if she cannot manage her domestic responsibilities properly. This situation is referred to as the "double burden" woman face; to be successful, they must excel in both roles.

To manage these dual responsibilities, working mothers need to maintain good mental health, as physical and mental conditions are interconnected. When one's mental state is disturbed, physical issues may arise, and vice versa (Dewi, 2012). Achieving optimal mental health is essential for working mothers to perform their role effectively. Psychological well-being reflects a healthy mental state, which influences various aspects of life. Fava (2012) states that low psychological well-being is a factor that can lead to depression and decrease an individual's mental health. Therefore, maintaining psychological well-being is crucial for working mothers to balance their domestic and professional role successfully.

In addition, a study conducted by Lakoy (2009) found that married women with more than one child face difficulties in managing time and caring for their children. They are overwhelmed in handling multiple responsibilities as workers, married women, and mothers to their children. Furthermore, they struggle to communicate openly with their partners and maintain close relationship (positive relationships) with them. This causes frustration for them, as they feel dissatisfied with their achievements and sometimes feel disheartened about how they navigate life. The dimension of autonomy in the psychological well-being of working mothers in this study is classified as low, indicating that working mothers often think about others' expectations and evaluations of them, making important decisions based on others' opinions. Additionally, full-time work significantly impacts working mothers' psychological well-being. According to Edmunds (2015), increased involvement in women's roles, such as full-time work, can negatively affect their psychological well-being.

In line with interviews conducted with ten full-time working mothers in Semarang who have more than one child, six out of ten reported difficulties managing morning routines. They need to attend to their children's needs before leaving for work, often feeling overwhelmed by the numerous tasks requiring attention and they must focus on job-related responsibilities. This daily routine leads them to go through their days without contemplating future plans (purpose in life). Limited time also results in fatigue, affecting their mood, and sometimes causing them to vent their frustrations on others, which can negatively impact their relationships (positive relationships).

Ryff (2014) explains that psychological well-being is not merely about achieving happiness but also involves striving to realize one's fullest potential. Ryff (2018) defines psychological well-being as a state in which individuals find meaning in life, accept themselves as they are, cultivate positive relationships with others, effectively manage their surrounding environment, exercise self-determination, and continuously develop their personal potential.

Several factors influence psychological well-being, including gender differences, age, educational level, employment status, and environmental settings (Ryff & Singer, 2006). Additionally, mindfulness plays a significant role in psychological well-being. Research by Mahmoudzadeh, Mohammadkhani, Dolatshahi, dan Moradi (2015) indicates a positive correlation between mindfulness and all dimensions of psychological well-being. Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney (2006) define mindfulness as an inherent awareness involving present-moment experiences and acceptance without judgement. Working mothers who adopt a mindful and accepting attitude can maintain calmness, exercise control, and avoid being overwhelmed by challenges, thereby enhancing their psychological well-being (Clark, 2015).

In addition to mindfulness, another factor that can influence psychological well-being is work-life balance. Wilkinson (2013) found that work-life balance is a relevant issue related to psychological well-being, particularly for women who often juggle work and home responsibilities, potentially impacting their well-being. Greenhaus, Collins, dan Shaw (2003) define work-life balance as the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with work and family roles. If individuals can balance their roles in work and personal or family, they can achieve life satisfaction, such as

improved psychological well-being, thereby strengthening family relationships (Parkes & Langford, 2008).

This study aims to examine the relationship between mindfulness and work-life balance with psychological well-being among working mothers. The hypotheses are: 1) There is a relationship between mindfulness and work-life balance with psychological well-being among working mothers; 2) There is a positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among working mothers; 3) There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological well-being among working mothers. The findings of this research are expected to provide additional information for working mothers regarding factors that influence their psychological well-being, enabling them to perform their various roles more effectively.

Method

Participants

This study uses a quantitative approach. The method used is a correlational quantitative research method. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling. Data collection was conducted online through a Google Form link shared on social media and among friends. Participants were asked to provide personal information, such as name, number of children, age, occupation, and working hours. Those who met the specified criteria were selected for analysis. The researcher obtained 105 respondents, but only 80 met the participant criteria. The characteristics of the participants in this study were: (a) working mothers aged 25-45 years; (b) employed full-time in a company or office; (c) married; (d) having more than one child; (e) live in Semarang.

The age range of 25-45 years was selected because it corresponds to the responsibility stage, a phase occurring when a family is established, and attention is directed toward the needs of one's spouse and offspring. This stage typically begins in early adulthood and continues into middle adulthood. According to research by Prasetyo (2014) on the psychological well-being of working and non-working mothers, no differences were found in the psychological well-being of working mothers between early and middle adulthood within this age range. Additionally, full-time employment influences the psychological well-being of working mothers.

Edmunds (2015) suggest that increased role involvement, such as full-time work, may negatively affect women's psychological well-being. In Indonesia, legislation defines full-time work as 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week. Choosing mothers with more than one child is based on research by Lakoy (2009), which found that working mothers with multiple children have lower psychological well-being compared to those with only one child. This is because mothers with one child face fewer challenges in managing time and responsibilities. This aligns with issues identified in Semarang, where interviews with ten working mothers with more than one child revealed similar challenges.

Instrument

Data collection was conducted using three scales: psychological well-being, mindfulness, and work-life balance.

The psychological well-being variable in this study was measured using scale developed by the researcher, based on the dimensions of psychological well-being according to Ryff (2014): purpose in life, autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, positive relationships, and self-acceptance. This scale consists of 18 items, with 12 favorable and 6 unfavorable items. Responses were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale with the following options: 1) "Strongly Disagree"; 2) "Disagree"; 3) "Neutral"; 4) "Agree"; 5) "Strongly Agree". The validity test of this instrument was conducted with 80 participants who met the specified characteristics, resulting in 12 valid items, comprising 8 favorable and 4 unfavorable items. Item discrimination was analyzed using the corrected item-total correlation technique, yielding results ranging from 0.277 – 0.510. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha formula, resulting in a value of $(\alpha) = 0,734$.

The mindfulness variable in this study was measured using Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) developed by Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney (2006), which includes the following facets: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-reactivity to inner experience, and non-judging of inner experience. The questionnaire consists of 38 items, with 20 favorable and 18 unfavorable statements. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale with five options: 1) "Very Rarely"; 2) "Rarely"; 3) "Sometimes"; 4) "Often"; 5) "Very Often". Validity testing was conducted with 80 participants meeting the specified characteristics, resulting in 22 valid items, 11 favorable and 11 unfavorable

items. Item discrimination was assessed using corrected item-total correction, yielding results ranging from 0.253 – 0.606. Reliability testing using Cronbach’s Alpha formula produced a value of $(\alpha) = 0,830$.

The work-family balance variable in this study was measured using a scale developed by the researcher, based on the dimensions of work-life balance according to Greenhaus, Collins, dan Shaw (2003): time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. The scale consists of 12 items, with 6 favorable and 6 unfavorable statements. Responses were recorded using a Likert scale with five options: 1) “Strongly Disagree”; 2) “Disagree”; 3) “Neutral”; 4) “Agree”; 5) “Strongly Agree”. The validity test of this instrument was conducted with 80 participants who met the specified characteristics, and all items were found to be valid. Item discrimination was assessed using corrected item-total correction, yielding results ranging from 0,302 – 0,593. Reliability testing using Cronbach’s Alpha formula produced a value of $(\alpha) = 0,804$.

Analysis

The analysis methods used in this study include multiple linear regression to examine the relationship between mindfulness and work-life balance on psychological well-being. For minor hypothesis, Pearson’s product-moment correlation analysis is utilized to assess the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being, as well as between work-life balance and psychological well-being.

Result

Participants’ Demographic Characteristics

Table 1.
 Participants’ Demographic Characteristics

Category	N	(%)	Psychological Well-Being					
			Low		Medium		High	
			N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Age (in years)								
25-40	60	75%	9	11,25%	44	55%	7	8,75%
41-54	20	25%	1	1,25%	14	17,5%	5	6,25%
Number of Children	65	81,2%	8	10%	48	60%	9	11,25%

2	13	16,2%	2	2,5%	9	11,25%	2	2,5%
3	2	2,5%	-	-	1	1,25%	1	1,25%
4								
Types of Employment								
Teacher	18	22,5%	4	5%	13	16,2%	1	1,2%
State-owned enterprise employee	6	7,5%	1	1,2%	3	3,8%	2	2,5%
Government employee	16	20%	2	2,5%	9	11,2%	5	6,2%
Lecturer	2	2,5%	-	-	1	1,2%	1	1,2%
Private-sector employee	19	23,8%	1	1,2%	16	20%	2	2,5%
Healthcare workers	19	23,8%	2	2,5%	16	20%	1	1,2%

The participants in this study were predominantly working mothers aged between 25 and 40 years (early adulthood), accounting 75% (60 participants), while those aged between 41 and 54 years (middle adulthood) comprised 25% (20 participants). Most participants had two children (81.2%, 65 participants), three children (16.2%), and four children (2.5%). The majority were employed as private sector employees and healthcare workers, each representing 23.8% (19 participants), followed by teachers (22.5%), state-owned enterprise employees (7.5%), government employees (20%), and lecturers (2.5%).

Both early and middle adulthood working mothers predominantly exhibited moderate psychological well-being. Similarly, those with two or three children, as well as across various occupations, largely reported moderate psychological well-being.

Assumption Test

The normality of the variables—psychological well-being, mindfulness, and work-life balance—was assessed using the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. For the independent variable mindfulness and the dependent variable psychological well-being, the test yielded a significant value of 0.200 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that the residuals between these variables are normally distributed. Similarly, for the independent variable work-life balance and the dependent variable psychological well-being, the significance value was 0.200 ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the residuals between these variables also follow a normal distribution.

The linearity test results indicate that the relationship between the variables is linear. Specifically, for psychological well-being and mindfulness, the F-value is 0.827, which is less than the F-table value of 1.74, with a significance of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, for psychological well-being and work-life balance, the F-value is 0.970, which is less than the F-table value of 1.78, with a significance of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that the relationships between these variables are linear.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was 1.362, and the tolerance value was 0.734. Since VIF values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.10 suggest the absence of multicollinearity, these results indicate that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables in this study.

Hypothesis Test

Major Hypothesis

The major hypothesis in this study was tested using multiple linear regression analysis (Table 2), which revealed a significant relationship between mindfulness and work-life balance with psychological well-being among working mothers. This is evidenced by an F-value of 32.461, which exceeds the critical F-value of 3.128, and a significance level of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). The combined contribution of these two variables to psychological well-being, as indicated by an R^2 value of 0.457, suggests that 45.7% of the variance in psychological well-being can be explained by mindfulness and work-life balance. The remaining 54.3% is likely influenced by other factors such as age, number of children, and occupation.

Table 2.
Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	R	R ²	F	Sig. (p < 0,05)
Mindfulness and Work-Life Balance with Psychological Well-Being	0,676	0,457	32,461	< 0,001

Minor Hypothesis

In this study, the researcher used Pearson's product-moment correlation to test the minor hypothesis (Table 3). For the first minor hypothesis, which posited a positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among working mothers,

Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis yielded a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.559 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This suggests a moderate positive correlation, indicating that higher levels of mindfulness are associated with higher levels of psychological well-being.

The second minor hypothesis proposed a positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological well-being among working mothers. The analysis produced a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.614 with a significance 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a moderate to strong positive correlation. This implies that a better work-life balance is associated with higher psychological well-being.

Table 3.
Results of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

Variable		Psychological Well-Being
Mindfulness	Pearson Correlation	0,559
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0,000
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	0,614
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0,000

Discussion

The findings of this study align with Saradina (2021), who conducted research on working mothers in Banda Aceh and found a significant positive relationship between mindfulness and psychoogical well-being. Additionally, previous research by Afrashteh and Hasani (2022) indicates a direct and significant relatonship between mindfulness and psychological well-being. Mindfulness enhances psychological well-being by increasing attention to the present moment without judgement of one's life circumstances. For working mothers, being fully present in their tasks and temporarily setting aside current challenges can improve psychological well-being, enabling them to fully engage in their respective roles.

When attention and mindfulness increase, goal orientation and the activation of one's potential also improve (Arslan & Asici, 2020). Having mindfulness enables working mothers to have clear life goals, making life more meaningful, which is one dimension of psychoogical well-being. Additionally, their potential can emerge, allowing them to develop their abilities (personal growth). This indicates the achievement of psychological

well-being.

Based on the first hypothesis of this study and supported by previous research with consistent results, it can be concluded that individuals with high mindfulness, characterized by the ability to pay full attention, have life goals, and develop their potential, are more likely to have high psychological well-being.

The second accepted minor hypothesis is the positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological well-being in working mothers. The relationship was also found in Pratiwi (2022) research, which revealed a significant correlation between work-life balance and psychological well-being. The study found that individuals with a high work-life balance experience higher psychological well-being, and vice versa. Having the ability to effectively manage tasks and responsibilities in both personal and family life, as well as in professional life, without coercion or pressure, is crucial. The psychological well-being felt in both work and non-work aspects is marked by positive functioning, personal growth, and healthy relationships with others. This aligns with the findings of Dirfa and Prasetya (2019), which also found a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological well-being.

Another study conducted by Saraswati and Lie (2020) found that psychological well-being is dominantly and significantly influenced by work-life balance. This indicates that balancing work and personal life is a crucial factor in experiencing well-being. Individuals who can balance their roles will experience stable work and life relationships, leading to psychological well-being.

The contribution of mindfulness and work-life balance in this study, when examined simultaneously on psychological well-being, accounts for 45.7%, with the remaining 54.3% influenced by other factors such as age, number of children, and occupation. In this study, the description for participants based on age includes 60 individuals in the early adulthood stage (25-40 years) and 20 individuals in the middle adulthood stage (41-54 years). The results show no significant difference in psychological well-being between working mothers in early adulthood and middle adulthood. This indicates that increasing age does not necessarily lead to higher psychological well-being, as most working mothers in both age groups exhibit moderate psychological well-being. Research conducted by Tanujaya (2014) supports these findings, indicating that age does

not correlate with psychological well-being. This is in contrast to Ryff and Singer's (1996) assertion that mastery of the environment and autonomy tend to increase with age, particularly from early adulthood to middle adulthood. Individuals in early adulthood and middle adulthood are more likely to have higher life goals and personal growth compared to individuals in late adulthood (Ryff, 2014). Thus, no significant difference is observed in life goals and personal growth dimensions between early adulthood and middle adulthood.

Additionally, the participant description based on the number of children shows that working mothers with two children dominate, totaling 65 individuals, followed by those with three children (13 individuals), and four children (2 individuals). This study found that the most working mothers with two or three children have moderate psychological well-being. These findings align with research conducted by Anggarwati and Thamrin (2019), which revealed that the number of children can reduce the psychological well-being of working mothers. This is supported by Rahayuningsih's (2013) study, which showed that families with three or more children tend to have the lowest psychological well-being scores. In contrast, families without or not yet have children score the highest in psychological well-being. This is attributed to childless families having more free time and being able to engage in activities without the challenges of children. Finally, in terms of employment, this study found that private-sector employees and healthcare workers dominate the participant pool, with 19 individuals in each group. Other occupations included state-owned enterprise employees, lecturers, teachers, and government employees. Across these occupational groups, no significant differences in psychological well-being levels were found, as most working mothers exhibit moderate psychological well-being.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis results, the variables of mindfulness and work-life balance in this study have an impact on psychological well-being. The study found a relationship between mindfulness and work-life balance with the psychological well-being of working mothers. The magnitude of the influence of mindfulness and work-life balance on psychological well-being is evident from the effective contribution of 45.7%.

additionally, there is a positive relationship between mindfulness and the psychological well-being of working mothers. Lastly, the study found a positive relationship between work-life balance and the psychological well-being of working mothers.

Suggestion

For working mothers, it is expected that they can maintain or enhance mindfulness and work-life balance because this helps fulfill various aspects of psychological well-being and can improve psychological well-being. Mindfulness can be maintained or improved by being aware and focused on the present moment, expressing and managing emotions, being fully aware of actions taken, not getting lost in thoughts and feelings, adopting a neutral or non-judgemental stance toward internal experiences such as thoughts and feelings. Work-life balance can be maintained or enhanced by the ability to balance personal life and work, being physically and emotionally involved in both areas, and feeling comfortable when engaged in personal and professional life.

For future researchers, it is recommended to consider the variables of mindfulness and work-life balance, which contribute 45.7%, and to explore other variables that may have a greater impact on the psychological well-being of working mothers, such as age, number of children, and type of employment

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