



## Mindful Parenting as a Catalyst for Emotional Regulation: Insights from a Systematic Review

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of mindful parenting on children's emotional regulation through a systematic literature review of empirical research published between 2020 and 2024. Using the *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (PRISMA) framework, articles were retrieved from Scopus and Google Scholar databases and screened through identification, eligibility, and inclusion procedures. Out of 759 initial articles, 10 met the inclusion criteria and were analyzed thematically. The results show that mindful parenting serves as a significant protective factor that enhances children's emotion regulation, reduces parenting stress, and strengthens parent-child relationship quality. Moreover, mindfulness-based parenting interventions and psychometric instruments were found to be valid and effective across different cultural contexts. The findings contribute theoretically by reinforcing the conceptual framework of mindful parenting and practically by providing directions for the development of culturally relevant intervention programs. This review highlights the importance of integrating mindfulness practices into parenting education and underscores the need for longitudinal and cross-cultural studies to further explore the long-term impact of mindful parenting on children's psychological well-being and family functioning.

Keywords: Mindful Parenting, Child Emotional Regulation, Parenting Intervention, Developmental Psychology

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### 1. Introduction

Child emotional development constitutes a crucial foundation of developmental psychology, as the capacity to regulate emotions is a strong predictor of psychological well-being, social competence, and adaptive functioning throughout life (Zitzmann., 2023; Kim & Kochanska., 2022). Emotion regulation enables children to manage impulses, cope with stress, and form positive relationships with their surroundings (De Raeymaecker et al., 2022; Parent et al., 2016). Within this process, parents play a pivotal role in shaping children's emotional growth through emotion socialization, which involves how parents respond to, model, and accompany their children's emotions in daily interactions (Bögels et al., 2014). Consequently, the quality of parenting practices directly affects the child's emotional resilience, behavioral adjustment, and long-term mental health (Coatsworth et al., 2015; Bluth & Wahler., 2021)

The increasing complexity of modern life, including digital exposure, economic demands, and social pressures, has altered the nature of parenting. Parents today are required not only to provide physical care but also to ensure emotional stability and psychological safety (Lo & Chan., 2021). Conventional parenting styles that are reactive or authoritarian often fail to meet these challenges. Consequently, mindful

parenting has emerged as a contemporary approach emphasizing awareness, acceptance, and intentional presence in parenting interactions (Duncan et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn., 2015). Mindful parenting is defined as a parent's ability to be fully attentive to the present moment, respond to a child's emotions with empathy rather than reactivity, and regulate one's own emotional responses (Duncan & Coatsworth, 2018; Williams et al., 2020).

This approach facilitates conscious responses rather than impulsive reactions, thereby improving emotional co-regulation between parents and children (Sansone., 2024). Parents who practice mindfulness are better able to model emotion regulation, which fosters secure attachment and positive emotional climates within the family (Ahemaitijiang et al., 2021; Maloney & Lawlor., 2023). Cross-cultural studies also confirm that mindful parenting correlates with reduced parenting stress, greater psychological flexibility, and enhanced family harmony (Acet & Oliver, 2024; Lo & Chan., 2021). These findings demonstrate that mindfulness not only benefits parental well-being but also serves as a protective factor for children's socioemotional development (Shorey et al., 2021; Duncan & Bardacke, 2010).

Empirical evidence across diverse contexts reinforces this conclusion. Turpyn & Chaplin., (2015) found that mindful parenting reduces negative emotional

expression and risky adolescent behaviors, while Bögels et al., (2014) and Coatsworth et al., (2015) identified its role in decreasing coercive discipline and improving parental warmth. Meta-analytic evidence by Williams et al., (2020) and Shorey et al., (2021) further shows that mindfulness-based parenting interventions enhance self-regulation, parental empathy, and family well-being. Similarly, Bluth & Wahler., (2021) reported that mindfulness moderates the relationship between parenting stress and child behavioral outcomes, underscoring its role as an adaptive regulatory mechanism.

In Indonesia, research on mindful parenting is growing, particularly concerning its relation to early childhood emotion regulation. Mafaza & Sarry., (2022) demonstrated that mindful parenting, alongside coparenting quality, significantly supports children's emotional competence. Hidayati et al., (2025) revealed that social support and gratitude predict mindful parenting among mothers of preschool-aged children. Additionally, Febriani et al., (2021) successfully adapted the Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire (MIPQ) for Indonesian parents, validating its two-factor structure of Mindful Discipline and Being in the Moment with the Child. These efforts indicate the growing relevance of mindfulness-oriented parenting research in the Indonesian cultural setting. However, the literature remains limited by methodological weaknesses such as small sample sizes, cross-sectional designs, and limited exploration of cultural moderators (Lo & Chan., 2021; Maloney & Lawlor., 2023).

Beyond Indonesia, recent global studies highlight that mindful parenting interacts dynamically with parental attachment, self-compassion, and cultural context (Szabó et al., 2023; Kim & Kochanska., 2022). Acet & Oliver., (2023) developed the *Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents* (MPIP) and *Children* (MPIC) to capture these dynamics from dual perspectives, while Duncan & Coatsworth., (2018) emphasized that mindful parenting functions as both a self-regulatory and relational process. A cross-cultural meta-synthesis by Ahemaitijiang et al., (2021) further affirmed that collectivist societies tend to express mindful parenting through relational harmony, whereas individualistic societies prioritize intrapersonal awareness.

Despite these developments, several critical gaps remain. First, most studies still lack longitudinal evidence capable of elucidating causal pathways between mindful parenting, parental emotion regulation, and child outcomes. Second, there is a scarcity of studies examining mindful parenting through the lens of socio-economic and digital-era stressors that increasingly shape family dynamics (Caetano et al., 2024; Zitzmann., 2023). Third, the integration of cross-cultural and localized evidence through *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) remains rare, particularly in Southeast Asia.

Given these conditions, the present study aims to conduct a comprehensive *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) of research published between 2020 and 2024 to synthesize empirical findings on mindful parenting and its relationship with children's emotion regulation. The study maps research trends, theoretical models, mediating and moderating mechanisms, and methodological patterns, while identifying gaps for future research. Theoretically, this study contributes to refining the conceptual framework linking mindful parenting and emotion regulation; practically, it offers a foundation for evidence-based intervention designs that align with local cultural values and parenting contexts (Duncan et al., 2010; Maloney & Lawlor., 2023; Acet & Oliver., 2024). Through this synthesis, the study aspires to enrich both scientific understanding and applied strategies for enhancing family well-being in the post-pandemic, digitalized era.

## 2. Methods

This study employed a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) approach based on the Preferred Reporting Items for *Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009). The use of this approach allows for the systematic identification, evaluation, and synthesis of previous research findings to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of mindful parenting literature and its relationship with children's emotional regulation within a defined time frame. The research focused on scientific articles as the primary data sources, specifically those relevant to the topic of mindful parenting. Articles were limited to publications from 2020 to 2024, representing current trends and recent research developments. Only studies published in peer-reviewed journals both at the national level (SINTA) and international level (*Scopus and Web of Science*) were included to ensure methodological rigor and credibility.

The inclusion criteria for selected articles required that each study (1) utilized quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches; (2) had a primary focus on mindful parenting and its relation to children's emotional regulation, mental health, or the quality of parent child interactions; (3) was published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal; (4) was available in full-text format; and (5) was published between 2020 and 2024. Articles that did not meet these criteria were excluded from the analysis.

The search process was conducted on two major databases *Scopus* and *Google Scholar* because of their comprehensive coverage of national and international literature. The search, carried out on September 20, 2025, employed several keyword combinations, including "mindful parenting," "mindful parenting and emotional regulation," "mindful parenting and child behavior," and "mindful parenting and

coparenting.” To ensure data completeness, a manual search was also conducted using the reference lists of selected articles. The article selection followed the PRISMA flow, which consisted of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Initially, 759 articles were identified, from which 390 were excluded for being published outside the specified period (2020–2024), and 180 were removed due to unavailable full-text access. Of the remaining 142 articles, 132 were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria, leaving 10 articles that were analyzed in depth.

The data analysis process applied a thematic synthesis approach to group the selected studies according to their research focus, design, sample size, and main findings. Study quality was evaluated using the *Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP)* guidelines to assess methodological rigor, instrument validity, reliability, and consistency of results. Only studies meeting acceptable methodological standards were included in the final analysis. Through this procedure, the present review aims to provide a comprehensive mapping of the literature on mindful parenting, identify existing contributions and limitations, and offer directions for future research and intervention development in the field.

### 3. Results and Discussions

The systematic literature review identified 759 articles from Scopus and Google Scholar databases. Following the PRISMA 2020 screening flow Moher et al., (2009) duplicates and out-of-range publications were excluded, leaving 369 articles. After removing 189 papers without full-text access, 142 studies proceeded to eligibility assessment. Of these, only 10 fulfilled all inclusion criteria focusing on mindful parenting and its association with child emotion regulation from 2020 to 2024.

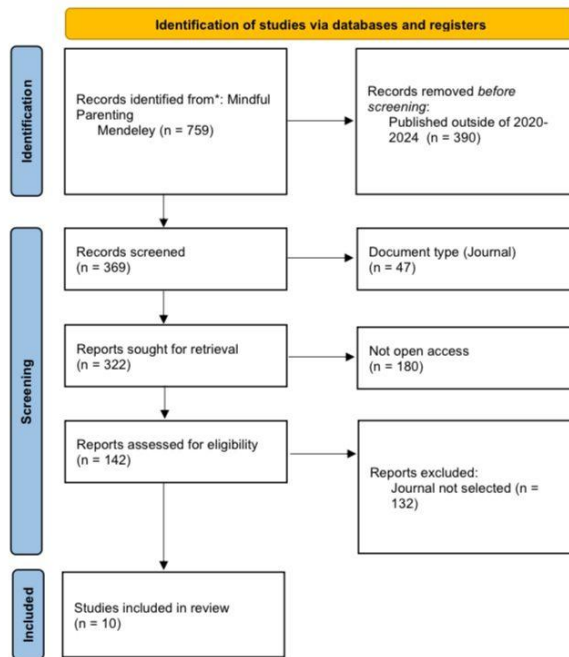


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram

The selected studies demonstrated diversity in design quantitative correlational, experimental, instrument adaptation, and cross-cultural comparative methods with samples ranging from 18 mother-child dyads to over 500 participants.

Table 1. Distribution of Included Studies by Year and Indexing

Title (Author, Year)	Indexed	Sample	Findings Articles
Determinants of Mindful Parenting: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Parent and Child Reports (Acet et al., 2024)	Q2	Parents and children from diverse cultural backgrounds (cross-cultural, sample size > 500 participants from several countries)	The study found that mindful parenting is influenced by individual factors (emotion regulation, parenting stress), contextual factors (social support, culture), and child-parent interactions. Cross-cultural differences indicate that mindful parenting practices are stronger in contexts emphasizing collectivist values and family support, while in individualistic cultures, personal parental competence plays a greater role. This study underscores the importance of a cross-cultural approach in understanding the determinants of mindful parenting.
Perspectives of Maternal Mindful Parenting: Development and Initial Validation of the Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents (MPIP) and Children (MPIC) (Acet & Oliver., 2023)	Q1	Mothers and children (sample size > 400 participants) in psychometric instrument development	The study produced two new instruments to measure mindful parenting: the Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents (MPIP) and for Children (MPIC). Validity and reliability tests showed that both instruments have stable factor structures and good internal consistency. These instruments allow for measuring mindful parenting from a dual perspective (parents and children) and strengthen the conceptual understanding of the role of mindfulness in parenting practice.
Mindful Parenting and Behavioural Problems in Preschool Children (Maglica & Ljubetić et al., 2020)	Sinta 3	Parents with preschool-aged children (N ≈ 200)	The study found that higher levels of mindful parenting are negatively correlated with behavioral problems in preschool children. Parents with higher mindfulness tend to have children with lower levels of aggression and

Title (Author, Year)	Indexed	Sample	Findings Articles
The Effectiveness of Parenting Skills Training on Mental Health and Behavioral Problems in Preschool Children (Bostani & Rezaei et al., 2020)	Q1	Parents and preschool children (N ≈ 60, divided into experimental and control groups)	problematic behaviors. This research confirms the role of mindful parenting as a protective factor in early childhood social-emotional development, particularly in preventing behavioral problems. Results show that parenting skills training is effective in improving child mental health while reducing behavioral problems in preschool-aged children. Parents who participated in the training exhibited increased use of positive parenting strategies, more effective communication, and reductions in negative child behaviors. This study establishes that parenting skills-based interventions are significant preventive approaches in supporting child development.
The Relationship Between Mothers' Attachment Style, Mindful Parenting, and the Perception of Their Child (Szabó et al., 2023)	Q4	144 non-clinical mothers with children under 3 years old; using Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ), Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting Scale (IMP), Mothers' Object Relations Scale (MORS-SF) including warmth & invasion subscales	Analysis results indicate that maternal attachment style does not directly influence mothers' perceptions of child warmth or invasiveness. However, when mindful parenting is included as a mediating variable, a significant indirect effect emerges: mothers with more secure attachment styles and higher mindful parenting levels tend to perceive their children as warmer and less invasive. These findings affirm that mindful parenting serves as an important mechanism bridging the relationship between maternal attachment quality and interpretations of child behavior. The implication is that mindfulness-based parenting interventions are especially important for mothers vulnerable due to attachment styles, to enhance mother-child relationship quality.
Adaptation of Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire (MIPQ) for parents of children aged 2–12 years (Febriani et al., 2021)	Sinta 2	513 parents with children aged 2–12 years in Indonesia	This article adapted and tested the Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire (MIPQ) in the Indonesian context. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the adapted version contains two main dimensions: Mindful Discipline and Being in the Moment with the Child. Internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) indicated good consistency. This study provides a valid and reliable instrument to measure mindful parenting in Indonesia and supports further research on the role of mindfulness in early and middle childhood parenting.
Mindful With Your Toddler Group Training: Feasibility, Acceptability, and Effects on Subjective and Objective Measures (Potharst et al., 2021)	Q1	18 mother-toddler dyads (children aged 18–48 months) with clinically referred self-regulation or co-regulation problems	This study evaluated the feasibility, acceptability, and impact of the Mindful With Your Toddler Group Training program for mothers and children aged 18–48 months experiencing regulation difficulties. Results show that this nine-week intervention was feasible and well accepted, marked by high attendance and positive participant satisfaction. Significant improvements occurred in maternal sensitivity and acceptance, followed by enhancements in child regulation, psychopathology, maternal self-compassion, and mindfulness. Some changes, such as reductions in parenting stress and maternal internal psychopathology, were more evident during follow-ups two to eight months post-intervention. However, not all variables showed significant differences, for example, overreactivity and couple relationship quality. This study affirms the potential of mindful parenting as an effective intervention to improve early mother-child interaction quality.
A Review of Mindful Parenting (Ahemaitijiang et al., 2021)	Terindeks Scopus (Q2, Psychology) & Web of Science – ESCI	-	This review examined definitions, mechanisms, and impacts of mindful parenting based on cross-study findings. Mindful parenting, characterized by awareness, non-judgmental acceptance, and compassion, is correlated with reduced parenting stress, improved parental emotion regulation, healthier parent-child relationships, and decreased child behavioral problems. The article also emphasized mindful parenting's function as a protective factor in children's social-emotional development. The authors highlighted limitations due to the dominance of Western-based research, underscoring the need for cross-cultural studies and more standardized mindful parenting interventions.
Emotional Regulation Ability in Early Childhood: Role of Coparenting and Mindful Parenting (Mafaza et al., 2022)	Journal An-Nafs: Kajian Penelitian Psikologi	200 parents with early childhood children (PAUD) in Indonesia	This study investigated the roles of coparenting and mindful parenting on emotion regulation abilities in early childhood. Regression analysis showed that both variables significantly contribute to the development of

Title (Author, Year)	Indexed	Sample	Findings Articles
	Terindeks Sinta 2, DOAJ		emotion regulation in children. Mindful parenting was demonstrated to have a positive effect in helping children manage emotions, reduce tantrum behaviors, and increase self-control. Supportive coparenting strengthens the effectiveness of mindful parenting, making both important predictors of adaptive emotion regulation in early childhood.
Does Mothers' Self-Reported Mindful Parenting Relate to the Observed Quality of Parenting Behavior and Mother-Child Interaction? (Potharst et al., 2021)	Q1	73 mothers with children aged 0–48 months; mothers facing difficulties in parenting their children (some from mental health care contexts, others from preventive contexts)	This research showed that self-reported mindful parenting (total IM-P) is more strongly related to actual behavior in the visual attention aspect (gaze) of the child, rather than all observed parenting aspects such as acceptance or verbal interaction. In other words, mothers who report mindful parenting tend to truly pay more visual attention to their children, at least during face-to-face interactions.

Analysis revealed consistent evidence that mindful parenting functions as a protective mechanism enhancing child emotional regulation and parental well-being. Studies by Maglica et al., (2020) and Mafaza & Sarry., (2022) showed that higher mindfulness levels among parents correspond to lower behavioral problems and improved child self-control. These findings align with meta-analytic conclusions by Williams et al., (2020) and Shorey et al., (2021) who reported that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) consistently improve parental empathy, emotion regulation, and family harmony.

In intervention contexts, Potharst et al., (2021) demonstrated that the Mindful With Your Toddler program increased maternal sensitivity, self-compassion, and toddlers' emotion regulation echoing outcomes of similar MBIs examined by Bluth & Wahler., (2021) and Bögels et al., (2014). Complementary evidence from the Parent Mindfulness Training study Coatsworth et al., (2015) confirmed reduced parenting stress and more adaptive child behavior following integrated mindfulness modules. Collectively, these studies support the view that mindful parenting fosters bidirectional emotional co-regulation between parent and child (Duncan & Coatsworth, 2018; Sansone., 2024).

A prominent trend concerns cross-cultural variation. Acet & Oliver., (2024) identified significant cultural moderation: mindful parenting was more pronounced in collectivist settings emphasizing interdependence, whereas in individualistic cultures, parental self-efficacy was the stronger predictor. Lo & Chan., (2021) corroborated these differences, stressing that mindfulness constructs must be contextually adapted to cultural norms. Ahemaitjiang et al., (2021) further highlighted the dominance of Western paradigms in prior research and the urgent need for localized perspectives an issue this review addresses by integrating Indonesian-based evidence.

In the Indonesian context, Febriani et al., (2021) adapted the *Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire* (MIPQ), verifying its dual factors (Mindful Discipline

and Being in the Moment with the Child) with robust reliability. This adaptation, also cited in Psyche 165 Journal Febriani et al., (2021) demonstrates progress in culturally grounded psychometrics. Mafaza & Sarry., (2022) found that mindful parenting combined with supportive coparenting predicts stronger emotion regulation in early childhood an outcome consistent with findings from Kim & Kochanska., (2022) on developmental pathways of parental mindfulness.

Instrument innovation represents another major contribution. Acet & Oliver., (2024) developed the *Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents* (MPIP) and *Children* (MPIC) to capture dual perspectives, while Maloney & Lawlor., (2023) synthesized advances in measurement reliability across cultures. Duncan et al., (2009) previously emphasized that mindfulness constructs must integrate both intra- and inter-personal awareness to predict family resilience effectively.

The mediating role of attachment security and parental emotion regulation also emerged as a recurrent finding. Szabó et al., (2023) confirmed that mindful parenting mediates the relationship between maternal attachment style and perceptions of the child securely attached, mindful mothers perceive their children as warmer and less invasive. This mediating mechanism mirrors results from Parent et al., (2016) and Bluth & Wahler., (2021) who noted that mindfulness dampens stress reactivity, leading to healthier parent-child interpretations.

From a neurodevelopmental lens, Kim & Kochanska., (2022) observed that parental mindfulness predicts enhanced child prefrontal activation during emotion regulation tasks, strengthening neuropsychological evidence that mindfulness modifies both behavioral and neural processes. Zitzmann., (2023) and Caetano et al., (2024) similarly emphasized that digital-era stress requires parents to cultivate mindful awareness to buffer technological overstimulation in children an insight particularly relevant in post-pandemic parenting.

While the reviewed evidence is compelling, methodological gaps remain. Most studies applied cross-sectional designs, limiting causal inference (Lo

& Chan., 2021; Maloney & Lawlor., 2023). Sample diversity was often constrained, with few low-income or non-Western participants, underscoring the call for longitudinal, cross-cultural research (Ahemaitijiang et al., 2021; Acet & Oliver., 2023b). Emerging studies in *Psyche 165 Journal* (Hidayati et al., 2025; Triandini et al., 2019) recommend integrating big-data analytic techniques into SLRs to improve evidence synthesis and predictive modeling of parental behavior trends.

Overall, this synthesis demonstrates that mindful parenting consistently correlates with improved child emotion regulation, reduced behavioral problems, and enhanced parental psychological health. The approach functions both as a preventive and an interventional mechanism across developmental stages (Bögels et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2020). Interventions grounded in mindfulness show feasibility and effectiveness across contexts (Potharst et al., 2021; Bluth & Wahler., 2021) and their adaptation for Indonesian cultural settings through validated instruments (Febriani et al., 2021; Mafaza & Sarry., 2022) holds promise for scalable family-based mental-health programs.

Practically, the evidence implies that policymakers and educators should promote mindful-parenting curricula in early-childhood education and community training, integrating culturally relevant practices of compassion, presence, and self-awareness (Acet & Oliver, 2024; Hidayati et al., 2025). Theoretically, mindful parenting can be conceptualized as a multidimensional process combining emotional self-regulation, attuned communication, and contextual sensitivity serving as both a mediator and moderator in family emotional dynamics (Duncan & Coatsworth, 2018; Maloney & Lawlor., 2023).

In conclusion, the ten reviewed studies collectively affirm mindful parenting as a cornerstone of modern developmental psychology. Through the integration of validated instruments, cross-cultural frameworks, and mindfulness-based interventions, mindful parenting emerges as a scientifically grounded and contextually adaptable paradigm for promoting emotional health and family resilience worldwide (Acet & Oliver., 2024)

#### 4. Conclusions and Suggestions

This study synthesized recent research on mindful parenting and its relationship with children's emotion regulation through a systematic literature review approach. The results indicate that mindful parenting functions as a crucial protective factor that promotes children's emotional well-being, decreases behavioral problems, and strengthens the overall quality of parent-child relationships. The practice of mindful parenting enhances emotional awareness, empathy, and acceptance, enabling parents to respond to their children consciously rather than reactively. Evidence from various interventions demonstrates that

mindfulness-based parenting programs effectively improve parental sensitivity, emotion regulation, and family harmony. The findings also reveal that cultural context plays an important role in shaping mindful parenting practices, emphasizing the need for contextual adaptation, especially in collectivist societies. Additionally, local validation of mindful parenting instruments contributes to the advancement of research methodologies and the applicability of the concept within Southeast Asian cultural settings.

Although the literature consistently supports the benefits of mindful parenting, several methodological limitations remain, including the predominance of cross-sectional designs, limited cultural variation, and the lack of longitudinal data. Future research is encouraged to employ experimental or longitudinal approaches and involve participants from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to strengthen generalizability. Integrating neuropsychological perspectives and big-data analysis may also deepen the understanding of mindfulness dynamics within families. Practically, the application of mindful parenting can be expanded into family-based interventions, early childhood education programs, and school counseling systems to enhance emotional resilience and reduce parental stress. Overall, mindful parenting offers a transformative framework in developmental psychology that emphasizes self-awareness, compassion, and intentional presence, supporting the growth of emotionally balanced and resilient families in the modern era.

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