



# Comparison of the Effectiveness of the Mindfulness Parenting Training Program along with Parent Management Training (Combined Training) with Mindfulness Parenting Training and Parent Management Training alone on Coping Strategies and Marital Satisfaction in Mothers of Preschool Children

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## Abstract

**Aim:** The present study was conducted with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of the mindful parenting training program along with parent management training (combined training) with mindful parenting training and parent management training alone on coping strategies and marital satisfaction in mothers of preschool children. **Methods:** The current research was a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test, post-test and two-month follow-up with a control group. The statistical population included all the mothers of preschool children in Kashmir city in 2019-2020, from which 120 people were selected by purposive sampling and randomly assigned to four groups include 30 subjects that first group received Mindful Parenting Training and second group received Parent Management Training in 8 sessions 120 to 150 minutes weekly, and last group received Combined Training in 16 sessions 150 minutes, two sessions per week. Control group didn't received any program and was wait list. In all three stages of pre-test, post-test and follow-up, all people completed Enrich's (1989) marital satisfaction questionnaires and Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) coping strategies. Finally, the data were analyzed by repeated measurement variance analysis methods with the help of SPSS<sub>V19</sub> software. **Results:** The results showed that none of the educational methods were effective in marital satisfaction ( $F=0/08, P=0.98$ ). This was despite the fact that in two problem-oriented ( $F= 6/97, P= 0/0001$ ) and emotion-oriented strategies ( $F= 8/14, P= 0/001$ ), this amount was significant. This means that in the post-test and follow-up phases, the combined training of parent management and mindful parenting was more effective. **Conclusion:** The findings of the research show that the combined training of mindful parenting and parenting management training can reduce emotion-oriented strategies and increase problem-oriented strategies, but it has no effect on marital satisfaction, so the awareness of parents, teachers, counselors, psychologists and other professionals about these trainings can be helpful. **Keywords:** Mindfulness Parenting Training, Parent Management Training, Coping Strategies, Marital Satisfaction.

## Introduction

The family is one of the important foundations of the society, whose importance in the health of the people of the society has always been considered; So that the formation of personality and health of people is rooted in the family. In fact, it should be said that the educational processes and the way parents communicate with the child are predictors of the emotional and social development of the child (Najatifar, Aghaziarti, and Abedi, 2022). The relationship between family members, especially couples, is recognized as one of the basic pillars of the family. Marital relationship can be called the most basic human relationship; Because it can provide a first structure for raising the next generation and has a major role in the level of efficient family functions. Marital satisfaction is the enjoyable and positive attitude of couples towards various aspects of their marital relationship (Duploy & DeBaer, 2018).

The distinguishing feature of mindful parenting from other parenting programs is its strong emphasis on emotional literacy and compassion. Since parents' behaviors are often guided by conditional beliefs and expectations that are rooted in the past, mindful parenting can bring attention and awareness focused on the present moment, little reactivity, and a receptive attitude toward thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. (Emerson et al., 2021). Meanwhile, other programs, such as parent management training, focus more on correcting inappropriate behaviors. In other words, it can be said that conscious parenting contains cognitive and emotional components, and the other method contains behavioral components. Thus, each of the two mentioned methods has separate advantages that can complement each other, and possibly combining them together can have a higher effectiveness on the quality of parenting. Also, despite the increasing support for the use of mindfulness in parenting, there has not been much research in the non-clinical and preventive field, and most of the research in the field of parenting based on mindfulness has focused on parents with problems or children with special needs. Few researches have been done in the direction of early prevention of problems or promotion of positive abilities in non-clinical samples. Therefore, teaching parenting programs and early interventions at the family level and parent-child interaction are very important. Therefore, considering these research gaps and the importance of the role of parenting in the mental health of children and parents, this research sought to answer the following questions with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of the aforementioned programs:

1. Was the effectiveness of the mindful parenting program combined with parent management training (combined training) and mindful parenting programs and parent management training alone on coping strategies and marital satisfaction of mothers different in the post-test stage?
2. Was the effectiveness of the mindful parenting program combined with parent management training (combined training) and mindful parenting programs and parent management training alone on coping strategies and marital satisfaction of mothers stable in the follow-up phase?

## Method

The current research was a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test, post-test and two-month follow-up with a control group. The statistical population included all the mothers of preschool children in Kashmir city in 2019-2020, from which 120

people were selected by purposive sampling and randomly assigned to four groups include 30 subjects that first group received Mindful Parenting Training and second group received Parent Management Training in 8 sessions 120 to 150 minutes weekly, and last group received Combined Training in 16 sessions 150 minutes, two sessions per week. Control group didn't received any program and was wait list. In all three stages of pre-test, post-test and follow-up, all people completed Enrich's (1989) marital satisfaction questionnaires and Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) coping strategies. Finally, the data were analyzed by repeated measurement variance analysis methods with the help of SPSS<sub>V19</sub> software.

### **Results**

The results showed that none of the educational methods were effective in marital satisfaction ( $F=0/08$ ,  $P=0.98$ ). This was despite the fact that in two problem-oriented ( $F= 6/97$ ,  $P= 0/0001$ ) and emotion-oriented strategies ( $F= 8/14$ ,  $P= 0/001$ ), this amount was significant. This means that in the post-test and follow-up phases, the combined training of parent management and mindful parenting was more effective.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to compare the effectiveness of the mindful parenting training program along with parent management training (combined training) with mindful parenting training and parent management training alone on coping strategies and marital satisfaction in mothers of preschool children. The results showed that none of these three trainings could make a significant change in the level of marital satisfaction of mothers.

The present study contained several limitations that could be resolved in future studies to provide more effective and reliable results. One of the limitations of this study was the measurement and questionnaires used. The questionnaires used in the present study were of the self-assessment type, which, despite the fact that they provide valuable and extensive information in a short time, may also have bias or inefficient measurement. One of the most important limitations that this research faced was the corona virus epidemic at the time of the research. This research and its trainings were carried out in the context of the epidemic of Covid-19 and the health policies and restrictions caused by it. This disease has probably had a very wide impact on families, in every way, which can interfere with the results of these trainings. Another limitation of this study is related to the geographical area of the study, this study was conducted on preschool children and its findings cannot be generalized to other children in other cities, in case of generalization, caution should be observed. Considering the importance of the role of fathers and their participation in parenting, as well as the importance of parental coordination, other researchers should also consider the presence of fathers in educational groups in future research, so that in addition to improving their effectiveness, the opportunity to compare education in both genders will be provided. Another suggestion is that future research should consider education for children in parallel with the education of parents and compare its results with research that only includes parents. In this research, mindful parenting training was combined with parent management training. It is suggested that other researchers combine this approach with newer behavioral approaches that have other components compatible with the

principles of mindfulness and compare the results with other researches. Another suggestion is that future researchers interested in this field should use questionnaires other than self-assessments (such as functional or unstructured tools) to collect data in their research. This research was conducted in a non-clinical population of mothers of preschool children and has a preventive aspect. Therefore, it is suggested that future researches implement this program for high-risk groups that are exposed to potential problems. Due to the fact that mindfulness requires practice and time to be integrated and stabilized in behavior and parenting, it is suggested that future researches examine the research results in longer follow-up periods, such as six months or one year, in order to evaluate the consequences of possible late onset. Finally, it is suggested that researchers interested in this field should re-run this research if possible and compare its results with the current research or researches that have been carried out under these conditions.

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