

# Education, Income and Parenting Patterns in Relation to Toddler Temper Tantrum Incidents and Parents Using Smartphones

Educación, ingresos y patrones de crianza en relación con incidentes de rabietas en niños pequeños y padres que usan teléfonos inteligentes

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## SUMMARY

**Introduction:** *Developmental disorders for toddlers are still a health problem today. Temper tantrums are an expression of extreme frustration that is described through the behavior of crying, shouting, and slamming things. Many factors can influence this condition, one of which is the background that the parents have. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between education, income, parenting patterns, and the incidence of toddler temper tantrums for parents who are active smartphone users.*

**Methods:** *A correlational study method with a cross-*

*sectional approach was used in this study. A total of 120 parents of children aged 12-36 months who are active smartphone users in the Surabaya area were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The data was obtained using a parenting pattern questionnaire to measure three types of parenting patterns, as well as temper tantrums. The reliability and validity of this questionnaire were confirmed. The data was analyzed using the Spearman Rank (rho) test and the contingency coefficient.*

**Results:** *The results of the study based on statistical tests show there to be a significant value in relation to education background ( $p=0.024$ ), monthly income ( $p=0.021$ ), and parental pattern ( $p=0.034$ ). There is a relationship between education, income, parenting patterns, and the incidence of toddler temper tantrums among parents who are active smartphone users.*

**Conclusion:** *The parent plays an important role in the incidence of toddler temper tantrums. Therefore, it takes proper parenting patterns and the support of the family environment to reduce the incidence of temper tantrums among toddlers.*

**Keywords:** *Parenting patterns, smartphone user, temper tantrum, toddler*

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## RESUMEN

**Introducción:** *Los trastornos del desarrollo de los niños pequeños siguen siendo un problema de salud en la actualidad. Las rabietas son una expresión*

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*de frustración extrema que se describe a través del comportamiento de llorar, gritar y golpear cosas. Muchos factores pueden influir en esta condición, uno de los cuales son los antecedentes que tienen los padres. El propósito de este estudio fue determinar la relación entre la educación, los ingresos, los patrones de crianza y la incidencia de las rabietas de los niños pequeños para los padres que son usuarios activos de teléfonos inteligentes.*

**Métodos:** *En este estudio se utilizó un método correlacional con un enfoque transversal. Se seleccionó un total de 120 padres de niños de 12 a 36 meses que son usuarios activos de teléfonos inteligentes en el área de Surabaya mediante la técnica de muestreo intencional. Los datos se obtuvieron mediante un cuestionario de patrones de crianza para medir tres tipos de patrones de crianza, así como las rabietas. Se confirmó la fiabilidad y validez de este cuestionario. Los datos fueron analizados mediante la prueba de Spearman Rank ( $\rho$ ) y el coeficiente de contingencia.*

**Resultados:** *Los resultados del estudio basados en pruebas estadísticas muestran que existe un valor significativo en relación con la formación académica ( $p=0,024$ ), el ingreso mensual ( $p=0,021$ ) y el patrón parental ( $p=0,034$ ). Existe una relación entre la educación, los ingresos, los patrones de crianza y la incidencia de las rabietas de los niños pequeños entre los padres que son usuarios activos de teléfonos inteligentes.*

**Conclusión:** *Los padres juegan un papel importante en la incidencia de las rabietas de los niños pequeños. Por lo tanto, se necesitan patrones de crianza adecuados y el apoyo del entorno familiar para reducir la incidencia de rabietas entre los niños pequeños.*

**Palabras clave:** *patrones de crianza, usuario de teléfono inteligente, berrinche, niño pequeño.*

## INTRODUCTION

An inappropriate parenting style is one of the factors that cause temper tantrums in children (1-3). Many of today's parents actively use smartphones when they are with their children. This factor becomes one of the reasons why children seek attention when they feel unnoticed and why they display bad behavior when their wishes are not followed. Untreated tantrums can be physically harmful to the child. In addition, the child is unable to control their emotions, or the child will lose control and become more aggressive. This results in children being unable

to face the outside environment, finding it difficult to adapt, being unable to face problems, and being unable to make decisions on their own (4-6).

In Chicago, 50 % - 80 % of temper tantrums occur between the ages of 2 - 3 years old, they usually occur once a week, and for 20 % of toddlers, they occur every day. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the age characteristics of children under five who usually experience temper tantrums show that 23 % - 83 % of children aged 2 to 4 have experienced temper tantrums (7). Based on the results of a preliminary study in an early childhood education institution in East Surabaya, five out of ten children experience symptoms of temper tantrums such as crying while hitting their parents, stomping their feet, screaming loudly, and slamming the objects in front of them.

The incidence of temper tantrums is influenced by several factors, including the child not being able to express their will, the parents not meeting the child's needs, the child feeling stressed and uncomfortable, and the child looking for attention because their parents do not give them enough attention or don't care and prioritize business. Working parents and parents who are indulgent will often comply with the requests of the child (8). In addition, the cause of the temper tantrum is the improper parenting style of the parents. Parents assume that when a child wants something and cries, they will give what the child asks for (9). Unconsciously, this can cause children to seek attention from their parents because the children think they are not getting attention and they are looking for reasons to be able to attract their parents' attention. This can have an emotional impact on the children (10).

Parents are expected to implement positive parenting patterns, namely authoritative, which is a balanced middle ground parenting pattern. This nurturing respects the needs and opinions of the child but the parents must set precise boundaries. Children who are raised in this way rarely experience tantrums (11). Parents are also expected to know how to prevent temper tantrums in their children, namely by knowing exactly what conditions the tantrums appear in their children (12).

**METHODS**

This study used an analytical cross-sectional study design to identify the relationship between education, income, parenting patterns, and the incidence of toddler temper tantrums among parents who actively use smartphones. Purposive sampling was used to select 120 parents who are early childhood education students with children aged 12-36 months old in Surabaya. The parenting pattern research instrument was a self-development instrument used to measure three types of parenting patterns, namely democratic parenting, authoritative parenting, and permissive parenting. The questionnaire consisted of 30 statements with the choice of answers being very often, often, rarely, and never. Each parenting style was represented by 10 statements. The highest score for a particular parenting pattern will indicate the parenting pattern possessed by the individual respondents. The research instrument for the temper tantrum variable was adopted from the temper tantrum questionnaire developed by Rizki (1). This questionnaire uses 33 items for temper tantrum questions using the answers very often, frequently, rarely, and never. The temper tantrum scores include low, high, and moderate. The reliability scores were in the range of 0.964 - 0.971, the validity scores for the parenting patterns questionnaire were 0.612 - 0.820, and the validity scores for the temper tantrum questionnaire were 0.617 - 0.959. The Spearman Rank (Rho) test analysis and contingency coefficients were used to determine the relationship between the variables.

**RESULTS**

Based on the Table 1, the majority of respondents have a senior high school educational background (37 %), are housewives (35 %), are aged 26-28 years old (37 %), and have an income in the range > IDR 1 500 000-2 000 000 (38 %). The most common parenting pattern was authoritarian (53.3 %) and the temper tantrum category was high (61.7 %).

Based on the results of the statistical tests, all variables, namely educational background, income, and parenting patterns in relation to toddler temper tantrums, were found to be

significant with a p-value <0.05 (Table 2). From these results, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between education background, income, parenting pattern, and temper tantrum incidence.

Table 1  
Parent's Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
23-25	30	25
26-28	37	31
29-31	33	28
32-34	12	10
35-27	4	3.3
38-40	4	3.3
Occupation		
Public Servant	6	5
Private company worker	34	28
Entrepreneur / Trader worker	28	23
Teacher	10	8.3
Housewife	42	35
Education Background		
Elementary School	32	27
Junior High School	34	28
Senior High School	44	37
Bachelor	10	8
Income (IDR)		
>500 000 -1 000 000	10	8.3
>1 000 000-1 500 000	26	22
>1 500 000-2 000 000	46	38
>2 000 000-2 500 000	21	18
>2 500 000	17	14
Parenting Pattern		
Permissive	34	28.4
Democratic	22	18.3
Authoritarian	64	53.3
Temper Tantrum Level		
Low	20	16.7
Moderate	26	21.6
High	74	61.7

Table 2  
Significant values for the variables related to the incidence of toddler temper tantrums

Variables	Statistics Test	Significance
Education Background	Contingency coefficient test	0,021
Income	Spearman Rho test	0,024
Parenting Pattern	Spearman Rho test	0,034

**DISCUSSION**

The way that parents care for their children plays a role in the cause of tantrums. Children who are too pampered and who always get what they want can throw tantrums when their request is rejected. For children who are too dominated by their parents, at times children can react against this parental dominance with tantrum behavior. Parents who raise their children inconsistently can also cause their children to tantrum (13,14). Parenting style in this case is more about how the parents are role models to children in terms of every behavior because children will always imitate their parents. If a child sees a parent expressing anger or screaming in frustration over a small thing, the child will find it difficult to control themselves. A child needs to see that adults can overcome frustration and disappointment without having to lose control so then the children can learn to control themselves. Parents should not expect their children to show a calm attitude if they always set a bad example. According to the previous research on authoritarian parenting, parents tend to force their children to obey orders and try to curb everything that their children do (15). Factors that influence parenting include education level, age, and socioeconomic level. Young people are more likely to be democratic and permissive than those who are older, based on theory and practice, so parents of old age tend to apply authoritarian parenting. This is not good according to the results obtained by researchers (16). According to the results of the study, it can be assumed that young people who have children are more likely to apply good parenting because young people tend to accept new things and can access information technology, meaning that the implementation of good parenting is easy to apply (15). The next factor that can influence parenting style is the level of education (16-19). Parents who learn how to care for their children and understand their children's needs will use more a democratic parenting style. The results of this study are in accordance with the research on the effect of education level and parenting experience on parenting style (20). Researchers assume that parental education influences the parenting process. High parental education means that the parents will understand how to apply

good parenting styles, whereas if they are less educated, the parents will not think too much about implementing particular parenting styles or about the effect of parenting on their child's development. The income factor also contributes to parenting style. Low income can affect the application of parenting to the point where it is not optimal as the parents will be limited when providing care. For example, the children are not rewarded due to their limited income. The application of good parenting is not optimal; therefore children will be forced to do something.

Temper tantrums are a behavioral problem that is often found in toddlers. Temper tantrum forms of behavior include crying loudly, kicking everything near them, slamming objects, banging heads, stomping their feet, screaming, slamming pins, whining, and cursing. According to Carlson (2015), the act of a temper tantrum can cause injury (21). The higher the intensity of the tantrum, the higher the actions, therefore the risk of children damaging and disturbing their surrounding environment will be higher, even causing injury. Factors that influence the occurrence of temper tantrums include the obstruction of the child's desire to get what they want (22). If the child wants something, it must always be fulfilled. If the wish is not fulfilled, the child can use the tantrum method to pressure their parents to get what they want. Another factor is the child's inability to express what they want. Children have language limitations. When they want to express something but cannot, and their parents cannot understand, this can lead to frustration and manifest in the form of tantrums. Furthermore, active children may not always fulfill the need for space and time to always move, and they cannot stay still for a long time. If one day the child has to travel by car, the child will feel stressed. One way of relieving stress is tantrums. Besides that, the factor of parenting style increases the incidence of temper tantrum. Proper parenting patterns applied to children in a family environment that supports the child's development can reduce the incidence of temper tantrums in toddlers.

The results of the analysis in this study are in accordance with the previous study that found that children who are too spoiled and always get what they want can throw tantrums when their request is rejected (22). For children who are

too dominated by their parents, at times children can react against this parental domination with tantrum behavior. Parents who care for their children inconsistently can also cause their children to tantrums, therefore parenting has a relationship with the incidence of temper tantrums in toddlers. The results of this study are in line with the research conducted in Jember which found that mothers who leave their children or who work are at risk of having children with the temper tantrum condition (7). The study showed that children who get less attention have a higher rate of temper tantrums. This can happen when the child is ignored or without parental assistance.

Good parenting can be done using explanations, discussions, and research to help the children understand why certain behaviors are expected. This method emphasizes the educational aspects of the discipline rather than the aspect of punishment. This parenting style uses punishments and rewards with a greater emphasis on the reward. The punishment is never harsh and usually does not take the form of corporal punishment. Punishment is only used when there is evidence that the children consciously refuse to do what is expected of them. When a child's behavior fulfills what is expected, democratic parents will reward them with praise and the approval of others. In a democratic parenting style, children will grow a sense of responsibility and foster self-confidence. The children will be able to act according to societal norms and adapt to their environment. In previous research, it was found that authoritarian parenting can result in a high incidence of tantrums in children. In democratic parenting, there is still a high incidence of tantrums while in permissive parenting, the results are that there is no high risk of tantrums in toddlers (1). Good parenting methods are in accordance with the right way of dealing with temper tantrums. This relates to trying to understand the types of tantrums that occur when children are angry (23). If the child has a tantrum, the parents should ignore the child's behavior at that time, not look at the child, and try to be calm and keep doing their activities or work. Good parenting practices can minimize tantrums so then the behavior at risk of injury, self-harm, annoying friends, or cursing and injuring others can be prevented including sulking, crying, screaming, hitting, kicking,

pulling at their clothes or parents, and rolling on the floor (15).

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between educational background, income, and parenting patterns on the incidence of toddler temper tantrums in parents who actively use smartphones. Parents play an important role in the incidence of toddler temper tantrums. Therefore, using proper parenting patterns and support in the family environment are needed to reduce the incidence of temper tantrums among toddlers.

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