

A Descriptive Study of Parenting Sense of Competence (PSOC) in unmarried early adulthood

Pradiptya S. Putri¹, Cahyaning Widhyastuti², Adinda Destia³, Luccyana Stiffany⁴
University of Informatics and Business Indonesia, Indonesia^{1,2,3,4}

Correspondent: pradiptya@unibi.ac.id¹

Received : March 04, 2024

Accepted : March 28, 2024

Published : April 28, 2024

Citation: Putri, P. S., Widhyastuti, C., Destia, A., & Stiffany, L. (2024). A Descriptive Study of Parenting Sense of Competence (PSOC) in unmarried early adulthood. *Psychosocia: Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Psychology*, 2(2), 91-100.
<https://doi.org/10.61978/psychosocia.v2i2>

ABSTRACT: Age maturity begins when individuals prepare for the wedding and become parents. Unfortunately, the existing fatherless phenomenon influences the individual, especially in the belief that they are to parenting. So many choose for no own child or tend to consider becoming a parent as things that make it difficult. Research This aims to know the parenting sense of competence (PSOC) picture in early adulthood that has not been married. Research about PSOC has been done, especially in individuals already married, but research on individuals unmarried in early adulthood is still tiny. Research is done using a descriptive analysis method. Data was collected through a PSOC questionnaire with 17 statement items. The respondents are individuals unmarried in early adulthood, aged 21-24 years old, who have not married. Research results show an average value of 62.0. with the average value known, as many as 92 out of 162 respondents have a PSOC that is classified as low. It means most respondents still do not believe they can care for later. For that matter, this needs to be improved so as not to impact a parent's early adulthood life moments negatively.

Keywords: Early Adulthood, Individual Unmarried, Parenting Sense Of Competence.



This is an open-access article under the CC-BY 4.0 license

INTRODUCTION

Age mature beginning has reached maturity enough to form a healthy and mature relationship. According to Bowlby (1969), one of the needs of individuals in early adulthood is the need to bond emotionally with others. Needs will bond; this will focus on the couple's romance and lead to marriage. Marriage is one crucial change that forms a family (Olson et al., n.d.). The role of mothers and fathers in the family is essential in the development of children. In Indonesia, there is still an extreme view of parenting; the mother is better in the position, especially for doing various work in the household, while the father only works outside the house. The fact is that the presence and involvement of fathers in the parenting process influence the child's development until later maturity (Ashari, 2017). Research Sarkadi & Kristiansson (2008) also found that more father involvement in active and positive parenting can contribute to developing more children (Sarkadi

& Kristiansson, 2008). But in reality, Indonesia is one of the countries experiencing a relatively high phenomenon of fatherlessness. Indonesia is third in the fatherless country category (Ricky, 2022).

According to Roberts (2023), fatherlessness significantly impacts a child's life. One of them is that the child will experience difficulty in social relations in the future (challenging) to believe and have connection close). Kalmijin (2015) said that individuals with good relationships with their fathers tend to be more stable in marriage (Kalmijn, 2015). Besides, mothers who experience instability in connection to weddings tend to feel uncertain about child care. They more easily feel worried and anxious about their ability to care for their child (Simonelli et al., 2019). Wang Y et al. (2020) also found that stability in marriage can influence confidence in the ability to care for the child. Belief in the ability to care for children owned by parents is also called with *Parenting Sense of Competence* (Wang et al., 2020).

Crockenberg S (1981) defines the parenting sense of competence as the belief and trust in the parent self in parenting the child and feeling capable and effective in giving attention and loving darling to children (Crockenberg, n.d.). Johnston & Mash (1989) also define parenting sense of competence (PSOC) as parents' beliefs in the ability to understand and respond to their child's needs. Of the two definitions above, can it be concluded that parenting sense of competence is the parents' belief in their ability to fulfill related needs with parenting? Stated if parents have a parenting sense of competence, they will have sufficient knowledge related to building a close and positive relationship with a child based on a pattern of proper parenting following the stages of the child (Jones & Prinz, 2005; Schaffer & Crockett, n.d.).

If parents can do parenting okay, they will positively influence the welfare of their children, including physical and mental health and social well-being. On the other hand, if a child gets lousy parenting naturally, it will negatively impact the welfare of the children (Sari et al., 2018). PSOC has two dimensions; the first, namely efficacy, is how far parents feel trust and believe in themselves and to what extent they consider themselves effective in caring for their child. The second dimension, satisfaction, is how far parents feel satisfied in operating their role as parents in parenting (Johnston & Mash, n.d.).

Jones, TL, & Prinz, RJ (2005) stated that if parents have a parenting sense of competence, they will have a sufficient understanding of how to pattern proper parenting to build close and positive relationships with children. Parents who feel more competent in caring for a child will have a positive strategy to face and overcome tasks to care for the child. With this, parents will more effectively care for the child and feel satisfied with their role as parents (Ribeiro & Silva, 2023). There are lots of possible impacts that will happen if parents have low PSOC. Parents feel they fail to fulfill the child's needs, experience limitations in building positive interactions with the child, and cannot consistently give rules. Besides that, the impact on the child that may happen will possibly not be enough support; the child can experience difficulty achieving performance well at or outside school. So, the sense of competence needs to be owned by parents, even when they are still prospective parents.

There are many cases where early adults decide not to have children because they are afraid of the possibilities that will occur. Even now, the term childfree is popular among young and unmarried couples. According to Harrington (2019), when individuals enter adulthood, they will be

physiologically ready to have children. When individuals are prepared, they can reach the next phase of development, namely becoming parents (Harrington, 2019). However, this phase will be hampered when individuals are not ready due to various things. This condition certainly has an impact, both on early adults themselves and on the development of their future lives. The desire not to have children in early adulthood may occur because they feel they are not ready and unable to be involved in caring for their children in the future.

Based on the phenomenon found by researchers related to the condition of unmarried early adulthood, which often experiences fatherlessness, which has an impact on their beliefs regarding parenting, many unmarried early adults choose to be childfree due to their doubts about future parenting. This condition, if not handled, will undoubtedly have an impact on many aspects of life, such as the emergence of generations who are not ready to get married, not prepared to have children, or will give birth to generations with higher levels of trauma due to parenting carried out by parents who are not prepared to care for their children. So researchers are interested in seeing how the parenting sense of competence is depicted in unmarried early adults as an initial effort to detect how the individual's parenting readiness is in facing their developmental tasks of getting married, having children, and building a healthy family. The results of this study can later be used as a basis for conducting further research related to the parenting sense of competence experienced by unmarried early adults.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach, where the data is obtained later in the form of numerical data or qualitative data that is quantified. The data is then collected through procedure measurement and processed with method analysis statistics. Meanwhile, the processing method used to present existing data is descriptive. According to Azwar (2017), the descriptive method can show quantitative data carefully and describe a situation, incident, or gathering incident. The study population is unmarried in early adulthood (Azwar, 2018). The sampling technique used is convenience sampling, namely taking samples based on availability elements and convenience to get as well as being capable of providing the information needed. Respondents in the study This totaled 162 people in the range of ages 21-24 years.

In the research, this tool measurement used is a tool adapted Parenting Sense of Competence measure from tool measure PSOC owned by - Wallston & Wandersman adapted from tool measuring Johnston & Mash's (1989) consists of 17 statement items (Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2008). The answer scale consists of 6 choices, namely 1 = very much not agree, 2 = less agree, 3 = no agree, 4 = agree, 5 = somewhat agree, and 6 = strongly agree. The higher the total score, the higher the PSOC parents are higher.

Data analysis techniques used in a study This method of statistics is descriptive. Quantitative data obtained in the study was processed with categorization using computer SPSS version 27 to see distribution frequency and percentage from the data. Calculation results are then used to draw interesting conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

Table 1. Respondent Data Overview

Category		Frequency	Percentage
Type Sex	Woman	138	85.2%
	Man	24	14.8%

Table 1 shows that the respondents who filled in the most were female respondents, with 138 people (85.2%).

PSOC Overview

Table 2. Description Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average
PSOC	162	44	75	62.0
<i>Satisfaction</i>		11	38	25.44
<i>Efficacy</i>		25	48	36.56
Woman	138	44	75	62.22
Man	24	54	69	60.75

Based on Table 2, it can be known that the PSOC variable, the average score obtained is 62.0. Besides that, based on Table 2, it is known that in the Satisfaction aspect, the average score obtained is 25.44, while in the Efficacy aspect, the average score obtained is 36.56. Next, it is also known that in demographic data respondent females, the average score obtained is 62.22, while the male average score obtained is 60.75. After average data is obtained from variables, each aspect, and each type of gender, the next researcher shares categorization into two groups: high and low. If $x < \text{mean}$, the element is classified as low, whereas if $x \geq \text{mean}$, the element is classified as high. Based on the guidelines, researchers get results as follows.

Table 3. Categorization

	Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
PSOC	High	$X \geq 62.0$	70	43.2%
	Low	$X < 62.0$	92	56.8%
Satisfaction	High	$X \geq 25.44$	83	51.2%
	Low	$X < 25.44$	79	48.8%
Efficacy	High	$X \geq 36.56$	79	48.8%
	Low	$X < 36.56$	83	51.2%
Woman	High	$X \geq 62.22$	63	45.7%
	Low	$X < 62.22$	75	54.3%
Man	High	$X \geq 60.75$	12	50%
	Low	$X < 60.75$	12	50%

Table 3 shows that some of the significant Respondents have a PSOC that is classified as low. This is demonstrated with data from 92 of 162 respondents to obtain a range of low scores from the average scores. This means that as many as 56.8% of individuals in early adulthood have a parenting sense of competence (PSOC), which is classified as low. In Table 3, it is also known that some significant respondents are classified as high on the satisfaction aspect. This is shown with data from 83 of 162 respondents to obtain a higher score than the average. This means that as many as 51.2% of individuals in early adulthood have satisfaction aspects in parenting sense of competence (PSOC), which are classified as high. Besides that, based on the study results, some respondents were classified as low in efficacy. This is shown with data from 83 of 162 respondents to obtain a range of low scores from the average scores. This means that as many as 51.2% of individuals in early adulthood own the efficacy aspect of parenting sense of competence (PSOC), which is classified as low. Based on type gender, in Table 3, it is known that part big respondent woman has a PSOC that is classified as low. This is shown with data from 75 of 138 respondents to obtain a higher score lower than average score. This means that as many as 54.3% of individuals in early adulthood own a level of parenting sense of competence (PSOC) which is classified as low. While the respondents were among the significant respondents, they were classified as low, and some significant others were classified as high. This is shown with data from 12 of 24 respondents to obtain the same score among the less from the average score with more from the average score. This means that individuals with type-sex males in early adulthood have their level of parenting sense of competence (PSOC), which is classified as equivalent between high and low.

Based on data processing that has been done, it found that the range score obtained from 92 respondents belongs to the category low, and 70 respondents belongs to the category high. This shows that some of the respondents unmarried in early adulthood research has low PSOC. The study's results align with those from Putri et al. (2023), which shows that the PSOC is owned by an individual who has not married and is classified as low before parenting education (Putri et al., 2023). PSOC in individuals can indicate behavior like avoiding interaction with children, feeling worried about the future as parents, and having their own trend of postponing weddings or having their child. Low the PSOC-owned individual related to lots of things. Suppose you look at it from the fatherless phenomenon, the impact of the high rate of fatherlessness that occurs in Indonesia, one of which is related to how children face the environment socially. In that case, they will tend to have no easy trust in others, and maintaining close relationships with them is also tricky (Roberts, 2023). If an individual has difficulty weaving connections near other people, it will also impact decisions for marriage and decisions for one's children. Some study to mention that the decision to own a child individually is related to the belief in competence in parenting or parenting sense of competence (PSOC). Kramer et al. (2016) found that the father's absence is related to the decision not to have children (Kramer et al., 2016). Besides that, the fatherless phenomenon can cause anxiety and uncertainty related to the role of parents that they feel. They often must go through the acceptance process of complex self so that this can reduce the sense of competence in parenting later. The absence of a father also impacts the lack of trust in self, existence trend, and difficulty in adjustment social and personal, so that can affect the lack of support obtained by an individual who is mature and beginning to prepare for building a family. Lack of support will lead to a greater sense of competence in parenting, especially for unmarried early adulthood (Iskandar & Kertamuda, 2022).

Expectation socially about the role of parents can also affect the possessed individual's sense of competence. With increasingly advanced technology growing, increasing social media exposure makes it easy for individuals to access related news or information about parenting. The use of social media can positively impact various information about parenting. However, on the other hand, excessive exposure to social media and content parenting can cause unrealistic expectations. It is naturally can impact the sense of competence that is possessed when expectations are too high and not realistic about the role of parents, then can reduce the feeling of competence in parenting, especially for mature who have not been married and do not yet have experience in to care for children (Fiqh & Mu'arifudin, 2022). According to Sarkadi, A., & Bremberg, S. (2013), social expectations about parenting, limited knowledge about parenting or the development of children, and lack of experience in caring for to be able to lower the sense of competence in individuals (Sarkadi & Bremberg 2013). This is because when an individual is not exposed enough to the correct information about parenting, lack of training about parenting, as well as pressure to fulfill standard existing social, will make individuals unmarried in early adulthood more feel no ready to play a role as parents (Olafson & Brody, 2020)

Based on the research results, it is known that PSOC is owned by some prominent respondent individuals in early adulthood, and the research is classified as low. Low PSOC in individuals' early adulthood can impact several aspects of life, such as myself. One of them will influence decisions for one's child or not. This is due to the individual with low PSOC often relating with concern to the role of his upbringing later; this makes them feel not ready to fulfill the role of parents and doubt deciding for their child. This is in line with the results of research that shows that individuals with low confident parenting tend to own welfare to be more psychologically low. This condition can influence readiness for early adulthood in the role of parents and decisions for their children (Kusuma, 2021). In addition, low PSOC in individuals unmarried in early adulthood, if not developed later, will impact the role of his care. As the research results by Jones et al. (2005) state, parents with a low Parenting Sense of Competence will have difficulty building close and positive relationships with their children. Due to uncertainty about ability, parenting often makes individuals dodge their role as parents to care for or nurse a child. So, social involvement in activity parenting becomes less low (Gupta & Bhargava, 2017).

Apart from low PSOC, it is known in research. These 70 respondents have high PSOC. With high PSOC, of course, later, it will have a positive impact on life. High PSOC directs individuals on a sense of trust, self, and confidence in their own ability to be a good parent, even though they are not yet married and do not yet own a child. In line with Olafson & Brody (2020), individuals with high PSOC, in the end, will feel more ready to become parents and will make individual own skills to overcome challenges in parenting more effectively (Olafson & Brody, 2020). Skills overcome challenges related to how individuals manage stress when face to face with a problem. Individuals with high PSOC, in the end, will be capable of reducing anxiety, managing stress, and ultimately lowering lower stress levels, especially those related to parenting, because they are confident and believe in themselves as parents or candidate parents. This condition will push individuals to make planning more family good so that they will be more ready to face every possibility that will occur (Skarin & Leung, 2018).

If reviewed based on aspects of PSOC, it is known that in the element of individual satisfaction, the mature beginning is classified as high compared to the efficacy aspect. This means that most

of the respondents in the study already feel satisfied with their description of role care, but their level of trust that they can do parenting is still low. Research results This is in line with Johnston and Mash's (1989) research, which stated that individuals often have a level of satisfaction in role parenting compared to the belief in ability parenting (efficacy). Respondent has already seen interest in the presence of children. However, to decide on effective parenting later, the mature individual is still unsure and does not believe in themselves. This can impact the later moments of the individual's child, allowing pattern care that is not consistent. Inconsistency and consistency in pattern parenting can make parents not firm enough and tend to be permissive to the child. This is because of parents' difficulty setting clear boundaries to child-related rules. This condition can also impact emotional conditions in children. However, parents who have felt satisfied still have feelings of doubt, making them unstable in managing emotions, especially when nurturing. Instability is what it's all about. In the end, it will also impact the conditions and emotions children feel (Sanders & Woolley, 2005).

Based on the results of the study, it is also known if, on the type sex women, PSOC owned part big classified as low. This aligns with Raikes & Thompson's (2005) research stating that low belief in parenting correlated with higher stress levels in the mother (Raikes & Thompson, 2005). So, can it be said that women are prone to experience uncertainty and anxiety in parenting because lots of women feel doubtful about their ability to become good caregivers? Besides that, the stigma of the society-related burden of female-centered care can also trigger low PSOC owned by women. Social stigma can cause pressure, stress, and feelings of not being competent to care in their role as a parent. Different the results research on types sex men, where results show that there is a draw between individuals who have high PSOC and those low. This happens because individuals man Still adheres to a patriarchal culture patriarchy, where man no emphasis on the role of parenting, so they are seldom very involved in a way directly to the care. Rarely can involvement make an individual man mature and begin to feel no burden related to care, so the PSOC ownership becomes high. Besides that condition, this can also make individual men in early adulthood have low PSOC because they have no involvement in parenting, making them not used to the situation. Parenting will impact their belief when faced with real parenting (Zulkarnain et al., 2023).

Based on the results and discussion above, it is known if PSOC has a significant role in parenting. Especially for the individual who will prepare for a wedding and prepare to become a parent. So, that important for individuals in early adulthood to follow class or course prenuptial agreement that discusses parenting. The goal is for individuals in early adulthood to have the readiness and confidence to become parents and avoid pattern care that is not appropriate later.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, the level of parenting sense of competence possessed by individuals unmarried in early adulthood is at a low level. This means that most respondents do not yet believe in the care that they will face in the future. As for the aspects of the PSOC owned by the respondents, they saw high satisfaction and low efficacy. This signifies that individuals in early adulthood tend to be satisfied when involved with children; however, they still experience doubt about being involved directly in parenting. For type gender, in respondents, women tend to have

low PSOC. Meanwhile, the respondents tended to have the same PSOC between high and low. Of course, this needs to be improved because if not, it will impact their lives as parents in the future.

Of course, this is not due to shortcomings in research. One of them is amount respondents, women and men, who aren't equal, so the researcher cannot compare the PSOC levels between men and women. Besides that, the respondents in the study are still the most famous limited, so they cannot yet represent the results of depicting PSOC in one city. With existing limitations, the researcher provides advice for the researcher next, which will be researching with a similar theme, which should be to expand respondents so that the data can be generalized and more representative. In addition, the researcher can also gather respondents based on the type of sex to analyze the differences between men and women. Researchers can also consider a study experiment that treats respondents to increase individual PSOC in unmarried early adulthood. Respondents should improve their PSOC by following related training in parenting, life parents, etc. The government should create a class program with a special prenuptial agreement to discuss parenting for prospective parents get supplies and experience For them to grow PSOC in themselves.

REFERENCE

- Ashari, Y. (2017). Fatherlessness in Indonesia and its impact on children's psychological development. *Psychoislamika*, 15(1), 35–40.
- Azwar, S. (2018). *Methods Study Psychology Edition II*. Student Library.
- Crockenberg, S. (n.d.). Infant irritability, maternal responsiveness, and social support influence infant-mother attachment security. *Child Development*, 1;52(3):857-65.
- Fiqh, G. K., & Mu'arifudin. (2022). Analysis Use of Social Media As Parenting Education Among Young Parents in Villages Grant Purbalingga Regency. *Journal on Education*, 6(4), 22687–22698.
- Gilmore, L., & Cuskelly, M. (2008). Factor structure of the Parenting Sense of Competence scale using a normative sample. *Child Care Health Dev*, 34(2), 10 1111 1365–2214 2007 00785.
- Gupta, R., & Bhargava, R. (2017). Parental self-efficacy and parenting practices: A comparative study of mothers and fathers. *International Journal of Family Studies*, 28(3), 250–264. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-017-0738-9>
- Harrington, R. (2019). Childfree by choice. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 20(1), 22–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2019.1559515>
- Iskandar, R. N., & Kertamuda, F. E. (2022). Concept Overview Self in Men Early Adults Who Experience Fatherlessness Due to Divorce. *Inquiry: Journal Psychology of Paramadina University*, 12(2), 49–61.
- Johnston, C., & Mash, E. J. (n.d.). A measure of parenting satisfaction and efficacy. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 1;18(2):167-75. <https://doi.org/doi>

- Jones, T. L., & Prinz, R. J. (2005). Parental self-efficacy and parenting practices: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25(3), 341–365. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2005.01.002>
- Kalmijn, M. (2015). *The role of father involvement in children's later-life outcomes* (M. E. Lamb, Ed.; 5th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Kramer, W., Slutsky, J., Jadva, V., Freeman, T., Persaud, S., Steele, M., Steele, H., & Golombok, S. (2016). Integrating donor conception into identity development: adolescents in fatherless families. *Fertile Sterile, Jul;106(1):202-208*. <https://doi.org/doi>
- Kusuma, A. A. A. M. N. (2021). *The Relationship Between Parenting Self-efficacy and Psychological Well-Being in Single Parent Mothers*. https://core.ac.uk/download/483879633.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt
- Olafson, C. A., & Brody, G. H. (2020). The Role of Social Expectations and Media Influence on Parental Self-Efficacy: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 34(3), 345–357.
- Olson, D. H., Russell, C. S., & Sprenkle, D. H. (n.d.). Circumplex model of marital and family systems: I. Cohesion and adaptability dimensions, family types, and clinical applications. *Family Process*, 22(2), 243–258.
- Putri, P. S., Widhyastuti, C., A, D., & Stiffany, L. (2023). The Impact of Parenting Education on Parenting Sense of Competence in Preparing Early Adulthood Becoming a Parent an Effort to Improve Independence and Family Mental Health. *JIPSI*, 5(2), 104–112.
- Raikes, H. A., & Thompson, R. A. (2005). Efficacy and Social Support as Predictors of Parenting Stress among Families in Poverty. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 26(3), 177–190.
- Ribeiro, L. P., & Silva, A. L. (2023). Parental competence, parenting stress, and satisfaction: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 32(5), 1609–1623. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-023-01981-9>
- Ricky, M. (2022). *Father's Day, Indonesia ordered three countries to have fatherless children without a father figure*. <https://www.solopos.com/hari-ayah-indonesia-urutan-ketiga-negara-fatherless-anak-tanpa-figur-ayah-1469662>
- Sanders, M. R., & Woolley, M. L. (2005). The Relationship Between Maternal Self-Efficacy and Parenting Practices: Implications for Parent Training. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 31(1), 65–73.
- Sari, N. K., Suharnan, S., & Hadi, S. (2018). Parental Care with Child Welfare. *Journal Study Humanities*, 22(1), 21–34.
- Sarkadi, A., & Bremberg, S. (2013). Socially Constructed Parenting Expectations and Their Impact on Parental Competence and Well-Being: A Review of Evidence. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 22(5), 614–623.
- Sarkadi, A., & Kristiansson, R. (2008). Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: A systematic review of longitudinal studies. *J Early Child Res*, 6(2), 157–186. <https://doi.org/doi>

- Schaffer, H. R., & Crockett, L. J. (n.d.). Competence: A conceptualization and its implications for child development. In T. Wheeler & J. Wertsch (Eds.), *The psychological meaning of competence in childhood* (pp. 27–45). Springer.
- Simonelli, A., Stasio, S., & Perego, V. (2019). Marriage instability and maternal confidence in parenting. *Marriage & Family Review*, 55(5), 385–400. <https://doi.org/doi>
- Skarin, M., & Leung, C. (2018). Parental Expectations, Media Influence, and Their Effects on Parenting Self-Efficacy Among First-Time Parents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 27(8), 2568–2580.
- Wang, Y., Li, T., & Li, X. (2020). The relationship between marital stability and parenting competence: A comparison of mothers and fathers in China. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29(11), 3159–3169.
- Zulkarnain, Z., Amiruddin, A., Kusaeri, K., & Rusydiyah. (2023). Analysis Comparison of Childcare Patterns in Indonesia and Finland. *Journal Obsession : Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 7(5), 6399–6414.