

A Study of Parenting Sense of Competence
and Parental Stress in Selangor

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PARENTING SENSE OF COMPETENCE AND PARENTAL STRESS

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CHENG JING WEI

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Approval Form

This research paper attached here to, entitled “A Study of Parenting Sense of Competence and Parental Stress among Parents of Young Children in Selangor” prepared and submitted by Cheng Jing Wei in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (Hons) is hereby accepted.

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Declaration

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

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Abstract

Although parenting could be rewarding and fulfilling, it could be challenging and demanding at times, especially for those new parents who are not prepared for parenthood. Consequently, it will decrease parenting competence and increase parental stress. Hence, for fast adaptation into parental roles, the parenting sense of competence plays the key factor. However, there are still limited research that discussed about the relationship between parenting competence and parental stress among parents of young children in local context. Therefore, the present study strives to investigate the significant relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress of parents with young children in Klang Valley, Selangor. The Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory had been applied in this study to investigate the correlation between parenting competence and parental stress among parents of young children. It is quantitative correlational research and there are two questionnaires had been used which are Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) by Gibaud-Wallston and Wandersman (1978) and Parental Stress Scale (PSS) by Berry and Jones (1995). There were 62 parents of young children ranged in age from zero to six years old involved in this study and convenient sampling had been used in collecting the data. Descriptive analysis had been used in analysing the profile of the respondents and inferential analysis is performed using Pearson correlation coefficient to test the hypotheses. Based on present findings, it indicated there is a significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence in efficacy ($r=-.641$; $p<.001$) and satisfaction ($r=-.603$; $p<.001$) and parental stress. This study is found limited in the sample size, language of questionnaires, sampling method and lack resources in quantitative research. As for recommendations, this study suggests increasing the sample size, use cluster sampling, back translation, and mixed method approach.

Keywords: Parents of young children, parenting sense of competence, parental stress

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List of Abbreviations

- PSOC Parenting Sense of Competence
- PSS Parental Stress Scale

Chapter I

Introduction

Introduction

This study aims to study the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children in Selangor. In this chapter, it will cover the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, research hypothesis, significance of study as well as the definition of terms which include both operational and conceptual definitions.

Background of the Study

Being a parent could be fulfilling and rewarding when he or she gets to establish physical and emotional connection with his or her own child. The sense of being needed, respected, and loved by one's own child would be a great source of emotional fulfillment. Meanwhile, it is deeply rewarding when parents are able to witness and accompany their child to thrive holistically to become an independent and competent individual. However, it cannot be denied that parenting can be challenging and demanding at times. In fact, nurturing a child could be a challenging task especially for those new parents who are still adapting to parenthood (Zhu et al., 2022). To illustrate, some issues that might be faced by the new parents are striking a balance between work and parenting, handling unexpected situations, etc. They might find it hard to cope with their new roles as they could be lack of parenting experience, child development knowledge and social support (Zhu et al., 2022). Hence, for fast adaptation into parental roles, the parenting sense of competence plays the key factor (Zhu et al., 2022). The term parenting sense of competence refers to how the parents personally assess their ability to nurture their children and their satisfaction with their parenting role (Johnston et al., 2018, as cited in Nunes et al., 2022).

According to Mohammad et al. (2021) as cited in Zhu et al. (2022), parenting sense of competence is associated to parental stress. This is due to the fact that parenting sense of competence can greatly impact the parenting ability, parenting attitude and beliefs as well as parenting behaviors of a person (Zhu et al., 2022). To illustrate, parents who feel less competent in their parenting are prone to negative emotions such as tense and anxious when overcoming challenges in parenthood. Subsequently, it will lead them to have poorer physical and mental well-being with higher parenting stress as such, they will be less satisfied in parenting. Conversely, parents with higher levels of parenting sense of competence are more likely to apply more effective parenting styles and subsequently lead to lowered risk of parental stress (Albanese et al., 2019 as cited in Trillingsgaard et al., 2021). This is in line with Zhu et al. (2022) where they mentioned that parents who feel more competent in their parenting are prone to adopt positive strategies to tackle challenging parenting tasks and thus lead to better well-being with lower parental stress. With that, they will be more effective in parenting and satisfied with their parenting role (Wang et al., 2023). Therefore, it is crucial to understand how parenting sense of competence can bring impacts on parental stress.

Problem Statement

Parenting has evolved and become much different compared to the past due to the changes in technological aspects which can create greater burdens for parents in parenting (Wu et al., 2014). To illustrate, they might need to respond to additional parenting tasks such as managing and monitoring their children's screen time as well as guiding them to use the internet wisely (Wu et al., 2014). According to an Internet user survey that conducted by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), the use of Internet for social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram are increasing among five to 17 years old children who are fragile and having poor self-regulation (Norazlinda, 2023). This can create several potential issues for them such as cyberbullying, online harassment,

addicting, social isolating and so on (Norazlinda, 2023). Indeed, parents of young children usually experience higher levels of stress compared to other age groups as raising young children is a challenging process where the parents are not only responsible to fulfil their children's physical and psychological needs but also need to perform a series of caregiving task such as mediate sibling conflicts, constantly cleaning up mess, assisting with personal care, dressing, toileting and so on (Crnic & Ross, 2017). Additionally, they need to spend more attention and guidance on their child due to this stage of children begin to develop their own thoughts but struggle with perceiving things from the perspectives of others. With that, the challenges faced by parents of young children in the realm of parenting have been steadily increasing. Inability to self-regulate or adapt to the parental roles will cause parents fatigue and eventually will trigger parental stress (Molano et al., 2023). Consequently, these negative feelings and emotions will make the parents feel incompetent in managing the parenting task and thus demotivate parents to execute caregiving tasks (Kumalasari & Fourianalistyawati, 2020).

Apart from that, most of the research studies reveal the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress are lacking in the early childhood field. To illustrate, most of the past studies had been conducted with premature babies (Woods, 2023), pre-teens (Nunes et al., 2022), and adolescents (Wang et al., 2023). Hence, the findings cannot be applied in early childhood context as children might be varied in different stages in terms of their behavior, characteristics, and limitations. For instance, according to Piaget's Cognitive Theory, children who are under the preoperational stage (2 to 7 years old) will be more egocentric (Kesselring & Müller, 2011). As such, the challenges that are faced by the parents will also be different which in turn different parenting sense of competence and parental stress.

In addition, most of the studies also reveal there is limited research about the association between parenting sense of competence and parental stress in the local context, that is Malaysia.

To illustrate, most of the studies had been conducted in Western countries such as Croatia (Katkić et al., 2017), China (Chi & Hu, 2018), Portugal (Nunes et al., 2022), Finland (Botha et al., 2020), and Spain (Molano et al., 2023). As such, this might cause different in findings due to the cultural perspectives being different, which resulting in a different parenting sense of competence and parental stress. Therefore, further research of local literature is needed to bridge the knowledge gaps.

Research Objectives

In response to the problem stated, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress. The following are the two objectives:

1. To investigate the relationship between parenting efficacy and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.
2. To investigate the relationship between parenting satisfaction and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. Is there a significant relationship between parenting efficacy and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor?
2. Is there a significant relationship between parenting satisfaction and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor?

Research Hypotheses

From the research objectives and research questions, two research hypotheses have been constructed.

H₁1: There is a significant relationship between parenting efficacy and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.

H₁2: There is a significant relationship between parenting satisfaction and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.

Significance of Study

The current study is worth to investigate as the findings from the study can uncover the nature of the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress which can be used to empower the parents of young children in various ways. For instance, the findings can be used to raise awareness of parenting sense of competence and parental stress among the parents of young children. To illustrate, the findings can prompt parents of young children to take concern about their level of confidence, satisfaction, and stress in performing parenting roles and understand if there is a significant relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress. As such, this can help parents to be aware of the importance of boosting their sense of competence by seeking support from the social and observing others with good role models to enhance their parenting performance and thus reduce their dissatisfaction and stress in parenting. This is in line with Wang et al. (2023) as they mentioned that to avoid parents easily getting frustrated or overwhelmed in parenting, it is essential for them to expand their resources to fulfil their different parenting demands.

Besides that, the findings of this study can be used to contribute valuable insights to the early childhood field. As mentioned earlier, most of the studies of parenting sense of competence and parental stress had been conducted with premature babies, pre-teens, and adolescents as such, the findings cannot be applied in the early childhood field due to the development of a child is different in every stage. Hence, through this research, it can make the early childhood educators aware of the issues that are faced by the parents of young children

and to support the parents in executing their parental roles by sharing useful parenting strategies and child development knowledge. According to Manorath (2020), teachers play a vital role in supporting parents in raising their children, which can reduce parental stress and improve children's performance.

Apart from that, the present findings can be used to bridge knowledge gaps by contributing insights to local research. To further elaborate, it can contribute to the existing literature by uncovering whether parenting sense of competence is correlated to parental stress in Malaysia context. As we know, parents from different countries hold different parental beliefs and practice different parenting styles due to the cultural differences. According to Luo et al. (2013), authoritarian parenting style is more likely adopted by Asian parents, showing less responsiveness in children's needs and high demandingness whereas Western parents tend to be more permissive in parenting by showing more warmth with less controllingness. In fact, parenting styles can reflect a person's level of confidence and satisfaction in parenting as it influences parents' parental attitudes and beliefs. This is in line with Brian (2023) as he mentioned that authoritative parenting style was positively correlated with parental self-efficacy whereas permissive parenting style was negatively correlated. Hence, the information obtained in this study is useful for determining whether there is a relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among Malaysian parents.

Definition of Terms

To ensure the readers can understand the research context better, the researcher clearly defined and interpreted the following terms which were being used in the study by giving two types of definitions, that is conceptual definition and operational definition. Conceptual definition is related to the use of scientific concepts to define the variables and it can be commonly interpreted as textbook definition (Dunn, 2021). In contrast, operational definition

is related to the actual methods used by the researcher to measure the variables in the study (Dunn, 2021).

Conceptual Definition

Parenting Sense of Competence: According to Nunes et al. (2022), parenting sense of competence is regarded as parents' perception of their competence or capabilities in fulfilling their parenting role.

Parental Stress: According to Coulacoglou & Saklofske (2017), parental stress can be defined as a kind of stress that often occurs when parents or guardians responding to caregiving task. It becomes a stressor when they possess limited parenting knowledge and skills or have insufficient social support that might lead them to perceive their children as challenging.

Young children: According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2019), young child refers to a person who is under 8-year-old.

Operational Definition

Parenting Sense of Competence: In this study, parenting sense of competence was assessed by the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) (Gibaud-Wallston & Wandersmen, 1978). It is being studied based on two aspects, that is parenting self-efficacy and parenting satisfaction. Parenting self-efficacy can be defined as the belief of parents about their ability to execute their parenting role by applying positive parenting knowledge and skills (Zhu et al., 2022). Whereas parenting satisfaction is related to the satisfaction and comfort of parents with their parenting role which can influence their motivation in engaging with children (Zhu et al., 2022).

Parental Stress: The Parental Stress Scale (PSS) (Berry & Jones, 1995) was being used in present study to measure the levels of stress and feelings of parents about their parenting

role. In this study, parental stress is referred to as a kind of stress that is experienced by the parents of young children when performing their parental role. It often occurs when they perceive parenting demands are beyond their resources and capabilities (Deater & Deckard, in Cronin, Becher, Christians, Maher, & Dibb, 2015 as cited in Kumalasari & Fourianalisyawati, 2020).

Young children: In this study, young children refer to those who are under the age of six.

Conclusion

In general, the research aims to investigate the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children in Selangor. This research is expected to bring benefits to the parents, early childhood level and local research. That is because the findings can be used to raise awareness of parenting sense of competence and parental stress among the parents of young children and bridge knowledge gaps by contributing insights to local research as most of the studies had been conducted in Western countries. Apart from that, the researcher also defined and interpreted several terms that were used in the study to make the readers understand better about the research context.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the relationship between the two variables, that is the parenting sense of competence and parental stress. Besides, it also introduces the theoretical framework that is applied in this study and provides the conceptual framework to explain how the two variables in the study are correlated with each other.

Parenting Sense of Competence

In this research, the concept of parenting sense of competence is categorized as the levels of self-efficacy and satisfaction of a person experienced in his or her parenting role. Parenting self-efficacy pertains to a parent's personal evaluation on their ability to perform competently to care for their children whereas parenting satisfaction refers to the enjoyment and pleasure of parents gained from their parenting roles (Zhu et al., 2022). Generally, parenting sense of competence in parents of young children is influenced by a variety of factors, including parenting knowledge, social support, numbers of children and gender differences (Popp et al., 2018; Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021).

Parenting knowledge provides parents with relevant information and knowledge about child development which can help them to prepare for various aspects of parenting. For instance, parents who have better parenting knowledge tend to employ effective parenting strategies to address the challenges compared to those parents who have limited parenting knowledge (Wang et al., 2023). Thus, when parents are able to manage their children or parenting tasks effectively, they are more likely to feel capable in their parenting roles which can further boost their sense of competence and self-efficacy in parenting. Also, by having parenting knowledge, it can lead parents to have higher parenting satisfaction and fulfillment

as they have better skills in resolving conflicts which can contribute to better child-parent relationships.

Next, social support can enhance parents' parenting efficacy and satisfaction through providing informational, emotional, esteem and social network support (Popp et al., 2018). For instance, when parents have stronger social support from other experienced parents, spouse and family members that can provide useful resources of parenting and emotional support, they are more likely to feel a sense of fulfilment and thus increase their satisfaction in parenting.

Besides that, the numbers of children can also impact parenting sense of competence in efficacy and satisfaction (Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021). To illustrate, when parents have more children, they may feel their responsibility and parenting demands become heavier. Thus, this may make them doubt their ability to meet the needs of each child effectively and cause them to be fatigued easily, in turn reducing their levels of parenting efficacy and satisfaction.

Apart from that, gender differences can impact the levels of parenting satisfaction (Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021). Past research indicated mothers usually present higher levels of parenting satisfaction than fathers (King et al., 2023). This could be due to mothers may have better skills in expressing their emotions and feelings compared to fathers (Islamiah et al., 2023). Hence, this can lead to a more open and satisfying parent-child relationship in turn increasing parenting satisfaction.

Parental Stress

Stress is a response to a situation where something is lost or disrupted within one's surroundings (Sugiana et al., 2020). In other words, stress may arise when there are sudden changes in life. In this instance, the birth of children and the parenting process could be one of these changes that causes stress in people (Sugiana et al., 2020).

Stress in the parenting domain is called parental stress which refers to a kind of stress when parents carry out parental roles (Lee & Jeon, 2021). According to Sugiana et al. (2020), parenting stress often occurs when the parents feel that they lack resources to deal with parenting demands and think that parenting tasks are far beyond their personal and social ability to perform. Therefore, parenting can be a stressor for parents who are not prepared to adapt to the changes, and it will consequently affect the parents' physical and mental well-being. In fact, parental stress can be easily triggered by children at early age as young children often have limited communication skills to express their thoughts which may hinder the understanding between parents and children thus, leading to frustration and high parental stress (Kumalasari & Fourianalistyawati, 2020). Additionally, parental stress could also be caused by less positive interactive behavior and less engagement with children (Crnic & Ross, 2017). To illustrate, when parents spend less time in building bonds with their children, they may feel disconnected and may result in behavioral challenges in children and thus, leading to higher levels of parental stress (Fang et al., 2022). In Malaysia, parents of young children reported heightened parental stress during the COVID-19 pandemic as they might face the challenges of home-schooling and work-life balance (Karabi et al., 2022). Thus, it is important to investigate the parental stress among parents of young children in Klang Valley, Selangor.

The Relationship between Parenting Sense of Competence in Efficacy and Parental Stress among Parents of Young Children

Most research in this area indicated a significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress (Lee & Jeon, 2021; Saltali, 2020; Sugiana et al., 2020; Smith, 2017, Crnic & Ross, 2017). This is due to parents with higher levels of parenting sense of competence may have higher possibility of success in executing parental roles which in turn reduce their parental stress (Crnic & Ross, 2017). To illustrate, parents with higher self-efficacy are more likely to view parenting tasks as energizing experience and put

more effort in dealing with it which can lead to lowered parental stress (Wang et al., 2023). According to past research, parenting sense of competence plays a central role in positive parenting (Wang et al., 2023). For instance, parents with higher parenting self-efficacy tend to have higher levels of confidence as they believe they have the ability to perform well in their parental role thus, they feel motivated and are more inclined to adopt positive parenting strategies (i.e.: authoritative parenting styles) to guide their children (Crnic & Ross, 2017). This is in line with Zhu et al. (2022) as they mentioned that parents with higher sense of parenting competence are prone to adopt positive parenting strategies to guide child's behavioral issues and overcome challenging parenting tasks (e.g.: toilet-training) which will lead them to perceive themselves to be competent in their parental roles. Eventually, they will have good coping abilities with greater psychological well-being (Wang et al., 2023). Similarly, parents who possess higher levels of parenting-efficacy are more likely to be resilient in coping stressful situations as they are prone to optimistic mindset to seek feasible methods to overcome the challenges or child-related issues which can be linked to a declined in their levels of parental stress (Sugiana et al., 2020; Achouche et al., 2022).

In contrast, parents with lower self-efficacy tend to perceive caregiving tasks as threats which may demotivate them to be less involved in positive parenting styles and may further increase tension thereby leading to higher parental stress (Sugiana et al., 2020). This is supported by Chi and Hu (2018) as they mentioned that parents with lowered parenting self-efficacy tend to employ dysfunctional or hostile parenting practices that may cause problematic behaviors in children and thus contribute to parental stress.

The Relationship between Parenting Sense of Competence in Satisfaction and Parental Stress among Parents of Young Children

Other than parenting self-efficacy, parenting satisfaction is also closely related to parental stress. To exemplify, parents with higher parenting satisfaction are more likely to feel pleasurable in their parenting experiences which can motivate them to spend more time in interacting with their children and thus lead to lower parental stress (Trillingsgaard et al., 2021). Furthermore, parenting satisfaction is associated with children's outcomes (Crnic & Ross, 2017). To illustrate, high parenting satisfaction may lead parents to be warm and responsive in parenting as such, they tend to deal with their children in a positive manner in turn develop the children with good personalities and performance (Wang et al., 2023). Thus, reduce their levels of stress in parenting.

In contrast, low parenting satisfaction may lead parents to view child-parents' interactions less pleasurable which can cause them to show withdrawal in parenting and thus increase the tendency of child externalizing behavior (Trillingsgaard et al., 2021). This will greatly increase the pressure on parents as they need to deal with these behavioral challenges such as temper tantrums, aggression, or defiance. Additionally, parents with lowered parenting satisfaction are prone to frustration in their parenting experiences which they often find being a parent as a stressful job in turn lead to higher parental stress (Zhu et al., 2022). This is supported by Nunes et al. (2022) as they mentioned that these parents tend to express negative emotions such as anxiety and depression when handling parenting tasks which will cause them to be fatigue and overwhelmed easily and thus contribute to higher levels of parental stress.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory can be applied in this study to explain the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress which saying a person's behavior and performance changes is strongly determined by his or her sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1977). The concept of reciprocal determination of the factors that influence behavior has been highlighted to explain the levels of self-efficacy can influence a person's behavior in turn affect the environment. For example, the level of competence can impact parents' behaviors in turn affect their stress levels and vice versa. Specifically, it claimed that people with higher self-efficacy are more likely to be motivated to accomplish specific tasks as they believe the tasks and environment is under their control as such, it will often turn out good results (Poluektova et al., 2023). In contrast, people with lower self-efficacy tend to give up easily which will often lead to failure (Poluektova et al., 2023). In fact, self-efficacy is the belief in one's effectiveness in accomplishing a task (Bandura, 1977 as cited in Kardong-Edgren, 2013). In this theory, Albert Bandura proposed that a person's self-efficacy is developed by four major sources, that is (1) experience (mastery experience), (2) vicarious experience, (3) social persuasion, and (4) physiological feedback.

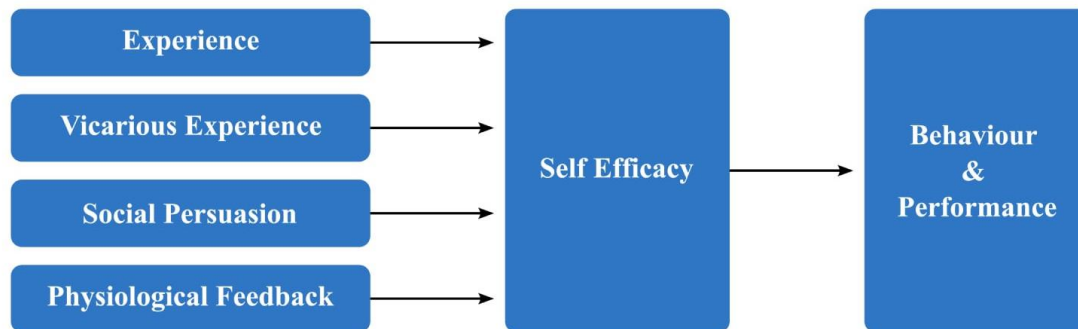
First, mastery experience is the primary source of developing one's self-efficacy. It relates to one's past performance or accomplishment (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). To illustrate, a person's self-efficacy will be fostered through his or her past experiences in accomplishing the tasks successfully while failure in carrying out the task will diminish one's self-efficacy. Hence, a person's mastery experience can influence him or her self-efficacy in dealing with new challenges. Second, vicarious experience refers to gaining insights through observing the performance of others to improve personal experiences (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). It is believed that a person's self-efficacy can be developed through observing good role models who are capable in performing the tasks successfully (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). It can help the person to

build confidence in executing tasks because through observation, it allows the person to gain insights which can help him or her to improve their performance. Third, social persuasion refers to a process of receiving coaching and constructive feedbacks to make a person change his or her beliefs about self-capabilities (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). For instance, if a person gets positive feedbacks or encouragement from others, he or she will be most likely to believe himself or herself is able to carry out the task successfully and thus lead to high self-efficacy. Fourth, physiological feedback refers to the emotional or physiological state of a person while engaging in a specific task (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). It is believed that a person's emotional or physiological well-being can influence his or her self-efficacy in performing the task (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). For instance, if the person has greater anxiety or depression, he or she will tend to have negative thoughts and doubt with himself or herself in completing the tasks.

As mentioned earlier, the parenting sense of competence is closely linked to self-efficacy as it reflects a parent's actual capability to nurture their children holistically by providing appropriate guidance and care (Bandura, 1977 as cited in Zhu et al., 2022). Parents with higher self-efficacy in their parenting abilities will tend to perceive themselves as competent caregivers and believe they are capable in manipulating the child rather than being manipulated. They take on challenges with a positive attitude by viewing the challenges as opportunities and stepping-stones rather than perceiving them as stumbling blocks that can obstruct them from being competent parents. As such, they will be more confident in handling parenting tasks by adopting positive and effective parenting strategies and will be more resilient in coping stress due to the pleasurable experiences that they had gained in parenting (Albanese et al., 2019 as cited in Trillingsgaard et al., 2021). In conclusion, parenting sense of competence can influence parental stress negatively.

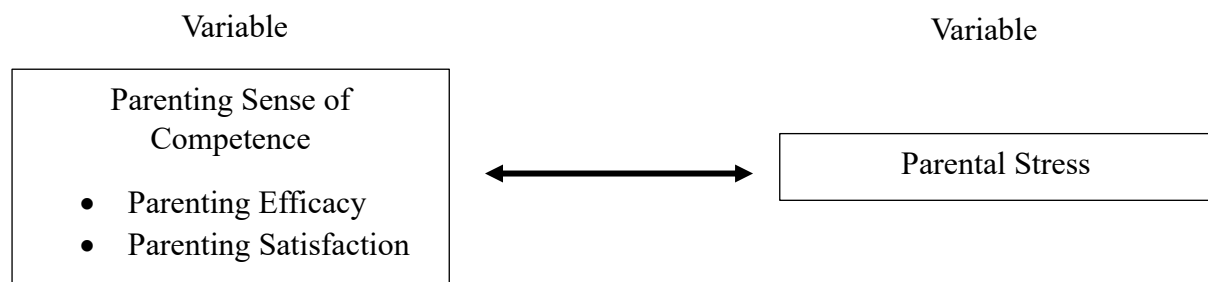
Figure 1

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory



Conceptual Framework

This study is a correlational design and was carried out to examine whether there is a bidirectional relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress. Under the parenting sense of competence, there are two subscales, that is parenting efficacy and parenting satisfaction. In this study, the researcher hypothesized that parenting sense of competence is correlated to parental stress which means the level of parenting sense of competence might contribute to high or low level of parental stress and at the same time the level of parental stress might associate with high or low level of parenting sense of competence. This assumption is supported by past literature. To illustrate, according to Molano et al. (2023) a significant relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress was found which is in line with Cooley et al. (2015); Jiménez et al. (2013), Jiménez-Morago et al. (2018); Morgan & Baron (2011); Whenan et al. (2009). In general, most of the studies agree that parenting sense of competence is correlated to parental stress.

Figure 2*Conceptual Framework of the Study***Conclusion**

To sum up, the researcher has included three subtopics that are related to the topic and are supported by various journal articles from the past studies. In addition, the researcher also discussed about the Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and used the conceptual framework to explain the association between parenting sense of competence and parental stress.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will be discussing the research methodology that have been used in this study. It consists of research design, sampling and respondents, research instrument, data analysis methods and research procedures.

Research Design

This study is a quantitative based of research where the researcher uses questionnaires (i.e.: Parenting Sense of Competence Scale and Parental Stress Scale) as the research method to collect data in order to explore the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children. According to Sheard (2018), quantitative research method is often used to test the hypotheses by using numerical data. Also, it allows the researcher to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results to larger populations by gathering and analysing the numerical data (Bhandari, 2020). In fact, quantitative research can be classified into four types, that is survey research, correlational research, experimental research, and causal-comparative research (Apuke, 2017).

Based on this study, correlational design was being used as the research design because it was aimed to measure the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress. According to Apuke (2017), correlational research design is used to determine the existence and strength of a linear relationship between two or more variables in a given population. In this methodology, the correlation coefficient (r) qualifies the extent of the linear relationship (Apuke, 2017). Generally, a correlational study can produce three possible outcomes: (1) positive correlation, (2) negative correlation, (3) no correlation. According to

Cherry (2022), a positive correlation occurs when two variables increase or decrease at the same time, showing the tendency to move in the same direction; a negative correlation occurs when one variable increases while the other decreases (and vice versa), showing the both variables move in opposite direction; no correlation occurs when one variable moves one way while the other move in unrelated direction, showing no linear dependency with each other.

Sampling Methods, Respondents and Population

There are some differences between population and sample. According to Ravikiran (2021), population refers to an entire group of individuals, objects, events, or organizations that share a particular set of characteristics which makes a researcher intends to study. Whereas sample refers to a specific group that has similar characteristics of the population that the researcher will collect the data from. This also reflects population size is larger than sample size. As such, samples can be regarded as a part of the population.

In this study, the research population is referring to the parents of young children in Selangor. As for the sample size of this study is referring to 62 parents of young children in Klang Valley, Selangor. Among these 62 respondents, each of them needs to fulfil some requirements or characteristics such as being Malaysians and having at least a child who under the age of six. According to the findings of UKEssays (2018), parents from different countries may have varied opinions and practices in parenting due to cultural differences. To illustrate, most parents from Western countries have higher knowledge and parenting beliefs compared to the parents from South-East Asian (Smith et al., 2021). This may lead to lower parental stress. Thus, to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the findings, it is important to select the respondents who shared similar demographic characteristics.

Convenient sampling is chosen for this study for some reasons. According to Etika (2016), convenient sampling is a type of non-random or non-probability sampling which can

ease the researcher to obtain the data from the people who can be easily accessed. With that, the researcher used convenient sampling to collect data due to time constraint and lack of manpower in gathering the data. To use convenience sampling in present study, the researcher will recruit the participants who are willing to participate in the study and are fulfilling the characteristics such as Malaysian parents of young children by distributing the questionnaires through social media.

Research Instrument

According to DiscoverPhDs (2020), a research instrument is a set of tools that is used by the researcher to collect the data which is related to his or her research study. There are several types of research instruments that can be used in quantitative research such as questionnaires, tests, scales, and observation (Sathiyaseelan, 2015). In this study, the researcher used online and physical surveys as the data collection method to collect the questionnaires from the respondents. According to Mcleod (2023), questionnaire is a kind of research instrument that is used for collecting data from the respondents to understand their attitudes and opinions through answering a series of questions.

In this study, the questionnaires consist of 3 sections: (1) Section A, (2) Section B, (3) Section C. Section A is used to collect demographic data of the respondents to allow the researcher to have a brief understanding on their background. Such demographic information includes the gender, age, race, educational level, monthly household income and numbers of children.

In Section B, the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) which was developed by Gibaud-Wallston and Wandersman (1978) was used to measure the parents' sense of competence in parenting. It consists of 17 items, nine of which are negatively worded (i.e.: No. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14 and 16). It is separated into two subscales, that is parenting efficacy and

parenting satisfaction. Each of them is scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. For instance, 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Somewhat Disagree; 3=Disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Somewhat Agree, 6=Strongly Agree. There are nine reverse score were found in this scale, that is items 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14 and 16. These items should be reversed scored as follows: (1=6) (2=5) (3=4) (4=3) (5=2) (6=1). The scoring method of this instrument is to calculate the reverse items in reverse scoring then total up all the items. Lower scores indicate lower parenting sense of competence, and higher scores indicate higher parenting sense of competence. According to Gibaud-Wallston and Wandersman (1978), the PSOC is a reliable instrument as the Cronbach alpha for parenting efficacy is 0.7 and the Cronbach alpha for parenting satisfaction is 0.82.

In Section C, the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) which was developed by Berry and Jones (1995) was used to measure parents’ levels of stress and feelings about their parenting role. It consists of 18 items and are scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree; 3=Undecided; 4=Agree to 5= Strongly Agree. From the 18 items, eight of which are reverse items, that is items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, and 18. These reverse items need to be reversed scored as follow (1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1). To calculate the scores, the eight reversed items need to be calculated in reverse scoring, then sum up all 18 items. Lower scores represent lower level of parental stress, and higher scores represent higher level of parental stress (Berry & Jones, 1995). The reliability of this scale is good as it has achieved Cronbach alpha 0.83 which shows a good internal consistency (Berry & Jones, 1995).

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of examining and transforming the data to discover valuable information and draw conclusion on the findings (Johnson, 2019). In this study, the researcher will use Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the data to obtain

descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis was being used in analysing the demographic profile of the respondents and the total score of the two variables, that is parenting sense of competence and parental stress. These analysed data are considered as descriptive statistics which can be used to describe the patterns of the data and the relationship between two variables in a sample (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). In general, there are a total of five statistical tools used in analysing the demographic information of the respondents and the total score of the two variables, that is table, frequency, percent, mean, and standard deviation. To illustrate, the table, frequency, and percent are used to summarize the demographic data of the respondents such as gender, age, race, education level, monthly household income, and numbers of children. Whereas the mean is used to calculate the average score of the total score of the two variables, that is the Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) and Parental Stress Scale (PSS) while the standard deviation (SD) is used to measure the level of variation and dispersion among individual data points relative to the mean value (Alicia, 2019).

In addition, inferential analysis was being used in investigating the research hypothesis. In other words, it is employed to investigate the linear relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children. In present study, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC) also known as the Pearson correlation coefficient was being used to assess the strength between parenting sense of competence and parental stress by using the r value to indicate. In fact, the r value will range from -1 to $+1$, indicating whether there is a negative or positive correlation between the two variables (Calkins, 2019). The closer the value of r towards $+1$, the stronger the positive relationship between two variables (e.g.: the higher the parenting sense of competence, the higher the parental stress) (Jason, 2023). Whereas the closer the value of r towards -1 , the stronger the negative relationship (e.g.: the higher the parenting sense of competence, the lower the parental stress)

(Jason, 2023). In addition, if the value of r is closer to 0, it indicates a weaker relationship between the two variables. However, if the r value is 0, it means there will be no linear relationship between the variables (Calkins, 2019). Cohen, 1988, Cohen 1992 recommended the r value that indicate the strength of relationship can be categorized into three levels, that is $r = 0.1-0.29$ representing low correlated, $r = 0.3-0.49$ representing moderately correlated, $r = 0.5$ and above representing highly correlated (Gignac & Szodorai, 2016). Therefore, through using the Pearson correlation coefficient, the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress can be investigated.

Besides that, other than r value, the p value will also be used in testing whether the findings are statically significant or not to help the researcher to determine whether to support or reject the alternative hypothesis (i.e.: there is a significant relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress). According to Lani (2021), there are two types of hypotheses in common, that is null hypothesis (H_0) and alternative hypothesis (H_1). Null hypothesis predicts no relationship between the variables while alternative hypothesis predicts relationship between the variables (Lani, 2021). Generally, the p value can lead to two possible outcomes, either the alternative hypothesis gets accepted if the p value is ≤ 0.05 , indicating there is sufficient evidence to support H_1 or the alternative hypothesis gets rejected if the p value is > 0.05 , indicating there is insufficient evidence to support H_1 (Mcleod, 2019).

Research Procedure

To conduct this research, the researcher has undergone the following process.

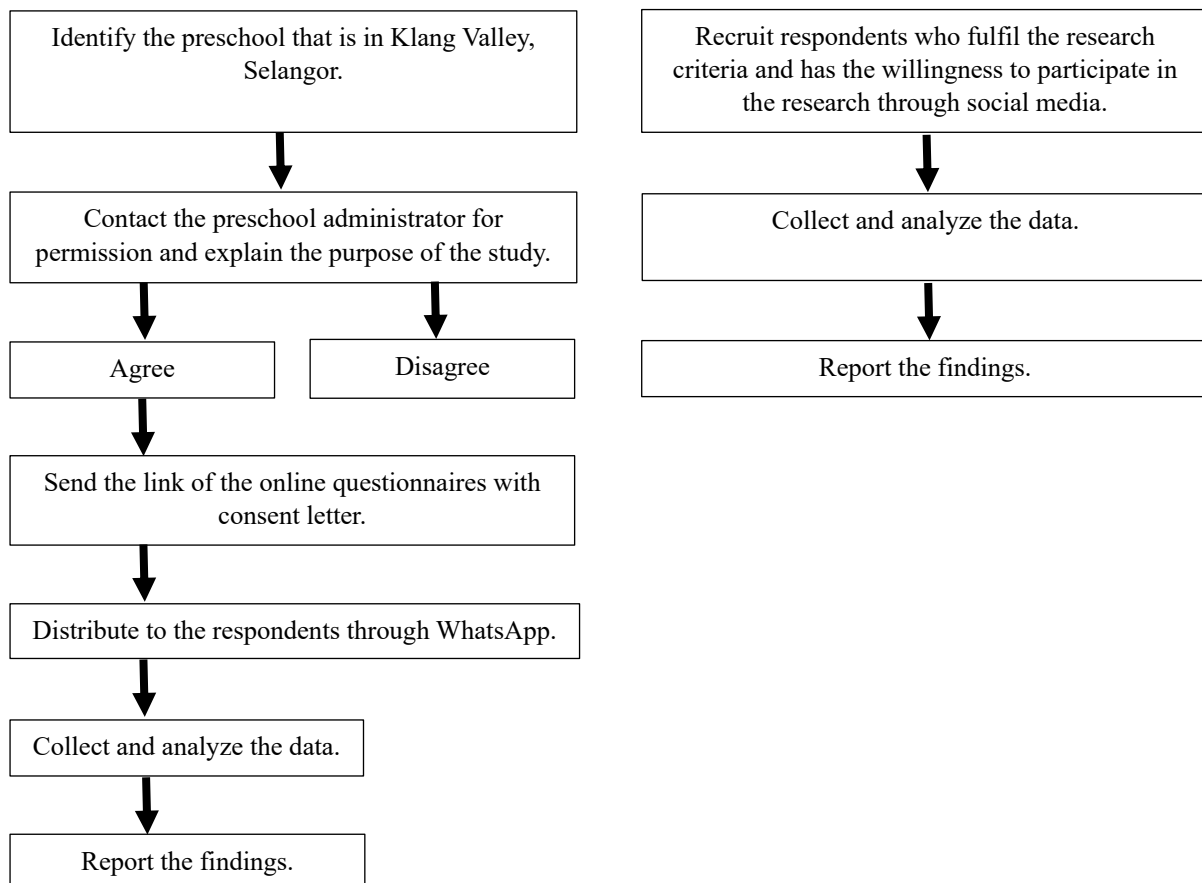
First, the researcher will create a questionnaire by using Google Form and attach it with the consent letter prior to the data collection. After compiling the questionnaires (i.e.: demographic information, PSOC and PSS) with consent letter, the researcher will search and identify the preschools that are in Selangor through the internet. Next, the researcher will

contact the preschool administrators via WhatsApp to do a brief background of herself and explain the purpose of this study to grant their permission for collecting the data. After getting approval from the preschool administrators, the researcher will send an online questionnaire link to the school administrators in order for them to distribute to the parents through WhatsApp.

Besides that, the researcher will also recruit respondents who fulfil the research criteria and has the willingness to participate in the research through social media such as Facebook and Instagram. The data collection process will take around 2 weeks and the survey will be taken around 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Once all the data has been collected, the researcher will analyze the data by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and eventually report the findings.

Figure 3

Flow Chart of Data Collection



Chapter IV

Findings and Analysis

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will present the descriptive analysis and inferential analysis result that investigated the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress. The data analysis for this study has been conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.

Descriptive Statistics and Analysis

Based on the data collected, the researcher will present the demographic information of the participants which includes the gender, age, race, education level, monthly household income, and numbers of children.

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents based on their gender. Out of a total of 62 respondents, 40 respondents (64.5%) are female while another 22 respondents (35.3%) are male, indicating that most of the parents involved in this study are female.

Table 1

Gender of Parents

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Male	22	35.3
Female	40	64.5
Total	62	100.0

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents based on their age and race. Majority of the parents fall under 2 ranges of age, that is the ages of 21 to 25 and 31 to 35 with the frequency of 21 (33.9%) in each category, followed by 8 parents are 26-30 years old (12.9%), 7 parents are 36-40 years old (11.3%), and 5 parents are above 40 years old (8.1%).

Whereas for the races, 36 parents are Chinese (58.1%), followed by 18 parents are Malay (29.0%), 6 parents are Indian (9.7%), and 2 parents are Bumiputera Sabah (3.2%).

Table 2

Age and Race of Parents

	Items	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Age	21-25 years old	21	33.9
	26-30 years old	8	12.9
	31-35 years old	21	33.9
	36-40 years old	7	11.3
	> 40 years old	5	8.1
	Total	62	100.0
Race	Malay	18	29.0
	Chinese	36	58.1
	Indian	6	9.7
	Bumiputera Sabah	2	3.2
	Total	62	100.0

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents based on their education level. Most of the parents have the certificate in bachelor's degree with the frequency of 23 (37.1%), then followed by 16 parents certified with Diploma (25.8%), 11 parents certified with master's degree or PhD (17.7%), 7 parents certified with post-secondary education or Pre-university (STPM/Matriculation/ University Foundation or Equivalent) (11.3%), whereas the remaining 5 parents certified with secondary education (SPM/UEC), which was about 8.1%.

Table 3

Education Level of Parents

Education Level	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Secondary education (SPM/UEC)	5	8.1
Post-secondary education or Pre-university (STPM/Matriculation/ University Foundation or Equivalent)	7	11.3
Diploma	16	25.8
Bachelor's degree	23	37.1
Master's degree/ PhD	11	17.7
Total	62	100.0

Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents based on their monthly household income. Among the 62 parents, 16 of them have income range less than RM3000 (25.8%), followed by 15 parents have income range more than RM9000 (9.7%), 13 parents have income range between RM5001 and RM7000 (21.0%), 12 parents have income range between RM3001 and RM5000 (19.4%), and 6 parents have income range between RM7001 and RM9000 (9.7%).

Table 4

Monthly Household Income of Parents

Monthly Household Income	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Below RM3000	16	25.8
RM3001 - RM5000	12	19.4
RM5001 - RM7000	13	21.0
RM7001 - RM9000	6	9.7
Above RM9000	15	24.2
Total	62	100.0

Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents based on their numbers of children. Most of the parents are having 1 child with the frequency of 27 (43.5%), followed by 25 parents are having 2 children (40.3%), 6 parents are having 3 children (9.7%), 2 parents are having 4 children (3.2%), and another 2 parents are having more than 5 children (3.2%).

Table 5*Numbers of Children of Parents*

Numbers of Children	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
1	27	43.5
2	25	40.3
3	6	9.7
4	2	3.2
5 and above	2	3.2
Total	62	100.0

Table 6 indicate the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of parenting sense of competence scale in efficacy and satisfaction, and parental stress scale. The parenting sense of competence scale in efficacy among parents of young children had mean of 32.89 (SD = 7.49), while for the parenting sense of competence scale in satisfaction had a mean of 29.74 (SD = 7.49). Whereas the parental stress scale had a mean of 46.68 (SD = 10.23)

Table 6

Measures of Central Tendency for Parenting Sense of Competence Scale in Efficacy and Satisfaction, and Parental Stress Scale

Variables	M	SD
PSOC: efficacy	32.89	7.49
PSOC: satisfaction	29.74	7.49
PSS	46.68	10.23

Note: PSOC: efficacy = parenting sense of competence scale in efficacy; PSOC: satisfaction = parenting sense of competence scale in satisfaction; PS = parental stress scale

Inferential Statistics and Analysis

Inferential analysis in the present study is performed using Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between the parenting sense of competence and parental stress based on 62 parents of young children in Selangor.

H₁₁: There is a significant relationship between parenting efficacy and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.

Table 7 shows the results from the Pearson correlation analysis. The results indicate a strong significant negative correlation between parenting sense of competence in efficacy and parental stress ($r = -.641$; $p = <.001$). Therefore, based on the result, it indicates that the higher the parenting sense of competence in efficacy, the lower the parental stress, and vice versa. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 7

Correlation between Parenting Sense of Competence in Efficacy and Parental Stress

Variables	n	M	SD	r	p
PSOC: efficacy	62	32.89	7.49	-.641**	<.001
PS	62	46.68	10.23		

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; PSOC: efficacy = parenting sense of competence in efficacy; PS = parental stress

H₁₂: There is a significant relationship between parenting satisfaction and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.

Based on Table 8, the result shows there is a strong significant negative correlation between parenting sense of competence in satisfaction and parental stress ($r = -.603$; $p = <0.001$). This indicates that the higher the parenting sense of competence in satisfaction, the lower the parental stress, and vice versa. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 8

Correlation between Parenting Sense of Competence in Satisfaction and Parental Stress

Variables	n	M	SD	r	p
PSOC: satisfaction	62	29.74	7.49	-.603**	<.001
PS	62	46.68	10.23		

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; PSOC: efficacy = parenting sense of competence in efficacy; PS = parental stress

Summary

Based on Table 9, the findings show that there was a strong negative significant relationship between parenting sense of competence in efficacy and satisfaction and parental stress. In brief, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 9

Summary of Findings

Hypothesis	<i>p</i>	Remarks
Hypothesis 1: H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between parenting efficacy and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.	$p < 0.001$	Accept the alternative hypothesis.
Hypothesis 2: H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between parenting satisfaction and parental stress among parents with young children in Selangor.	$p < 0.001$	Accept the alternative hypothesis.

Chapter V

Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from chapter 4, implications, limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future study.

Discussion

The present study of findings indicated a strong significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence in efficacy and parental stress, showing that parents who perceived themselves to be more competent in their parental role are associated to lower levels of parental stress. This is consistent with most of the previous findings (Lee & Jeon, 2021; Saltali, 2020; Sugiana et al., 2020; Smith, 2017, Crnic & Ross, 2017). Parents who possess higher levels of parenting self-efficacy are more likely to show confidence in executing their parenting role and believe that they can exert positive influence on their child's developmental progress by using effective parenting strategies (Crnic & Ross, 2017). Similarly, parenting self-efficacy can significantly influence parenting behaviour which is closely related to children's developmental outcomes (Sugiana et al., 2020). To illustrate, when it comes to disciplining a child, parents with higher levels of parenting self-efficacy are more inclined to regard their children's mistakes as a valuable learning opportunity and opt for positive guidance to guide their children to learn from their mistakes rather than punishment. Also, they will tend to be more resilient when confronted with challenges and exert more effort in carrying out their role as parents (Sugiana et al., 2020). With that, it will positively impact the children's behaviour and performance and thus reduce the levels of parental stress. In contrast, parents with lower levels of parenting self-efficacy tend to doubt their capability in parenting and are more prone to show withdrawal when facing challenges especially dealing with child-related

issues, which will lead them to perceive parenting process as a threat thereby contributing to heightened stress levels (Crnic & Ross, 2017). This could be due to parents with lower levels of parenting efficacy are not ready to face challenges and might lack of coping strategies. Therefore, when these parents feel incapable of addressing the challenges of parenting their children, they may employ less effective coping mechanisms which can lead to high levels of parental stress (Wang et al., 2023). Similarly, parents in Malaysia are found to experience high levels of parental stress as most of them tend to use authoritarian parenting styles for rearing their children which can lead to problematic behaviours (Mofrad, 2014).

Next, present findings also indicated a strong significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence in satisfaction and parental stress. Parents expressing higher satisfaction were associated with lowered stress (Ribeiro et al., 2013; Popp et al., 2018; Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021). This is because parents with lowered levels of satisfaction tend to feel less pleasurable, tense, and anxious when interacting with their children which might cause them to become fatigue and frustrated easily in turn contribute to higher levels of parental stress (Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021). Similarly, parenting satisfaction can significantly influence parents' emotion and thus affect children's outcomes (Popp et al., 2018). For instance, parents who experience higher levels of parenting satisfaction are more likely to feel rewarding and motivated when carrying out parenting task thus, they will be more willing to exert more time and effort in fulfilling parenting tasks such as supervising their children which may lead them to have better outcomes (Popp et al., 2018). Conversely, parents with lowered parenting satisfaction are prone to negative emotions such as anxiety and depression when performing parenting tasks and may have difficulty in dealing stressful situations or child-related issues with feasible methods thereby influencing children's outcomes negatively. Hence, the levels of parenting satisfaction can impact on children's outcomes and thus determine the levels of parental stress. Besides that, numbers of children would also impact parenting satisfaction

(Oyarzún-Farías et al., 2021). When parents have more children, they will need to fulfil greater parenting demands. Hence, if parents show lack resources to meet the parenting demands, they tend to lose interest in parenting and escape from their children which will reduce their satisfaction levels and thus increase parental stress (Crnic & Ross, 2017; Wang et al., 2023). This is supported by Popp et al. (2018) as they mentioned that parenting satisfaction can be influenced by parents' social support in turn affecting their levels of parental stress. To exemplify, when parents experience high levels of social support, particularly emotional support, they tend to recover more quickly from emotional distress and approach stressful events or sudden changes with a more positive outlooks thereby leads to greater satisfaction in their parental role with lowered parental stress (Popp et al., 2018). Similarly, according to Liu and Shin (2022), they found that Malaysian parent's perceived social support is closely related to their parenting satisfaction as parents who perceive adequate social support are able to relieve depression and foster stronger bonds with their children in turn increase their parenting satisfaction with lowered parental stress.

Implication

The findings would be able to provide additional insights for the partnership between Malaysia preschool and parents. According to Singh and Ngadni (2023), the majority of the preschools in Malaysia often focus on children's academic achievement. Based on this, it implies that preschools should engage in advocates for the importance of fostering parental competency by equipping parents with better child development knowledge and parental skills. According to Reggio Emilia approach, it emphasized that the roles of an early childhood educator should include being an advocate for children (Flavin, 2020). With that, administrators and educators can provide guidance to support parents in executing their parental roles through establishing partnership with them in the aspect of learning at home. To illustrate, the principal and educators can share useful guidance and insight with parents on how they can best assist

their children with homework such as using simple to complex and known to unknown ideas to introduce new concepts to children. Also, the educators can share some ideas with the parents on how to incorporate digital and plays in learning to cultivate lifelong learners. According to Han (2017), higher levels of home-based parental involvement are associated with lower levels of child externalizing behaviors, resulting in lower levels of parental stress. Aside from that, in order to foster parenting satisfaction in parent-child interaction and child behaviour, the school can establish a support network such as forming a parenting group to allow the parents to share experiences and exchange ideas on parenting with other parents. With that, it can allow the parents to have better emotional support to seek advice for which in turn leads to lower parental stress with higher parenting satisfaction.

Other than that, the present findings would also be able to provide valuable insights for future studies. It helps to statistically prove that parenting sense of competence is significantly and negatively correlated to parental stress based on parents of young children in Klang Valley. This allows the researcher to compare the present findings with similar studies that conducted in different contexts or with diverse populations since most of the studies are conducted in Western countries and are mostly with parents of premature baby, pre-teens, and adolescents while present study has contributed explicitly to the young children population, which is rarely being studied in local context. As such, by comparing the findings can provide insights into how variables may operate differently under different conditions. Hence, the present findings provide additional insights for future research in order to replicate the present study to further investigate the relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children in local context, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research.

Limitation

Based on the present research findings, there are several limitations being identified. Small sample size, convenient sampling, limited language used, and lack of resources in quantitative research are the four main limitations that can be improved in this study.

Due to the small sample size which only involved 62 parents of young children, it does not represent the diverse population. This also means that the findings from these samples cannot be generalized to a broader population. Majority of the respondents are Chinese (58.1%) which do not represent the proportion of racial breakdown in Malaysia. Therefore, the results of present study could hardly represent the population of the targeted group which would possibly lead to potential bias.

Secondly, convenient sampling was being used in this research study to collect data, so it is limited and targeted on parents of young children from Klang Valley, Selangor. According to Jager et al. (2017), although convenient sampling is easy and economical to implement, the generalisation of the findings is restricted to a similar context and population which does not provide a representative result. Hence, it may result in sampling bias.

Thirdly, the language used in the questionnaire could be another limitation of this study as it was restricted to English. In Malaysia, English is typically taught as a second language. Consequently, being limited to the English language could hinder the respondents' full understanding of the questionnaires, potentially leading to inaccuracy in findings.

Fourthly, there was lack of resources in quantitative research. To illustrate, all the questions in this study are presented in close-ended question manner which it only requires the respondents to select answers from the multiple choices of answers that apply to them without formulating answers. As such, by depending solely on close-ended questions would possibly

lead to potential bias in findings as it somehow limits the respondent's answers to only what the researcher considers to be true (Hamed, 2021).

Recommendation for Future Research

Despite the limitations mentioned above, the researcher proposes some solutions to the problem in order to mitigate and address the reported limitations in the study for a more favourable result in future research.

Based on the present findings, it shows that there is a need to increase the sample size to include more ethnically diverse and different age groups of parents. This is because the proportion of races and ages participated in this study does not represent the general population. Hence, it is better to recruit different parents with different demographic profiles in terms of their ages and ethnicity so that it can better represent the actual population. This is in line with Andrade (2020) as he mentioned that a larger sample size than necessary will yield more accurate results by offering greater representation of the population. This is due to larger sample size provide smaller margin of error and a lower standard of deviation therefore, it allows the researcher to identify outliers in the sample to avoid the possibility of causing misleading statistics (Charlesworth Author Services, 2022). To determine the ideal sample size, the researcher can use Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination. Based on the population, the sample determinant will be able to provide an appropriate number of samples such as the ideal sample size for one million of population is 384 samples.

Besides that, to improve the results in future research, the researcher recommends replacing the convenient sampling to cluster sampling. According to Sedgwick (2014), cluster sampling is a random sampling where the researcher divides a population into clusters or groups and then the samples are randomly selected from these clusters for further study. In fact, this randomization can reduce the potential of selection bias that may occur in convenient

sampling where the participants are chosen based on availability. Therefore, by using cluster sampling, it allows the researcher to obtain the findings that are more likely to be generalizable to the larger population.

Apart from that, using back translation is also one of the recommendations that can be made to improve future research. It is also known as reverse translation which involves the process of retranslating the translated content into its original language to compare and evaluate the equivalence between both translations (Son, 2018). Hence, by using this method, it allows the researcher to validate the quality and accuracy of the translated questionnaires. To exemplify, the researcher should use back translation to translate the questionnaires into bilingual so that it can avoid the respondents to misinterpret the questions. Additionally, the researcher should also conduct a pilot test to test the reliability of the questionnaires.

Next, to improve the results in future research, the researcher recommends using a mixed method approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data. This is because by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches will allow the researcher to obtain a more comprehensive and in-depth information and understanding of a research area (Guetterman et al., 2015). For instance, the researcher suggests incorporating a qualitative approach by conducting semi-structured interviews with the respondents for data collection. According to Hamed (2021), a semi-structured interview is known as a formal kind of interview where it requires the researcher to ask a series of questions that is based on a guide. As such, by incorporating semi-structured interviews, it allows the respondents to freely express their opinions and thoughts through answering relevant open-ended questions thereby providing more valuable studies.

Conclusion

To sum up, this study aims to investigate the relationship between parenting sense of competence in efficacy and satisfaction and parental stress among parents of young children in Selangor. The researcher concludes that there is a strong significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence and parental stress.

In addition, the present study aims to address the gap between local studies and western studies as there are limited studies that focus on the Malaysia context on parenting sense of competence and parental stress among parents of young children. Since the findings of this research is based on Malaysian parents of young children, it might not be applicable to western studies. Furthermore, the current study intends to investigate how parenting sense of competence and parental stress relate to parents of young children since past studies show more concern on parents of premature babies, pre-teens, and adolescents. The quantitative method was being used in this study where the researcher used two questionnaires to collect data, that is Parenting Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC) and Parental Stress Scale (PSS).

Based on the findings, it indicated that there is a strong significant negative relationship between parenting sense of competence in efficacy and satisfaction and parental stress. Hence, the current finding has implications for establishing preschool-parent partnerships and provides valuable insights for future studies. Furthermore, there are some limitations of the present study, including small sample size, convenient sampling, limited language used, and lack of resources in quantitative research. The study will be wrapped up by suggesting some recommendations that can be made to improve future research such as increase sample size, replace convenient sampling to cluster sampling, use back translation as well as use a mixed method approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Questionnaire

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Good day everyone! I'm Cheng Jing Wei, a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education student from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR).

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by the researcher, and you are required to answer a series of questions, which covers

1. Demographic details
2. Parenting sense of competence
3. Parental stress

(1) Purpose:

- a. To investigate the relationship between **parenting efficacy and parental stress** among parents with preschoolers.
- b. To investigate the relationship between **parenting satisfaction and parental stress** among parents with preschoolers.

(2) Procedure: This is a self-reported questionnaire. It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to stop this interview at any point of time if you do not feel comfortable.

(3) Potential risks and benefits:

- a. The lecturer had reviewed and approved this study. There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in these studies beyond those encountered in daily life.
- b. Information obtained from this study might raise awareness of parenting sense of competence and parental stress among the parents of preschoolers.

(4) Confidentiality: All of the information you have given will be kept private and confidential. Your information will be stored only by code, with personal details kept secured in files and computer with access only by the lecturer and researcher. The final results of this study will be written up in journals.

(5) Contact information:

For further information or clarification, please feel free to contact the researcher via email below at any time
: chengjw1312@1utar.my

1. I have read and understood all the information stated above. I understand that my participation is voluntary and is appreciated.

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, I agree. I have been notify by you and I hereby understood.
- No, I disagree.

Section A: Demographic information

Please complete this section by choosing only **ONE** answer.

Gender *

- Male
- Female

Age *

- 21-25 years old
- 26-30 years old
- 31-35 years old
- 36-40 years old
- > 40 years old

Race *

- Malay
- Chinese
- Indian
- Other...

Education level *

- Secondary education (SPM/ UEC)
- Post-secondary education or Pre-university (STPM/ Matriculation/ University Foundation or Equivalent))
- Diploma
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree/ Phd
- Other...

5. I feel close to my child(ren). *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

6. I enjoy spending time with my child(ren). *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

7. My child(ren) is an important source of affection for me. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

8. Having child(ren) gives me a more certain and optimistic view for the future. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

9. The major source of stress in my life is my child(ren). *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

10. Having child(ren) leaves little time and flexibility in my life. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

11. Having child(ren) has been a financial burden. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

12. It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my child(ren). *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

13. The behaviour of my child(ren) is often embarrassing or stressful to me. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

14. If I had it to do over again, I might decide not to have child(ren). *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

15. I feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

16. Having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

17. I am satisfied as a parent. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

18. I find my child(ren) enjoyable. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

Appendix B: Original Data

Table A1

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Gender

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	22	35.5	35.5	35.5
	2	40	64.5	64.5	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A2

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Age

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	21	33.9	33.9	33.9
	2	8	12.9	12.9	46.8
	3	21	33.9	33.9	80.6
	4	7	11.3	11.3	91.9
	5	5	8.1	8.1	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A3

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Race

		Race			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	18	29.0	29.0	29.0
	2	36	58.1	58.1	87.1
	3	6	9.7	9.7	96.8
	4	2	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A4

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Education Level

		Education_level			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	8.1	8.1	8.1
	2	7	11.3	11.3	19.4
	3	16	25.8	25.8	45.2
	4	23	37.1	37.1	82.3
	5	11	17.7	17.7	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A5

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Monthly Household Income

Monthly_household_income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	16	25.8	25.8	25.8
	2	12	19.4	19.4	45.2
	3	13	21.0	21.0	66.1
	4	6	9.7	9.7	75.8
	5	15	24.2	24.2	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A6

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Respondents' Numbers of Children

Numbers_of_children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	27	43.5	43.5	43.5
	2	25	40.3	40.3	83.9
	3	6	9.7	9.7	93.5
	4	2	3.2	3.2	96.8
	5	2	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Table A7

SPSS output of descriptive statistics – Measures of Central Tendency for Parenting Sense of Competence Scale in Efficacy and Satisfaction, and Parental Stress Scale

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PSStotal	62	27.00	69.00	46.6774	10.23298
PSCsatisfaction	62	13.00	45.00	29.7419	7.48974
PSCeff	62	17.00	48.00	32.8871	7.12443
Valid N (listwise)	62				

Appendix C: Result

Table A8

Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Parenting Sense of Competence in Efficacy and Satisfaction and Parental Stress

Correlations

		PSStotal	PSCsatisfac tion	PSCeff
PSStotal	Pearson Correlation	1	-.603**	-.641**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	62	62	62
PSCsatisfac tion	Pearson Correlation	-.603**	1	.456**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	62	62	62
PSCeff	Pearson Correlation	-.641**	.456**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	62	62	62

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).