

What is mindful parenting? An empirical test of the dimensions of 'mindful parenting' in a cross-cultural context.

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Background and objectives:

Mindful parenting training is a relatively recent application of mindfulness-based interventions. The definition and measurement of the construct of mindful parenting is still developing. Duncan et al (2009) proposed a theoretical model and constructed the 31-item Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting scale (IM-P) to measure this construct. The IM-P assesses 5 dimensions: listening with full attention to the child, emotional awareness of the self and child, self-regulation in the parenting relationship, non-judgmental acceptance of self and child, and compassion for the self and child. Subsequently, de Bruin et al (2014) assessed the psychometric properties of a Dutch translation of the IM-P. Results supported a different, 29-item, 6-factor model where the “emotional awareness” and “compassion” factors were separated into different factors for the parent and the child, and several items were reallocated from their original to new factors. The aim of our study was to test these two different models and provide further independent psychometric evaluation of the IM-P in a cross-cultural context.

Methods:

291 parents completed the Hungarian translation of the IM-P (Duncan et al, 2009), as well as other questionnaires not reported on here.

Results:

Confirmatory factor analyses supported the 6-factor 29-item model proposed by de Bruin et al, compared to Duncan’s original model. However, model fit indices did not meet criteria for excellent fit for either model. Therefore, we proceeded with an exploratory factor analysis. This analysis closely replicated 4 of the factors suggested by de Bruin et al. However, items from the Emotional Awareness of the Self and Non-Reactivity in Parenting factors loaded onto a single factor, resulting in a 5-factor model.

Discussion and conclusion:

Our data partially support both de Bruin et al’s and Duncan et al’s findings. Four factors proposed by de Bruin et al were replicated. However, items intended to assess EAS and NR were found to assess the same underlying construct, similar to the original Self-regulation in the Parenting Relationship subscale proposed by Duncan et al. Our next study will assess this new 5-factor model in samples of Hungarian and English-speaking parents to control for possible translation and cultural effects.