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MINDFUL PARENTING INVENTORIES FOR PARENTS (MPIP) AND CHILDREN (MPIC)

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Abstract (approximately 250 words)

Mindful parenting refers to the parenting skills of being aware, non-judgmental, and paying intentional attention to both one's child and own parenting. Until recently, mindful parenting questionnaires were solely based on parents' reports without a validated assessment tool for children's reports. This limitation holds significant importance for the field because relying exclusively on parent reports of mindful parenting may potentially overlook important aspects or introduce biases in the assessment. We propose a need to move away from relying on these self-reports and that interpersonal aspects of mindful parenting manifesting in outward behaviours may be observable and thus reportable by others. This chapter describes the development and psychometric properties of the parallel Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents (MPIP) and Children (MPIC). Following initial feasibility and structural work, using a sample of UK-based mothers and their children aged 11-16 years old, the final inventories comprise 18 items with four subscales: Self-Regulation in Parenting, Acceptance and Compassion towards Child, Being in the Moment with Child, and Awareness of Child. Psychometric analyses showed that the inventories had good internal reliability and acceptable test-retest reliability over a four-month period in this sample. In addition, the Turkish version of the MPIP/MPIC was cross-validated in an analogous sample of Türkiye-based mothers and their children, supporting the utility of the new inventories in Türkiye. The novel MPIP/MPIC may expand our understanding of mindful parenting and shed light on the unique perspectives of mothers and their children.

Keywords (please provide around 4-8 keywords)

Mindful Parenting Inventories, Psychometrics, Child reports, Measurement

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Introduction (length depends on the topic describing importance of subject and content)

Definition and Theoretical Foundations

Parenting has long been considered crucial to children's psychological adjustment, and several models have been conceptualised to better understand the parenting process. Of these, models of "traditional" parenting styles (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglecting parenting; Baumrind, 1966) and practices (e.g., positive and negative parenting; Parent & Forehand, 2017) have dominated parenting research. However, in parallel with the growing interest in trait mindfulness and mindful practice in psychology (Lee et al., 2019), mindful parenting has gained significant attention in recent years, especially in adolescence (Duncan et al., 2009).

Mindful parenting was originally conceptualised (*see* Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 1997) as the ability to pay deliberate and non-judgmental 'here-and-now attention' to the child and to one's own parenting. In this pioneering work, three foundations of mindful parenting were identified, namely sovereignty (recognition and nurturing of the child's "true" self), empathy (taking the child's perspective and showing compassion towards them) and acceptance (accepting the child as they are, complementing sovereignty and empathy).

Practising mindful parenting has been posited to enhance the traditional parenting process, transforming it into a fulfilling rather than a burdensome experience for both the parent and the child (Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 1997). Yet, there has been an ongoing discussion on the distinction between dispositional or trait mindfulness (the propensity to be mindful) and mindful parenting specifically (*see* Duncan, 2007). This is a crucial limitation in the field, particularly in terms of what we understand about intervention effectiveness. Various mindful parenting interventions have been developed to cultivate mindfulness in parenting, encompassing both clinical and non-clinical settings (e.g., Bögels et al., 2010; Bögels & Restifo, 2013; Coatsworth et al., 2015; Dumas, 2005; Placone-Willey, 2002). However, studies evaluating the efficacy of these mindful parenting interventions have primarily centred on assessing parents' dispositional mindfulness rather than measuring mindful parenting per se (e.g., Bögels et al., 2008). Better understanding intervention effectiveness requires robust measurement of mindful parenting.

The most comprehensive model of mindful parenting to date (Duncan et al., 2009), partially addresses this issue, building on the mindfulness literature to provide a detailed operational definition of mindful parenting and, thus, facilitate its assessment. The model proposes five self-explanatory dimensions of mindful parenting: Listening with Full Attention to Child, Non-Judgmental Acceptance of Self and Child, Compassion for Self and Child, Emotional Awareness of Self and Child and Self-regulation in Parenting Relationship. The dimension of Listening with Full Attention entails being fully present in the moment with the child, attentively observing their actions and actively engaging in their conversations. Non-Judgmental Acceptance of Self and Child emphasises the parent's ability to embrace and acknowledge their own needs as a parent, as well as recognise the unique needs and desires of the child. Ultimately, it calls for parents to non-judgmentally accept

both themselves and their child as they are, encompassing all feelings, thoughts, and behaviours. Compassion for Self and Child involves cultivating patience, kindness, and warmth towards both themselves and the child. Emotional Awareness of Self and Child refers to the parent's capacity to pay intentional attention to the emotions of both themselves and the child in order to recognise and identify them. Lastly, Self-regulation in Parenting Relationships encompasses the skill of non-reactivity towards these emotions and child behaviours through effective emotion regulation (Duncan et al., 2009). The Mindful Parenting Model also suggests that practising these skills promotes positive child management and parenting practices, parental well-being, parent-child affection, and, importantly, child adjustment.

Mindful parenting differs significantly from more traditional parenting models, since it involves monitoring and controlling parents' own emotions, behaviours, and attention during parent-child interactions, as opposed to focusing on the management of children's behaviour. In addition, in the context of mindful parenting, parenting is viewed as a journey where parents gain valuable insights from their children, a perspective that contrasts traditional approaches that often position parents as the exclusive "experts" (Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 1997). Importantly, several studies have reported that traditional parenting and mindful parenting explain independent variance in chosen outcomes (e.g., Geurtzen et al., 2015).

Measurement of Mindful Parenting

In recent years, several measures have been developed to assess mindful parenting; three parent-report scales dominate the literature. First, the Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting Scale (IM-P; de Bruin et al., 2014; Duncan, 2007) is a widely used self-report scale that assesses the distinctive aspects of mindful parenting among parents of adolescents. The original IM-P (Duncan, 2007) and its extended form (de Bruin et al., 2014), based on Duncan et al.'s (2009) mindful parenting model, demonstrate promising psychometric properties and are available in at least seven languages. Second, also well-used is the Mindfulness in Parenting Questionnaire (MIPQ; McCaffrey et al., 2017), which is suitable for measuring mindful parenting skills in parents across a wider age range of children (i.e., 2-16 years) and is currently available in five different languages. Third, although less widely used is the self-reported Bangor Mindful Parenting Scale (BMPS; Jones et al., 2014), validated in parents of children with autism aged 7-16 years. To our knowledge, BMPS is available only in English and Indonesian (Mafaza & Sarry, 2022). In addition to these self-reports, we are aware of one existing measure for assessing mindful parenting through observational methods, the Mindful Parenting Observation Scales (MPOS; Geier, 2012), developed and validated using a sample of adolescents and their mothers. The MPOS comprises a total of 17 rating scales that assess various aspects of mindful parenting behaviours identified in Duncan et al.'s model. Although initial findings indicate that the MPOS scale is a reliable and valid observational tool for evaluating mindful parenting (Geier, 2012), its usage has not become widespread.

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Until recently, no validated scales were available to assess mindful parenting from children's perspectives despite suggestions that children's subjective experiences of mindful parenting might be at least as pertinent for understanding child outcomes as parent reports (Liu et al., 2021; Park et al., 2020). In fact, improvements in parents' mindful parenting after intervention showed little or no association with child self-reported outcomes (Coatsworth et al., 2018), suggesting the significance of considering children's perspectives on changes in mindful parenting. Although some studies (e.g., Lippold et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2019, 2021) have explored children's perspectives on mindful parenting by adapting the IM-P items for use with children, these adaptations have not undergone formal validation for their use with children. Recognising the importance children's subjective experiences, as well as the informant disagreement and social desirability biases in parenting and developmental research and practice (Hou et al., 2020; Schaefer, 1965). Acet and Oliver (2023a) recently developed and validated the parallel Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents and Children (MPIP/MPIC). The development of these new inventories is described below.

Main Text

The Development of the Mindful Parenting Inventories for Parents (MPIP) and Children (MPIC)Initial Item Generation Process

The "deductive" method was used to develop the preliminary version of the MPIP/MPIC. That is, an initial item pool of mindful parenting items was created based on theoretical models of mindful parenting and closely related concepts and existing measures (Clark & Watson, 1995). Accordingly, items representing interpersonal aspects of mindful parenting and deemed appropriate for child reports were selected from the MIPQ (McCaffrey et al., 2017) and IM-P (de Bruin et al., 2014; Duncan, 2007). Additional items for the pool were adapted to the parenting context from the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS; Baer et al., 2004), Interpersonal Mindfulness Scale (IMS; Pratscher et al., 2019), Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, 2003), and Anger Rumination Scale (ARS; Sukhodolsky et al., 2001). Finally, additional items were generated by the authors based on the theoretical definitions and suggested mindful parenting dimensions in the literature (e.g., Duncan et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn & Kabat-Zinn, 1997). Subsequently, an independent mindfulness researcher considered the face validity of the items and assessed the developmental appropriateness and clarity of the items. Forty-five items (29 of positive and 16 of negative valence) for each of parent and child report were thus included in the initial instruments on five theoretical dimensions: Being in the Moment with Child, Self-Regulation in Parenting, Awareness of Child, Non-judgemental Acceptance of Child and Compassion toward Child. Since it was aimed to develop a short instrument with approximately 20 items, 45-item initial instruments were considered suitable for piloting (Lounsbury et al., 2006, p. 133).

Initial Item Selection Criteria (Feasibility Study)

In the feasibility study (Acet & Oliver, 2023a), UK-based parents (n = 44; 35 mothers and eight fathers) and their children aged between 11 and 16 (n = 33) completed the English

version of the initial 45-item MPIP/MPIC described above. The frequency was rated for each item by parents and children on a five-point Likert scale (never true = 1, always true = 5). Participants also provided quantitative and qualitative feedback on the MPIP and MPIC. Following their response to each item, parents and children promptly assessed the level of comprehensibility of the items using a five-point scale ranging from "extremely easy" (1) to "extremely difficult" (5). Furthermore, they were asked to provide open-ended feedback for each item.

After the feasibility data collection, the authors evaluated the 45 items of MPIP/MPIC based on variances, along with quantitative and qualitative feedback from participants and professional judgments. Subsequently, the authors removed 20 items from the inventories since these items were found to reflect general negative/harsh parenting instead of negative mindful parenting, require high-level theory-of-mind abilities, or exhibit limited variability in the parent and child feasibility samples. Additionally, certain items were eliminated or revised as the participants reported a lack of clarity. As a result, the final set of inventories consisted of 25 items assessing five distinct dimensions of mindful parenting. Factors were named "Being in the Moment with Child" (BMC: items related to being here and now during interaction with child), and finally, "Self-Regulation in Parenting" (SRP: items related to parental emotion-regulation skills), "Non-judgemental Acceptance of Child" (NJAP: items related to accepting feelings, thoughts and behaviours of the child without judging them), "Awareness of Child" (AC: items related to the ability to pay attention to and detect child's emotions, thoughts and behaviours), and finally "Compassion toward Child'' (CC: items reflecting being patient, kind and affectionate towards child needs).

Initial Validation of the English Version of the 18-item MPIP/MPIC

For the final decisions regarding the structure of the inventories, UK-based mothers (n = 135) and their children aged 11–16 years (n = 90) completed the English version of the initial 25-item MPIP/MPIC with the five dimensions (Acet & Oliver, 2023a). The variances of the MPIP/MPIC items were examined before the exploratory principal component analyses (PCA). As a result, one item was discarded from the inventories because it lacked diversity in the mother sample (σ^2 = 0.49). Having conducted several PCA with the remaining 24 items, six additional items were removed due to cross-loadings. The analysis resulted in an 18-item (8 of which reverse-scored) MPIP with a four-component solution, which is closely aligned with the theoretical dimensions of mindful parenting (*see* Appendix 1). More specifically, the first subscale of the MPIP, Self-Regulation in Parenting, comprises six items that pertain to being (non) reactive during parent-child interactions. The second subscale, labelled Acceptance and Compassion towards Child, includes five items that primarily emphasis parental compassion and accepting attitudes towards the child. The third subscale, called Being in the Moment with Child, comprises four items that address the extent to which a parent is present and fully engaged in the "here-and-now" during interactions with their child. Lastly, the fourth subscale, Awareness of Child, consists of three items that represent the parent's ability to pay attention to and accurately perceive their child's inner experiences (*see* also, Acet & Oliver, 2023a). Then, a multiple-group Confirmatory Factor

Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the invariance between mothers' (MPIP; *see* Appendix 1) and children's (MPIC; *see* Appendix 2) reports of mindful parenting. Results confirmed the four-factor structure in the mother sample (with error covariances between Items 6 and 11 and between Items 1 and 11; $\chi^2(127) = 181.852$, $\chi^2/df = 1.432$, CFI = 0.910, RMSEA = 0.070, 95% CI [0.05, 0.09]) and child sample (χ^2 (129) = 197.864, $\chi^2/df = 1.534$, CFI = 0.905, RMSEA = 0.077, 95% CI [0.06, 0.10]) as well as the partial invariance across mothers and their children.

Correlation (*r*) between mother- and child-reported mindful parenting for the total scores was 0.61 ($p < 0.001$) and ranged from 0.39 to 0.63 for the subscales. Cronbach's alpha (α) reliabilities were 0.89 (MPIP) and 0.92 (MPIC) for the total scales and ranged from 0.75 to 0.86 for the subscales, with Being in the Moment with Child having the lowest reliability for both MPIP and MPIC. Mother reports ($n = 62$) showed that four-month test-retest reliability (*r*) was 0.83 ($p < 0.001$) for the MPIP total and ranged from 0.66 to 0.77 ($p < 0.001$) for the MPIP subscales ($r = 0.77$ for Self-Regulation in Parenting, 0.66 for Acceptance and Compassion towards Child, 0.76 for Being in the Moment with Child and 0.67 for Awareness of Child). Child reports ($n = 51$) mirrored these results showing that four-month test-retest reliability (*r*) was 0.81 ($p < 0.001$) for the MPIC total and ranged from 0.67 to 0.78 ($p < 0.001$) for the MPIP subscales ($r = 0.78$ for Self-Regulation in Parenting, 0.75 for Acceptance and Compassion towards Child, 0.67 for Being in the Moment with Child and 0.75 for Awareness of Child).

Correlations of the MPIP/MPIC total scores with mother- and child-reported child behaviours (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire; SDQ) and maternal psychological distress (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 Items; DASS-21), as well as with mother- and child-reported traditional parenting constructs (Alabama Parenting Questionnaire; APQ) and maternal dispositional mindfulness (15-item Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire; FFMQ), were examined for concurrent and convergent validity. Hierarchical linear regression analyses were employed to examine the additional predictive value of the MPIP/MPIC in child behaviours. These analyses assessed whether MPIP/MPIC explained unique variance in child behaviours beyond maternal dispositional mindfulness and traditional parenting practices.

As given in Table 1, results provided support for the convergent, concurrent, and incremental validity of both MPIP and MPIC (Acet & Oliver, 2023a). Particularly, MPIP/MPIC had positive associations with child prosocial behaviours while having negative associations with child problem behaviours and maternal psychological distress. As expected, in general, MPIP/MPIC was positively correlated with positive parenting and negatively correlated with inconsistent discipline and poor supervision (*see* Table 1). Moreover, MPIP/MPIC was found to be positively related to dispositional mindfulness (*see* Table 1) and explained additional variance in child behaviours over and above dispositional mindfulness and traditional parenting. Specifically, higher levels of MPIP predicted lower levels of internalising ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = -0.39$, $p < 0.01$, respectively) and externalising behaviours ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = -0.43$, $p < 0.001$, respectively) and higher levels of mother- and child-reported prosocial behaviours ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$, respectively). Similarly, a

higher MPIC was associated with a decrease in mother- and child-reported internalsing (β = −0.28, p = 0.03; β = −0.43, p < 0.01, respectively) and child-reported externalising behaviours (β = −0.41, p < 0.001), but an increase in mother- and child-reported prosocial behaviours (β = 0.30, p = 0.03; β = 0.50, p < 0.001, respectively).

Turkish Version of the 18-item MPIP/MPIC

A team of native Turkish and English-speaking psychologists collaborated in the adaptation process, in which the MPIP/MPIC was translated and back-translated for use with Turkey-based families. Turkiye-based mothers (n = 154) and their children aged 11–16 years (n = 154) completed the Turkish version of the 18-item four-factor MPIP/MPIC (Acet & Oliver, 2023b). Results confirmed the four-factor structure for Turkiye-based mothers with the error covariances between Items 1 and 6 and between Items 7 and 15 ($\chi^2(127)$ = 207.466, χ^2/df = 1.634, CFI = 0.912, RMSEA = 0.064, 95% CI [0.048, 0.080]). This structure was also validated for their children with the error covariances between Items 10 and 18 (χ^2 (128) = 201.404, χ^2/df = 1.573, CFI = 0.920, RMSEA = 0.061, 95% CI [0.044, 0.077]). Furthermore, multiple-group CFA suggested the partial measurement invariance across mothers and their children.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the MPIP/MPIC total scores (Cronbach's α = 0.87 and 0.88, respectively), as well as the MPIP (Cronbach's α = 0.69 to 0.82) and MPIC subscales (Cronbach's α = 0.66 to 0.83) indicated an acceptable level of internal consistency.

Correlation analyses supported convergent validity, showing positive correlations between MPIP/MPIC and maternal mindfulness (FFMQ) and positive parenting (APQ) (*see* Table 1). In addition, correlations between MPIP/MPIC and child behaviours (SDQ) were significant in the expected directions, thereby supporting concurrent validity. The exception to these was that cross-reporter correlations were often found to be insignificant, unlike in the UK sample. Finally, the hierarchical regression analysis provided some evidence of predictive validity by revealing that MPIP/MPIC predicted child behaviours even after controlling for maternal dispositional mindfulness and positive parenting. MPIP predicted additional variance in mother-reported externalising child behaviours (ΔR^2 0= 0.5, β = -0.25, p < 0.01). MPIC also significantly explained internalising (ΔR^2 = 0.09, β = -0.39, p < 0.001) and externalising child behaviours (ΔR^2 = 0.05, β = -0.29, p < 0.01) reported by children. Moreover, latent mindful parenting indicated by MPIP and MPIC predicted mother- (b = -.63, p < .000) and child-reported child behaviours (b = -0.73, p = 0.011).

MPIP/MPIC Across UK and Turkey

To compare the MPIP/MPIC across cultures, we used the UK (n = 90) and Türkiye (n = 154) dyadic data from Acet and Oliver (2023b). Multiple-group CFA (with Emulisrel correction; Byrne, 2016) was conducted to establish the configural, metric, and scalar invariance between the UK and Türkiye (Putnick & Bornstein, 2016). Deterioration of ≤ -0.005 in CFI, accompanied by a deterioration of ≥ 0.010 in RMSEA, or significant χ^2 deterioration (p < 0.05) in pairwise comparisons between configural and metric model, and between metric, and scalar model hinted noninvariance between groups (Chen, 2007).

In the mother samples, the Multiple-group CFA demonstrated that the unconstrained configural model had reasonable fit indices (*see* Table 2). Non-significant change between configural model and metric model supported full metric invariance across the groups, namely factor loadings were equal in British and Turkish version of MPIP. However, a poorer model fit in the scalar model, compared to the metric model, suggests a lack of invariance in item intercepts between British and Turkish mothers. After releasing three item intercepts (Item 5, Item 13, and Item 16), partial scalar invariance was established (Byrne et al., 1989).

In the child sample, the examination of the unconstrained configural model demonstrated a satisfactory level of invariance. Compared to the configural model, the model fit slightly decremented in the metric model, indicating factor loadings were noninvariant across the groups. After releasing one factor loading (Item 3), the model showed partial metric invariance. Again, compared to the partial metric model, the model fit worsened in the scalar model. Therefore, partial scalar invariance was established by freely estimating the intercepts of three more items (Item 1, Item 11, and Item 13).

The latent means of Being in the Moment with Child (z = 4.421, p < 0.001) and Awareness of Child (z = 2.758, p < 0.01) were higher in the Turkish mothers than British mothers. Turkish children similarly reported more maternal awareness (z = 2.212, p = 0.03) than their British counterparts, although they reported less maternal acceptance and compassion (z = -1.782, p = 0.04).

Limitations

The initial development of MPIP/MPIC exhibits significant constraints regarding the sample size and the sampling. Given the homogeneity of the relatively small samples, which primarily consisted of highly educated mothers and their typically developed children aged 11-16 years, it is recommended that further research should incorporate fathers and more diverse families to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, we also recommend further exploration of the factor structure using larger sample sizes.

MPIP/MPIC faces a further limitation in the absence of empirical evidence regarding its utility in detecting intervention-related changes in mindful parenting. Therefore, additional research is necessary to assess the sensitivity of MPIP/MPIC in capturing such changes. Moreover, it is crucial to investigate whether the observed improvement in mindful parenting is responsible for achieving the intended outcomes.

Finally, it is important to note that MPIP/MPIC may not effectively reflect variations in the construct of interest across groups due to the presence of partial measurement invariance (Millsap & Kwok, 2004).

Conclusion

MPIP/MPIC are parallel inventories designed to assess parent- and child-report of mindful parenting simultaneously. MPIP/MPIC were initially developed in English and then

adapted into Turkish. The findings indicated that the 18-item MPIP/MPIC exhibited promising psychometric properties, along with partial invariance across different reporters (mothers and their children) and cultures (UK and Türkiye). Importantly, studies supported the differentiation of both mother- and child-reported mindful parenting from dispositional mindfulness and traditional parenting practices in both cultures and emphasised the salience of considering children's perceptions of mindful parenting. Moreover, considering the studies conducted in the UK and Turkiye together, the findings implied that children's perceptions of mindful parenting, rather than those of parents, may be more noteworthy for their self-reported outcomes, particularly in Türkiye. The findings that both cross-reporter and within-reporter relations were strong in the UK, unlike in Türkiye, may reflect a relatively more "objective" parental report of mindful parenting in the UK compared to Türkiye. This difference could be attributed to a lower tendency of mothers with more individualist values in the UK to self-report socially desirable behaviours, as opposed to their counterparts in Türkiye with fewer individualist values (Bornstein et al., 2015). We believe that utilising MPIP/MPIC will improve assessment accuracy and our understanding of family dynamics (Taber, 2010). However, researchers should remain aware of potential variations in perceptions and outcomes of mindful parenting when considering different sources of information and cultural contexts.

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