

## Research Articles

# The Family Well-Being: A Dyadic Analysis of Parent-Child Relationship Quality

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## Abstract

The family's emotional psychological and social well-being is influenced by how parent-child relations quality is perceived by each other, both of the child and father, as well as the child and the mother. This study focused on the dyadic analysis of parent-child quality relationships prediction on the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of the family members in Indonesia. The study involved 230 dyads comprised of fathers, mothers, and children who completed the Revised Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire measuring the parent-child relationship quality and the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) to measure family well-being. Adopting the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) and structural equation modeling (SEM) as the statistics technique, the results showed that in general, no partner's effect was found. To be specific, dyadic relations between father and child showed an actor's effect influencing their well-being. On the other hand, the dyadic relations between child and mother showed neither the actor's effect nor the partner's effect on their well-being. The study highlights the vital role of fathers and adolescents in their own well-being.

*Keywords:* A Dyadic Analysis; Parent-Child Relationship Quality; Family Well-Being, Actor-Partner Interdependence Model

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### Introduction

The city's well-being is one of the measured components in seeing the quality of life in the city. Various surveys related to the measurement of happiness index have been done in all cities in Indonesia by the [Central Statistics Agency \(BPS, 2014\)](#). Data findings since 2014 ([BPS, 2014](#)) show that the urban happiness index is higher than the rural population happiness index ([Indonesians 'quite happy', 2017](#)). On a scale of 0-100, the general index of happiness of Indonesian society is at 70.69. This index means that, in general, the people of Indonesia are quite happy. According to the survey, family harmony was the happiest factor among Indonesian people, while education and skills were the lowest. A study showed that Indonesian youth was among the world's happiest, trailed by Nigeria and India ([Indonesian Youth, 2017](#)). Jakarta is the 4th happy city based on BPS analysis with an index of 69.21 ([A happy city, 2015](#)). The specific findings related to the happiness index in Jakarta is that the highest happiness index is in the community with higher education level: masters and doctoral degree, that is equal to 79.78. This happiness index is in contrast to individuals who are not or have not gone to school with a happiness index of 63.99. Findings from the happiness index in Jakarta also showed that those who are not married showed the lowest index of 67.76.

According to [Carr & Springer \(2010\)](#), marriage is one of the protective factors for the physical and emotional well-being of the individual. However, previous research



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showed that the effect of family on emotional and physical well-being depends on the condition of each family. Problematic marriage significantly depletes the individual emotional aspects of the family while good-quality marriages provide good psychological and physical benefits, especially to women (Proulx et al., 2007) and the elderly (Umberson et al., 2006).

Talking about well-being in the marriage certainly not only talks about the well-being measured in husband and wife but also the child. Within a marriage, families of all types can nurture children well, including families with the diversity of caregiving structures, cultural beliefs, socio-economic levels, language used in the home, and country of origin.

The relationship between parent and child concerning child outcomes has most often been analyzed in terms of parenting strategies ' behavioral dimensions. The parenting aspects most studied, as outlined by O'Connor (2002), include: (a) warmth /support/responsiveness; (b) dispute or refusal; (c) supervision level and control techniques of punishment; and (d) autonomy promotion. The family setting is a key determinant of lifelong subjective well-being, including the years of childhood and adolescence (Diener & Diener McGavran, 2008). For example, a cross-sectional study of 587 American middle school students found that high life satisfaction in early adolescence was related much more to supportive relationships with parents than to friends (Ma & Huebner 2008).

A study of researches of many youth samples from different cultures showed that the parenting behaviors associated with the youths' high well-being are logical with an authoritative parenting style. On the other hand, there is a tendency of parental control with punishment and a conflict between parent and child to be followed by low well-being. These studies however were conducted in cross-sectional and unidirectional (Suldo, 2009). The strong link between youth well-being and relationships betwixt parent and child is high crosswise cultures. Findings of the study by Schwarz et al. (2012) concluded that parental warmth and acceptance are



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completely independent of the cultural values concerned for early adolescents. Longitudinal studies indicated that their family experiences could form the well-being of children. This bi-directionality is demonstrated by research involving a study of 819 middle and high school students who measured their life satisfaction and the authoritative parenting rates of parents at two-time points separated by one year (Saha et al. 2010). The findings included that the following year, higher youth life satisfaction was associated with higher frequent practices of authoritative parenting.

A family-related analysis of a child's hope found that the increased child's hope were linked to higher levels of perceived attachment to their parents in a group of 489 children ages 9–14,  $r = .51$  to  $.54$  (Padilla-Walker, et al. 2011). From this study, the strong association between a child's hope and perceived attachment between the child and the mother was weaker than that between the child with the father.

Research concerning relationships within a family is challenging for researchers due to its various approaches. A challenge in studying family lies on whether the unit analysis is an individual member of the family, a dyad, or a group. Family systems theory stresses the interconnected relationship between father, mother, and child. Not exclusively does each add to the complex interactions building up the system relationships, however inside the family are settled the related subsystems of father-child, mother-child, and father-mother dyads (Holmes & Huston, 2010).

The insights from studies of the parent-child relationship and its impacts on the family well-being show a need to study it within dyadic contexts of the parent-child relations. The differences in the child's experience of the perception toward the experience with the father and the mother are also important to study within the child-parent dyadic relationship. This study focuses on the dyadic relationship between children and parents. On the one hand, the quality of a child's well-being is influenced by the interaction between the perception of the quality of their relationship with their parents and their parents' perception of the quality of their relationship with their child. On the other hand, the quality of a parent's well-being is influenced by the interaction between the perception of the quality of their



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relationship with their child and the perception of their child of the quality of their relationship with their parents. In this study, we collected data from both of the parents and their children.

### **Adolescents and parents**

Shearer et al. (2005) cited Steinberg's presidential address, which called for research on the psychological processes of teenagers in family relations. Surviving studies demonstrate that the parent-youngster relationship may change amid the adolescent years. Even though the well-known generalization of immaturity as a period of the inescapable and widespread tempest and stress is, to a great extent, unwarranted (Buchanan et al., 1998), impermanent bothers in parent-youngster connections do happen (Steinberg & Silk, 2002). The recent literature gives some depiction of parents' convictions about and expectations for pre-adulthood. Steady with standard social generalizations of youthful tempest and stress, parents report that they believe that young people are prone to participate in more elevated amounts of insubordination, issue practices, and exemplary pre-adult practices. For example, be materialistic and tuning in to music and to bring down levels of prosocial characteristics (Buchanan & Holmbeck, 1998) than primary school-age kids. Besides, as per Buchanan (2003), mothers' generalized convictions about young people (i.e., pessimistic generalizations about the formative time frame) anticipate their desires for their own kids' attributes amid adolescence.

Ryff et al. (1994) found a substantial relationship between parents' perceptions of how their youngsters had "turned out" and their well-being with the end goal that parents who revealed more positive assessments of their kids had elevated psychological well-being. View of progress additionally may impact daily interactions within the family situation. As per parents' thoughts regarding their youngsters' advancement, shape hopes about how kids will carry on.

Some study findings reveal a consistent trend that, time went through with parents tends to diminish amid puberty (Larson et al., 1996). Second, passionate closeness



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with parents likewise tends to diminish. Third, clash amongst parents and adolescence appears to increment amid early pre-adulthood and after that declines by late pre-adulthood (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). However, Arnett (1999) stated that the parents saw the conflict elevation between adolescence and them as a stressful developmental period faced by adolescence. Shearer et al. (2005) found that relationships within the family were studied to find a comparison between the mother-father-adolescence relationship. Differences are always found when explaining what positive relationship quality and negative relationship quality among parents-adolescence relationships are.

Adolescence is the time when they spend more time with their peers. This period has an impact on research emphasis on adolescents and their peers compared to the quality of the relationship between them and their parents (Harris, 1998). Van Wel et al. (2000) stated that parent-child relations were essential factors in adolescents' well-being. In a more detail study, Biller & Lopez Kimptom (1997) found the influence of affection quality of parent-child relationship toward child well-being, which went into adulthood.

O'Brien & Shemilt (2003) reported increasing men's participation in their children's lives. Research suggests that the companionship of a father in his relationship with his child is still in the area of playing together as well as outing together. Even though mothers are by large included for the most part in providing care and arrangement of passionate security, fathers are mainly engaged with play and exploratory exercises (Hewlett, 1992). Expanding on Schaffer & Emerson's (1964) finding that fathers can and do move toward becoming bonding figures for their newborn children, exact research has frequently demonstrated that men are very much prepared to go about as caregivers.

### Relationship quality and well-being

The essence of a prosperous life is, of course, not only based on the assessment of individual life characteristics but also includes a division of life that has a function or a public and private task (Keyes, 1998). Mead (1934) explained that the individual



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self is both individual and public processes. Many individual psychological concepts involve an assessment of two things affecting the individual: intrinsic and extrinsic. For example, the concept of self-esteem or self-concept is an aspect of personality characterized by an assessment and attention to information within and outside of self (Keyes, 1998). Approaches to happiness and wellbeing in psychology focus more on the internal aspects of the individual. Keyes (1998), therefore, sees the urgency of measuring the quality of social welfare (public) and not just focusing on the private aspects (Campbel, 1981; Diener, 1984; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Based on this thinking, this research bases the concept of family well-being measurement on the concept of well-being encompassing the welfare of intrinsic (private) values such as emotional well-being and psychological well-being as well as a public appraisal of social well-being. Operationally, in this research, the family's well-being is families whose high emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being. The family's well-being as the output of psychological processes within the family is based on the analysis of the dyadic quality of relationships among the family members. The emotional atmosphere in each family member: father, mother, and child determine the quality of family harmony. Excellent quality of the dyadic relationship between father and his adolescent child as well as mother and her adolescent child, especially in the quality of conflict resolution and acceptance, may increase their emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being.



## Method

### Research Design

It was implemented a dyadic cross-sectional study using the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) by [Cook & Kenny \(2005\)](#) to identify a partner's effect on the dependent variable. The quantitative data analysis was structural equation modeling (SEM). Before SEM, the distinguishability test was carried out to empirically tested whether the dyad members were distinguishable. Each dyad consisted of a pair of data from father and child and the data from paired mother and child.

### Participants

Data were collected conveniently from 230 dyads of 690 participants from Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya cities. Firstly, the researchers recruited a student at the faculty and asked for the possibility to participate in the study. Once participation was confirmed, the researchers asked the student to involve both parents in the study. After four months of effort, 230 families confirmed their full participation in the study. Table 1 provides demographic information.



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Table 1

*Descriptive Demographics of the Participants*

Characteristics	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	(n or %)
Age			
Child	19.07	3.21	230
Father	51.40	6.43	230
Mother	47.47	6.09	230
Father's Education			
High school			47.5%
Some College			53 %
Mother's Education			
Elementary			1.7%
Junior High school			5.6%
Senior High School			59.5%
Some College			7.8%
Undergraduate			22.4%
Master			3%
Child's Education			
Junior High school			59%
High school			41%
Some College			3.4%
Undergraduate			42.7%
Master			.4%
Father's job			
Civil servants			20.7%
Private employee			37.8%
Profesional			3.7%
Entrepreneur			28%
House husband			1.2%
Pension			3.7%
Clergy			2.4%
Labor			2.4%
Mother's job			
Civil servants			6%
Private employee			13.8%
Entrepreneur			19%
House mother			50.9%
Pension			2.6%
Clergy			2.2%
Child's gender			
Male			32.3%
Female			67.7%



## Measures

*Parent-Child Relations Quality.* Participants completed the Revised Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire (PACHIQ-R) developed by Lange et al. (2002), measuring the parent-child relationship quality. PACHIQ-R has two sub-scales: Acceptance (feelings) sub-scale consisting of 8 items and Conflict Resolution (behavior) sub-scale consisting of 17 items. Each modified sub-scale measures how parents view their relationship with their children and how children evaluate their relationships with their parents. Child, father and mother rated the items in dyadic relationship: child-mother and child father, on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *Never*, 2 = *Seldom*, 3 = *Sometimes*, 4 = *Often*, 5 = *Always*).

All of the items in the scale are identical except that the word "father" is replaced by the word "mother" in Mother-Child Version. The acceptance subscale sample items in Mother-Child Version are: "My mother and I get on well" and "When I do something for my mother, I see that she appreciates it." The Conflict Resolution sub-scale in Mother-Child relations is expressed in the sample of the statement: "My mother thinks that I cannot do anything for myself" and "My mother doesn't understand me very well." Within our sample, the internal consistency of the acceptance subscale was good (8 items;  $\alpha = .84$ ) in Father-Child Version and 8 items ( $\alpha = .85$ ) for acceptance sub-scale Mother-Child Version. The sub-scale conflict-resolution also shows a high reliability (17 items;  $\alpha = .85$ ) for Father-Child Version and highly reliable (17 items;  $\alpha = .87$ ) for Mother-Child Version.

*Well-being.* The Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) measures positive mental health consisting of a brief measurement of the emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being in 14 items. The MHC-SF assesses the symptoms of positive affection, self-development, and social connectivity.

Responses to the MHC-SF scale are on six Likert-type, varying from "Never" (1) to "Every Day" (6). The 3 items of MHC-SF of Father-Child Version showed good reliability ( $\alpha = .76$ ) for emotional well-being subscale, 6 items of psychological well-being subscale ( $\alpha = .79$ ), and 5 items of social well-being subscale ( $\alpha = .80$ ). The



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MHC-SF for Mother-Child Version also showed good reliability for 3 items emotional well-being subscale ( $\alpha = .74$ ), 6 items of psychological well-being subscale ( $\alpha = .74$ ), and 3 items of social well-being subscale ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

## Results

A descriptive analysis of each variable from each role is compiled in Table 2.

Table 2

*The Variables Descriptive Statistics Based on the Roles in the Family*

Variable	Role	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Relationship Quality	Child	3.18	0.50	230
	Mother	3.21	2.09	230
	Father	3.57	0.34	230
Emotional Well-Being	Child	4.76	0.86	230
	Mother	4.81	0.87	230
	Father	5.08	0.87	230
Psychological Well-Being	Child	4.71	0.81	230
	Mother	4.85	0.81	230
	Father	5.00	0.84	230
Social Well-Being	Child	3.94	0.98	230
	Mother	3.92	0.96	230
	Father	4.07	1.09	230

From Table 2, one can observe that the fathers show greater scores in all types of well-being and relationship quality than the equivalent scores of the mothers and the children.

### Test of distinguishability

Following research objectives and research designs, after data was collected, the next step was to restructure data into dyadic data for indistinguishability testing and data restructuring into pairwise data for multi-level modeling analysis. Data



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restructuring was using a web-based program available from [Kenny`s \(2017\)](#) website while the indistinguishable test was using Actor Partner Interdependence Model Estimated by Structural Equation Modeling ([Stas et al. 2018](#)).

Table 3 presents the distinguishability test of the dependent variables with mixed variable relationship quality using maximum likelihood estimates. The result showed that all of the dyadic relations should be treated as distinguishable ( $p < .05$ ) except in the relationship between the relationship quality and emotional well-being within the dyadic mother-child.

Table 3

### *Distinguishable Test of the Variables within Dyadic Relationship*

Dyadic	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Dyadic conclusion
Mother-child			
Emotional well-Being	2.31	.889	Indistinguishable
Psychological well-being	6	<.001	Distinguishable
Social well-being	6	<.001	Distinguishable
Father-child			
Emotional well-Being	6	<.001	Distinguishable
Psychological well-being	6	<.001	Distinguishable
Social well-being	6	<.001	Distinguishable

### **Relationship quality and well-being (mother-child dyadic)**

There are a total of 230 dyads and 460 individuals without missing data. From table 4, it is concluded that no actor effect found in the children's relationship quality and well-being. In other words, the results show that the children's emotional well-being, social well-being, and psychological well-being are not getting higher when they report more positive relationship quality with their mothers. The actor effect for relationship quality on the emotional well-being equals .23 and is statistically not significant ( $p = .088$ ). The actor effect of relationship quality on the psychological well-being equals .23 which is statistically not significant ( $p = .077$ ). The last actor



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effect of relationship quality on social well-being equals .15 and is statistically not significant ( $p = .321$ ).

There is no children's partner's effect found in the relationship between relationship quality and all forms of well-being. This finding means that mothers do not experience higher or lower all forms of well-being when their children experience relationship quality dynamics.

On the other hand, the mothers report higher emotional and psychological well-being, except social well-being, when they report more positive relationship quality with their children (*actor effect*). Within mother-child dyadic, there is no partner's effect found.

Table 4

*The APIM testing using Structural Equation Modelling (Child-Mother Dyad)*

Role	Model	Effect	Estimate	$\beta (o)$	$\beta (s)$	$p$
Children	Relationship quality -emotional well-being	(Actor)	.23	.06	.14	.088
		(Partner)	.02	.01	.01	.863
Mother		(Actor)	.29	.17	.16	.042
		(Partner)	.09	.05	.05	.518
Children	Relationship quality- psychological well- being	(Actor)	.23	.06	.14	.077
		(Partner)	.04	.03	.07	.743
Mother		(Actor)	.27	.18	.18	.024
		(Partner)	.05	.03	.03	.701
Children	Relationship quality- social well-being	(Actor)	.15	.03	.08	.321
		(Partner)	-.27	-.18	-.13	.095
Mother		(Actor)	.23	.12	.11	.141
		(Partner)	-.12	-.06	-.07	.409

### **Relationship quality and well-being (mother-child dyadic)**

Table 5 provides output analysis within father-children dyads. As presented in the table, the children actor's effects of relationship quality upon their well-being are



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significant. These effects explain that when the children experience positive relationship quality with their fathers, their emotional, psychological, and social well-being are getting higher. The same actor effects are also found in the fathers' experience with their children.

From the analyses, we do not find any partner's effect on both the children and the father. The findings revealed that relationship quality experienced by fathers does not affect the children's well-being. The same route also exists in the relationship quality experienced by the children, which does not impact the fathers' well-being.

Table 5

### *The APIM Testing Using Structural Equation Modelling (Child-Father Dyad)*

Role	Model	Effect	Estimate	$\beta$ (o)	$\beta$ (s)	$p$
Children	Relationship quality- emotional well-being	(Actor)	.50	.24	.27	<.001
		(Partner)	-.00	-.00	-.00	.974
Father		(Actor)	.77	.13	.30	<.001
		(Partner)	-.01	-.00	-.00	.945
Children	Relationship quality- psychological well-being	(Actor)	.35	.17	.20	.002
		(Partner)	.10	.05	.04	.743
Father		(Actor)	.91	.18	.37	<.001
		(Partner)	-.16	-.08	-.09	.149
Children	Relationship quality- social well-being	(Actor)	.30	.12	.18	.023
		(Partner)	.27	.11	.09	.149
Father		(Actor)	.69	.09	.22	<.001
		(Partner)	.02	.01	.01	.911



## Discussion

The result shows that, from the children's side, there are no partner's effects as well as actor's effects on the relationship between parent-child relationships and all forms of well-being in the mother-child dyad. On the other hand, mothers experience actor's effect on their emotional well-being and psychological well-being, but not the partner's effect.

Within the father-child dyad, both of the fathers and the children report the actor's effects. This finding shows the different actor's effects between mother-child dyads and father-child dyads. There is no partner's effect detected within father-child dyads.

Erel & Burman's (1995) study (as cited in Li et al., 2018) explained the family role as the basis of the social environment for individual growth, during marital relationships as the family relations basis. In the context of family development, an enduring bond between caregiver and children reflected in the parent-child relationship (Cox & Paley, 2003).

### Mother-child dyadic

The result of this study showed that within the mother-child dyadic, the partner effect does not influence the well-being of the actor. This indicates that the relationship between the mother and child is indistinguishable. When the mother perceives a good quality relationship with her child, this does not affect the child's well-being in all forms. Only the child's perception of good relationship quality with his/her mother affect his/her own well-being. On the other hand, the mother's well-being is also influenced by her relationship quality perception with her child, not by her child's relationship quality perception with her.

Jouriles et al (1987) (as cited in Mark & Pike, 2017) stated that marital disputes which were externalized might be reproduced within the mother-child dyad, which later might affect the well-being of the mother and the child. Pappa (2013) extended



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the idea that the mother, whose low relationship quality with her couple tended to have a problem in her parenting practices, relationship with her child, and child's well-being. This may be a potential explanation of why the dyadic relationship between the mother and child is indistinguishable in this study.

[Collins & Russel \(1991\)](#) explained that mothers typically had got higher levels of involvement with their children than fathers had. This condition opened the possibility of being involved in conflictual relations. A study by [Laursen \(1995\)](#) indicated that conflict between adolescence and their mother occurred more frequently than conflict with peers, fathers, siblings, and other older adults. This may be the reason why the children in the study do not experience the association between their perception of relationship quality with their mothers and their well-being.

In this study, female children dominate with 70 % of all samples. This characteristic may influence the result, as [Hill & Holmbeck \(1987\)](#) explained that disagreements concerning house-rule were more frequent between mothers and their postmenarcheal girls. This frequent conflict between the female adolescent and her mother may trigger the daughters to neglect the relationship quality with their mother temporarily.

[Collins & Laursen \(2004\)](#) (as cited in [Branje, 2008](#)) found that the youngster's tendencies to gain autonomy had decreased the intimacy in the relationship with the parents. This transition period, mixed with increasing house-rule conflict between the mother and her child, may lead the feeling of "disregard" toward each other. This situation may be the explanation of why the partner effect does not affect the well-being of the mother and the child.

### **Father-child dyadic**

[O'Brien & Shemilt \(2003\)](#) stated that the trend suggested the participation of men in their children's lives. In many cases, the role of fathers has been subject to less change, in that traditional activities fathers showed with their children were still in the area of play together, companionship as well as outdoor activities with their child.



## **Practical implication/Implication for Future Studies**

A unique result of this study is that within a dyadic mother-child relationship, no actor's effect and partner effect are found on each well-being. It may suggest that the existence and role of the mother, as well as the child's role in the family, are not considered important by both the mother and the child. This condition, however, is balanced by the father's relationship quality perception with his child, which influences his own well-being, even though the child's relationship quality itself does not affect his/her own well-being. These findings may suggest the importance of fatherhood during puberty or menarcheal to balance the absence of the mother's quality relationship effect toward a child in the family. Due to rarities in the dyadic study of relationship quality and family members' well-being, the opportunity to discover possible output is still big open. Constructing the same variables in a different social system like patriarchy and matriarchy is probably will give more explanation regarding the actor and partner effect within the dyadic analysis in the family.

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