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Mothers' parenting of adolescents in the VUCA era: a phenomenological analysis



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ABSTRACT

Keywords:Duva
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Parenting during the VUCA era
Phenomenological analysis
Adaptation of the mother's roleDuva
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In the VUCA era (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity), mothers must adjust their parenting without neglecting family values. This study investigated mothers' experiences in guiding adolescents during the VUCA era and identified their adaptive strategies based on Duvall's family development theory. This qualitative phenomenological design involved three mothers as participants taken with purposive sampling, with data collected through interviews, observations, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The researcher analyzed the data using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The findings revealed five main themes indicating that mothers' interpretations of their parenting roles influence their experiences, psychological stress, expectations, and the parenting strategies they adopt. Mothers' roles in parenting adolescents have shifted from traditional approaches to more modern, adaptive, and holistic models. In adapting to these dynamics, mothers involved multiple components, including themselves, their adolescent children, their husbands, and the wider community. The findings also demonstrated the expansion of Duvall's family development theory to incorporate new dynamics, particularly those fuelled by technological advancements. Support programs that enhance adolescents' emotional regulation skills can implement this research in school counseling services. For communitybased applications, a systems approach involving fathers and other family members can be used, along with digital parenting platforms such as e-parenting.id for education and counseling. Counselors can also provide training and support to address parenting-related stress among mothers and offer family counseling to improve family wellbeing.

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Introduction

The world is currently experiencing the VUCA era (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) (Johannes & Tatiana, 2024; Saputra et al., 2021), presenting new challenges for parents especially mothers in raising adolescents. Rapid technological changes have also influenced adolescents engagement with the digital world (Ricci et al., 2023; Third et al., 2017; Unicef, 2018).

In this context, mothers bear increased responsibility to filter information and protect their children from harmful digital content (Utami, 2022). As the primary figures in parenting (Bornstein & Putnick, 2016; Cabrera et al., 2011), mothers play a critical role in supporting their children s

growth and development. They must adapt to societal changes without sacrificing core family values (Feldman, 2007). In traditional family structures, mothers often assume the main caregiving role, while fathers tend to focus on economic support and decision-making (Grau et al., 2022). In fact, when fathers are involved in parenting, it has a positive impact not only on the child but also on the mother (Handayani et al., 2024).

Parenting is essentially a long-term process (Virasiri et al., 2011), involving meeting children s physical, emotional, social, and psychological needs (J. S. Miller et al., 2018). This study draws on Evelyn Duvall s Family Development Theory, which offers a conceptual framework for each stage of family life (Duvall, 1988; Duvall et al., 1977; Martin, 2018). In the fifth stage families with adolescent children mothers encounter greater challenges as adolescents enter a phase of identity exploration, independence-seeking, and rapid emotional and social change. Conflicts between mothers and adolescents often arise due to different perspectives and misaligned expectations (Mastrotheodoros et al., 2020). In the VUCA era, adolescents encounter copious amounts of information, leaving them susceptible to value confusion. The digital gap between parents and children further complicates this issue, which affect the mother s psychological condition, such as anxiety, emotional exhaustion, or even role conflict.

The sociocultural context of mothers in Semarang shaped by strong Javanese cultural roots also influences parenting dynamics. Javanese parenting patterns emphasize respect and harmony (Situmorang & Lubis, 2024), with mothers typically taking a more active role in caregiving (Baiduri & Yuniar, 2017). However, research indicates that when fathers also engage in parenting, family outcomes improve. Hapsari, Deasyanti, Muzdalifahet (2023) found that higher family functioning is associated with better mental health in children.

Several studies have explored maternal parenting in the VUCA era. For example, Utami (2022) examined "Smart Techno Parenting" for children, while Choiriah et al. (2023) reported that rising divorce rates during the VUCA era negatively affect children's personalities. However, few studies specifically explore mothers experiences in raising adolescents during this time, although adolescents are highly susceptible to value confusion due to unfiltered information exposure.

Therefore, this study is crucial. Adolescents are generally unstable, and the VUCA era allows them to access vast amounts of unfiltered information. In response, mothers must adopt an adaptive and critical approach to guide their children while preserving essential family values. This research contributes to communities with specific cultural backgrounds (e.g., Javanese) by offering insights into raising adolescents in the VUCA era. It can also help school counselors better understand students' conditions based on parenting styles and develop family-based intervention strategies to address adolescent issues such as gadget addiction and identity crises.

This study aims to fill the gap in parenting literature by focusing on mothers who support adolescents during rapid social change. Guided by Duvall s theory, it explores how mothers experience and adapt to parenting challenges in the VUCA era.

Methods

Design

This qualitative design used a phenomenological approach to explore in depth the experiences and roles of mothers in parenting adolescents during the VUCA era. This approach enabled a careful, systematic, and critical analysis of participants subjective experiences (Køster & Fernandez, 2023), focusing on unique life events (Badil et al., 2023). It could uncover mothers personal experiences in a more profound way covering social, emotional, spiritual, and technological aspects and to understand how mothers navigate family changes in line with Duvall s family development stages.

This approach allowed the researcher to gain a holistic and contextual understanding of parenting dynamics from the mothers internal perspectives. Through this lens, the researcher explored the structure of mothers life experiences in raising adolescents, and the meanings they assigned to



their parenting roles amid rapid change and uncertainty. The researcher employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to examine the mothers' subjective experiences and personal meanings of the phenomena they encountered (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2023). In particular, the researcher focused on mothers inner experiences, values, beliefs, and the struggles or challenges they encountered in parenting amid digital and societal transformation.

This study also uncovered the parenting challenges mothers encounter during their children s adolescent phase. The VUCA era demands that mothers adapt quickly in their parenting approaches.. Using IPA, the researcher could understand how mothers navigate uncertainty and complexity on a personal level. IPA enabled the extraction of subjective and contextual meaning relevant to family development dynamics based on Duvall s theory. The researchers proposed question such as: how do mothers describe their roles as parents?; What significant changes the mothers experience during caring the adolescents compared to their experience of receiving care?; What challenges the mother encounter in caring the adolescents?; What expectations the mothers have for their children s rapid-change future? Thus, combining phenomenology with IPA was appropriate for capturing the dynamics of parenting in a digital context

Although phenomenological research using IPA requires a high level of reflexivity since subjective experience is vulnerable to interpretative bias the researcher applied reflexivity principles to maintain the validity of interpretations. Given the researchers background in family psychology and mental health, they applied bracketing to suspend personal assumptions. They ensured rigor by conducting peer debriefing, member checking, and developing an audit trail to guarantee transparency in the data analysis process, thereby ensuring that the interpretation genuinely reflected participants perspectives (Berger, 2015).

Participants

The study involved three mothers, selected through purposive sampling. IPA does not aim for population generalization but prioritizes deep exploration of participants' subjective experiences. The inclusion criteria were (1) mothers of adolescents aged 13 20 years; (2) living with their adolescent child in the same household; (3) residing in the Semarang area; (4) willing to participate and provide informed consent; and (5) having a minimum education level of a bachelor s degree (S1) to ensure data depth and effective communication with the researcher.

Selecting mothers with a university education was not intended to disregard the voices of those with other educational backgrounds but to ensure participants could express, reflect on, and assign meaning to their subjective experiences. This also ensured the quality of communication and depth of reflection required for phenomenological research. The participants cognitive and verbal abilities were key to obtaining rich, meaningful data.

As Smith explained (cited in Vasileiou eta al,2018), *small-scale IPA studies allow in-depth analysis, which would not be possible with larger samples.* Therefore, involving three participants was considered sufficient to intensively and contextually reveal the subjective dynamics and meanings in mothers parenting experiences.

Instruments

The researchers collected data through semi-structured in-depth interviews to explore the experiences of mothers raising adolescent children in the VUCA era. The researchers recorded the interviews using audio devices, transcribed them, anonymized the data, and analyzed it (Folliard et al., 2024). The researchers designed the interview guide to uncover mothers parenting experiences, the dynamics of parenting, and their adaptive strategies to challenges in the VUCA era. The semi-structured format gave researchers flexibility to explore information in depth. Although we prepared an interview guide, this approach allowed us to adapt spontaneously and probe emerging themes from each participant. The researchers made immediate adjustments to follow-up questions to enhance the depth of the discussion.

The researchers conducted interviews lasting between 60 and 180 minutes to provide sufficient time to thoroughly explore participants experiences. To protect confidentiality and privacy, the



researchers recorded interviews only after obtaining participants consent. Then, the researchers informed participants that recordings served solely for research analysis. The researchers also anonymized personal data and did not disclose identifying information in the research report. Before the interviews, participants signed informed consent forms, where we explained the study s purpose, risks, benefits, confidentiality, interview procedures, and data storage.

To maintain confidentiality, the researchers used initials instead of real names, edited transcripts, and removed indirectly identifying information such as workplace names, children s schools, or other locations. Then, the researchers stored digital data in encrypted folders on our computers, ensuring only researchers could access it.

During interviews, the researchers monitored participants for signs of emotional distress triggered by questions probing deep parenting experiences in the VUCA era. The researchers reminded participants that they could stop the interview anytime without consequences.

The researchers applied an empathetic and supportive approach, closely observing signs of tension or discomfort. The researchers allowed breaks if participants showed emotional fatigue. Additionally, as a psychologist, the researcher offered counseling services after interviews if participants needed psychological support. This approach aligns with basic ethical principles in social research, emphasizing respect for participants autonomy and minimizing potential harm, including emotional distress (Nagai et al, 2022).

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed data using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Demeulenaere et al., 2025). IPA effectively examines qualitative data to gain a profound understanding of individuals subjective experiences and how participants interpret those experiences in their lives. This approach suits the study s mission to examine and comprehend mothers experiences managing adolescent parenting dynamics in the VUCA era. Our IPA process included: (1) recording interviews with audio and video, then fully transcribing them to prepare for analysis; (2) repeatedly reading transcripts to grasp participants experiences and contexts, helping to understand the meaning behind their words; (3) identifying initial themes emerging from the transcripts; (4) coding relevant sections of transcripts corresponding to identified themes. Coding facilitated grouping information under broader thematic categories; (5) exploring relationships among themes to analyze interconnections; (6) interpreting the data; and (7) writing the findings report.

IPA s rigorous philosophical and methodological principles make it relevant for research in education, psychology, and counseling (Miller et al., 2018). To ensure data validity, reliability, and credibility, the researchers used member checking, triangulation, peer debriefing, and audit trails. These methods helped refine and deepen our understanding of mothers experiences parenting adolescents in the VUCA era, considering family complexity and global uncertainties.

In member checking, participants reviewed interview transcripts and preliminary analyses to confirm the researcher s understanding aligned with their experiences and provided clarifications or corrections as needed (Mekarisce, 2020). Then, the researchers shared analysis results based on transcripts for participants to verify the interpretations accuracy.

The researchers triangulated data by collecting information from various sources and techniques, including observations, field notes, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), to strengthen findings. Two qualified colleagues in psychology and methodology conducted peer debriefing to discuss findings and the analysis process. These individuals provided alternative perspectives, maintained research objectivity, and helped identify potential biases in data interpretation. We maintained an audit trail for research transparency by documenting data collection processes and saving notes from interviews to allow detailed traceability. The researchers recorded every analytic step, showing how data was coded, analyzed, and transformed into themes. Then, the researchers also documented discussions among researchers regarding theme interpretation and stored rationale for interpretative decisions. We explained all analyses and findings thoroughly, ensuring accountability based on collected data.



Based on data analysis, the researchers manually coded transcripts. This involved reading and deeply analyzing interview texts, marking words or sections relevant to initial codes representing participants experiences and feelings about parenting adolescents in the VUCA era.

Results and Discussion

Results

This study involved three participants aged 35 40, with educational backgrounds ranging from bachelor's to doctoral degrees. Each had an adolescent child aged 13 15. Two participants came from middle-income families, while one came from an upper socioeconomic background. Table 1 presents the detailed participant characteristics.

Names of mothers	Age	Education	Numbers of Children	Occupations	Ages of Children	Sex types of the children	Marital statuses	Economic background
R M	40	S3 of Education	1	Lecturer	15	Male	Married	Moderate
RH	38	S2 of Management	3	Lecturer	13	Female	Married	High
AM	35	S1 of Nursing Care	1	Private employee	13	Male	Married	Moderae

Table 1. Identities of the Participants

Emerging Themes

Based on the interviews, five main themes emerged: (a) the meaning of the parenting role, (b) mothers parenting experiences, (c) the pressures mothers encounter, (d) mothers hopes in parenting, and (e) mothers parenting strategies in the VUCA era.

Theme 1: The Meaning of the Parenting Role

Participants viewed parenting as a dynamic process requiring adaptation and shared learning. They saw themselves as protectors, companions, and educators who teach moral values, life skills, and emotional competencies.

Participant RM stated, I see my role in many ways as a mother, a protector, a moral guide, sometimes a friend to my child, and even a digital educator in this technological era. The challenges are endless.

Participant RH explained, *As a mother, I have many roles teaching religion, economics, emotions, financial skills, survival skills, and setting boundaries in the digital age.* Participant AM added, *My role is to protect and accompany my child in this digital era, while teaching them religious and moral values as life foundations.*

The excerpts of sometimes I must be their friends and teachers about digital matters (AM); Many things to go through teach them religion, economics, finance (RH); and teaching religious, moral, and righteous values (AM), indicate the term of multi-functional roles of mothers. The roles are such as moral mentor, traditional-modern moderator. Thus, the superordinate theme is the complexity of mothers role in digital era.

Theme 2: Mothers' Parenting Experiences

All three participants recognized a shift from traditional to modern parenting styles driven by technological advancement. This shift intensified conflicts with their teenagers due to value differences, digital privacy issues, and communication challenges. Although mothers had been involved in their children s development since infancy, increasing levels of education and social exposure influenced the quality of parent-child communication.



Participant RM shared, "I still apply some parenting patterns that my parents used, although I have modified them to better suit my child." Some of my approaches may conflict with my child's perspectives, but I consistently strive to communicate that I am doing my utmost as a mother. Participant RH said, I ve tried to help my child manage social media use, but it often leads to conflict especially when I want to monitor their phone for privacy reasons. Participant AM reflected, I ve cared for my child since pregnancy. But now the problems just keep getting more complex.

The excerpts of Sometimes I want to wave the white flag, but I m not allowed to give up (RM), Once you ve bonded with your child you become a failed parent (RM), and Should I be firm or give in? ... Isn t it exhausting? It s stressful (AM). These quotes reveal emerging themes of anxiety about the child s future, pressure to be capable in every aspect without room for failure, and emotional dynamics between mother and child. The superordinate theme is emotional exhaustion and the pressure of managing dual roles

Theme 3: Pressures and Stress Mothers Encounter

Mothers expressed anxiety about rapid technological change and their children s future. They often felt emotionally overwhelmed when dealing with their children s emotional responses, especially when those emotions stemmed from school or social interactions. Mothers also felt constant pressure to adapt to new technology and parenting expectations.

Participant RM explained, Even though I keep updating myself with new information, I still worry about my child s development. I feel like I have to know everything about technology, life, everything yet I m still behind. After working all day, I m exhausted at home, juggling chores and my child s unpredictable behavior. Sometimes I feel like waving the white flag but of course, I can t give up.

Participant RH added, Sometimes my child gets angry even though I mean well. If I m tired from work and can t control my emotions, I snap too. When we argue, I feel like a failure as a parent. I ve felt sad, confused, even cried. But I have to stay strong firm, yet warm. Participant AM said, Schools and society place high demands on children, and I want to help. But I can t always understand everything. I know my child is tired, but I m confused should I be firm or lenient? Sometimes I have to stay strong, sometimes I must be gentle and wise. It s exhausting and stressful.

The participants expressed statements such as, Sometimes I want to wave the white flag, but I m not allowed to give up (RM), Once I m in sync with my child I end up being a failed parent (RM), and Should I be firm or give in? ... Isn t it exhausting? It s stressful (AM). These statements reveal the emerging themes of anxiety about the child s future, the demand to be capable in all areas and never fail, and the emotional dynamics between mother and child. The superordinate theme is emotional exhaustion and the pressure of fulfilling multiple roles.

Theme 4: Mothers' Hopes for Their Children

Mothers expected their children would grow up to be adaptive to technological changes while staying grounded in strong religious values.

Participant RM expressed, *I want my child to adapt to the times but still have a strong religious foundation.* In a follow-up interview, RM added, *I m scared my child will be tech-savvy but lack faith. It may not seem like a problem now, but it II affect their future. That s why I always remind my child that it s okay to go online or play games, but they should not skip prayers.* Participant RH said, *I want my children to be righteous and skilled in digital fields but not forget their religious values.* Participant AM emphasized, *Many people today are great at IT but don t know their limits. I want my child to master IT but still know what s right and wrong. I constantly remind them so they don t go astray.* AM elaborated further, *For me, religion is like a compass. My child can go anywhere in life, but religion must be the guide. Without it, I fear they II lose their way. That s why I ve taught moral values from an early age and enrolled them in an Islamic preschool to build a strong foundation.*



The excerpts of Children must stay adaptive but still need a foundation in religion (RM), I want my children to be pious and never forget religious values (RH), and Religion is like a compass. to keep us on the right path (AM), the emerging themes include the balance between progress and religious values, religion as a compass for life, and mothers concerns about moral deviation in the digital age. The superordinate theme reflects mothers ideal hopes to raise resilient and faithful children.

Theme 5: Mothers' Parenting Strategies

All three participants stated that mothers adopt strategies involving various components: themselves, their adolescent children, their husbands, and the broader community. They actively sought to enhance their parenting by improving their knowledge about technology (such as social media), understanding adolescent-related issues (such as teen problems and peer trends), and learning about effective parenting practices. In addition, they strive to manage their emotions, foster a supportive environment for their teens development, and serve as role models.



Figure 1 Inter-Thematic Association

RM stated, "As a mother, I keep learning to improve myself—to become a better parent by behaving more positively toward my child, managing myself, and asking for my husband' s cooperation. I help my child manage emotions and motivate them. For myself, I keep searching for information about parenting and adolescent issues, and I learn about social media to stay in tune with my child. I also involve my husband in discussions when parenting challenges arise."

RH explained, "For myself, I focus on self-care—managing my emotions. With my husband, I try to build cooperation in parenting, such as managing my expectations of him, discussing our responsibilities as parents, and evaluating our parenting efforts."

AM shared, "I strengthen myself by continuously learning from other parents-for example, searching for information online, joining parenting classes, speaking with other parents, or even teachers. I share experiences so I don't feel overwhelmed handling my child alone."



Based on the participants' statements—"*I keep learning about parenting... from social media..."* (RM), "*I manage my expectations of my husband... and evaluate our parenting..."* (RH), and "*I talk with other parents... so I don' t feel overwhelmed on my own"* (RM)—the emerging themes include maternal self-development through education and parenting, spousal collaboration in raising children, and the use of social support as a source of strength. Therefore, the superordinate theme is parenting strategies. **Figure 1** illustrates the findings.

Diagram explanations

Theme 1 explores the experiences and complexity of a mother s role amidst various demands, such conditions generate value conflicts and emotional pressure for mothers. Theme 2 addresses the tension between traditional values and the complexities of the digital era, which mothers experience as they try to reconcile long-held values with the dynamics of modern technology and adolescents today. This theme arises from Theme 1 and triggers Theme 3 (emotional exhaustion) due to value and communication conflicts that lead to disputes with children and cause stress. Theme 2 also relates to Theme 4, as mothers respond to value conflicts by turning to religious reinforcement to guide their hopes.

Theme 3 focuses on emotional responses, such as exhaustion and psychological stress from the dual role, which represent the mother s internal reaction to the burdens of modern parenting. Theme 2 intensifies this condition and also drives the emergence of Theme 5, as emotional strain prompts mothers to seek out parenting strategies.

Theme 4 highlights maternal hopes, which drive the development of Theme 5. A mother s aspiration for her child to become devout and resilient motivates her to keep learning. This theme also balances Theme 3 (emotional pressure), as mothers use religious coping as a source of inner strength.

Theme 5, which addresses maternal parenting strategies, is triggered by Themes 3 and 4. Emotional pressure creates the need for strategy, and hope fuels it. This theme also strengthens theme 1, as mothers who successfully adapt ultimately reconstruct the meaning of motherhood.

Based on the research findings, all subthemes illustrate the complex realities mothers encounter in the VUCA era, including parenting challenges, shifting values, communication, empathy, stress, expectations, religious values, and parenting strategies. These elements interact dynamically. The interrelation among subthemes strengthens the consistency of findings and offers a solid foundation for developing more relevant parenting theories and policies in response to modern dynamics.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to use Evelyn Duvall's family development theory to examine mothers' parenting experiences with adolescents. The findings reveal that mothers perceive parenting as an adaptive and dynamic process shaped by the times. This perspective aligns with the demands of parenting in the VUCA era, which requires rapid adaptation to uncertainty particularly in guiding adolescents through social and technological changes (Fitriani & Utami (2020).

Five key themes emerged from the findings: the meaning of the mother's parenting role, mothers parenting experiences, maternal stress, parenting expectations, and parenting strategies. Mothers understanding of their roles influenced their experiences, psychological stress, expectations, and the strategies they applied. These themes reflect the adaptive dynamics within families raising adolescent children.

First, the findings show that mothers perceive themselves as protectors, companions, and facilitators of their children s emotional and life skills development. This interpretation shapes their daily parenting practices, positioning them as the primary figures responsible for instilling moral values and character from an early age (Mulyani, 2018; Lubis & Harahap, 2021). Duvall (1988) supports this view, noting that as children enter adolescence, mothers become emotional guides, conflict mediators, and sources of support during identity formation.



At this stage, parents must shift from directive roles to supportive ones that promote children s independence. This change signals a transition from the mother as a primary caregiver to a facilitator of autonomy (Nomaguchi & Allen (2023). The shift brings more complex challenges, requiring mothers to continually learn how to parent adolescents. These findings reinforce earlier studies emphasizing that digital-era parenting demands strong self-regulation (Bridgett et al., 2013) and emotional control (üstündağ, 2024) to reduce family conflict.

As the times change, mothers no longer play purely domestic caregiving roles; they now act as adaptive agents who continue learning and evolving especially when encountering psychosocial and technological challenges in the VUCA era. Respondent RM reflected this by stating, *I take on many roles as a mother, a protector, a moral guide, sometimes even as a friend to my child, and a teacher of digital skills in today s tech-driven world. There are so many challenges*

This research supports previous studies that found both social and internal family pressures increase the complexity of mothers roles (Evans et al., 2016; Jezierski & Wall, 2019). These findings signify a paradigm shift from the traditional maternal role to that of a socially active agent who bridges adolescents with the complexities of the digital world. In this case, mothers are also capable of playing dual roles by contributing to both the public and domestic spheres (Daniel Opotamutale & Natanael, 2022; Maluleka et al., 2023).

A positive interpretation of the maternal role correlates with family harmony and optimal child development (Manap et al., 2015). Mothers current roles expand Duvall s family development theory by showing that digital-era parenting requires new skills and greater role complexity (Kalkim et al., 2024).

Furthermore, mothers parenting experiences are heavily influenced by a shift from traditional to modern parenting values. Mothers encounter value conflicts with their teenage children. As children grow older, mother child closeness tends to decrease, while conflict tends to increase (Nomaguchi & Allen, 2023). These value differences reflect adolescents efforts to construct their identities.

In addition to value conflict, mothers struggle to build empathic communication. However, empathic communication between mothers and adolescents can reduce value conflict and improve adolescents' psychological adjustment (Kerr, M., Stattin, H., & Özdemir, M., 2018). Despite this, many mothers find it difficult to communicate effectively with their teens, which often leads to conflicts. The result is evident in respondent RM s statement: *As a mother, I still use the parenting patterns my parents taught me, although I ve adjusted some to fit my child s needs. Occasionally our views clash, but I try to help my child understand that I m doing my best as a mother.*

Duvall (1988) described this stage as a crucial developmental task in which parents must adjust their relationship with adolescents by granting more independence within safe boundaries. Supporting teenagers in the digital era requires the ability to bridge generational gaps. Navigating adolescence with all its complexities causes emotional stress and pressure for mothers. Besides dealing with value conflicts and communication challenges, mothers also worry about the pressures of parenting in the digital age, including concerns about technological development and their children's future. This concern emerged in RM's statement:

...even though I ve tried to keep up by learning new things, I still feel anxious about my child s development. Occasionally, I feel like I need to know everything technology, life issues... Even before finishing one lesson, another appears. Especially after a full day of work, I feel exhausted. Then I get home and have to deal with chores and my child s behavior that often tests my patience. Haha... Sometimes I just want to give up, but I know I must keep going, even with all the burdens.

Despite being Generation Y mothers who are relatively tech-savvy and highly educated, the participants still experienced parenting anxiety (Sweeney & Wilson, 2023). Mothers also reported low confidence in guiding their adolescents. Concerns about cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content,



and fear of missing out (FOMO) further increased the psychological burden on the mothers. These conditions require mothers to constantly learn and adapt, even though they also suffer from emotional exhaustion due to multitasking. Emotional fatigue and anxiety are key indicators that link parental burnout, emotional distress, and parenting approaches (Moroń, Jach, Atłas, et al., 2023).

The study found that marital status, economic background, and educational attainment significantly shape a mother s awareness of the complexities of digital parenting. Education plays a vital role; higher educational levels positively influence parenting quality (Rezaeizadeh et al., 2024). Education also affects maternal values such as self-transcendence, strict parental control, and child behavior regulation, which in turn contribute to children s academic achievement (Trommsdorff, et al. (2023). However, high educational attainment does not eliminate emotional challenges in digital parenting.

Participants with higher education and middle-to-upper socioeconomic status exhibited diverse psychological dynamics. Mothers with backgrounds in education and health tended to understand emotional regulation and reflective communication better. They often negotiated parenting agreements, encouraged reflective conversations, and exercised effective control. The evidence suggests that parenting can foster children s behavioral regulation (Konstantina Giorgos Elsayed et al., 2023; Ringoot et al., 2022; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2022), strengthen mother child relationships, and promote self-efficacy and positive emotions (Elansary et al., 2022). However, these mothers also encountered internal pressures, such as high self-expectations and role ambiguity in digital parenting. These stressors indicate that parenting adolescents demands not only technical skills but also emotional and psychological readiness (Nomaguchi & Allen, 2023).

In response to these pressures, mothers expressed hopes that their children would adapt to modern developments while maintaining strong religious values and virtuous character. These aspirations reflect efforts to balance modern demands with moral beliefs, aligning with Duvall s theory of building a sustainable family value system.

Despite encountering various challenges, all three mothers expressed high hopes for their children s future emphasizing not only academic success but also character formation. One mother, RH, stated *I hope my children will grow up to be pious individuals, equipped with digital skills, yet still rooted in religious values.*

In this role, mothers act as moral compasses, guiding their adolescents in religious values, discipline, and independence. This study supports earlier findings that emphasize the importance of instilling moral and spiritual values (Yusnita et al., (2003). as a core foundation for parenting in the digital age. Parenting affects the quality of life for adolescents (Agustina & Appulembang, 2017), while religious values provide moral protection for teenagers as they navigate modern challenges (Konstantina Giorgos Elsayed et al., 2023). Religious and moral education is key to creating a generation that is virtuous and capable of contributing positively to society (Rodiyah, 2023).

To manage these pressures and expectations, mothers adopted various parenting strategies, including improving digital literacy, collaborating with spouses and communities, and applying flexible and adaptive approaches. External factors like spousal support, digital access, and community involvement influenced their development as primary caregivers. One mother, AM, explained *I* empower myself by learning from other parents browsing the web, attending parenting classes, discussing with other parents, or even teachers. Sharing experiences helps so I don t feel alone in encountering parenting challenges.

These findings highlight the importance of external environments in shaping children s behavior and development (Bush et al., 2020). The study found that two mothers with partner support showed greater resilience. Meanwhile, one mother lived apart from her spouse due to the husband s studies in another city. In the VUCA era, mothers who play dual roles experience greater pressure and higher self-expectations. Social value shifts also require mothers to develop psychological resilience. These findings align with previous research Modecki et al. (2022) showing that rapid technological growth increases parenting stress and digital anxiety in families. However, resilient families tend to foster



connection, shared reflection, and collaboration (Duncan et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2021), which enhance family resilience.

Despite limited access, mothers still demonstrated adaptive initiative by adopting religious-based strategies. These approaches reflect the concept of family resilience, showing that internal support from spouses and children and external community networks are vital for helping families adapt to modern challenges. This study reinforces previous findings that emphasize the importance of collaboration among mothers, children, spouses, and communities, consistent with the family resilience concept (Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2009; Coyle, 2011). This strategy highlights mothers efforts to reorganize family roles and relationships, as Duvall suggested parents must develop new interaction patterns that meet adolescent developmental needs.

Family resilience, mothers positive role construction, and community involvement are essential in building adaptive parenting systems. This study expands Duvall s theory by showing that contemporary parenting requires new skills, such as work family balance, responsive communication, and the ability to bridge generational gaps. Mothers who maintain harmonious communication with spouses and children, stay connected with communities, and remain responsive to technological changes are better equipped to support their children in the digital era. These findings confirm that the family serves as a protective factor in child and adolescent development (Mihić et al., 2022; Muchiri & Dos Santos, 2018; Vanderbilt-Adriance et al., 2015). Family becomes the primary protective factor of children and adolescents growth (Mihić, Munchiri & Dos Santos, 2022).

Overall, the findings reveal that mothers' parenting of adolescents involves a complex process shaped by meaning-making, dynamic experiences, emotional pressures, and evolving values. This process does not follow a linear path; instead, it forms a continuous cycle of adaptation that evolves with children s development and sociocultural changes.

However, this study has limitations. It involved only Generation Y mothers with higher education living in Semarang City. These characteristics limit generalizability to mothers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or with lower education levels, who may adopt different approaches to digital parenting. Future research should explore more diverse social classes and include fathers to offer a holistic view of family parenting. Further studies should also examine parental digital literacy, social media regulation strategies, work family balance, and maternal psychological well-being. These efforts can strengthen more adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable parenting theories and practices. Furthermore, Duval's theory is primarily relevant to nuclear and traditional families, in which the mother is responsible for the domestic sphere and the father for the public sphere. However, in today s context, many mothers are required to take on dual roles, and the involvement of extended family members in child-rearing is increasingly common. Therefore, an expansion of Duval s theory is highly plausible.

These findings can inform school counseling services through support programs that enhance adolescent emotional regulation. Community-based approaches should involve all family members in supporting mothers and provide father training in shared parenting responsibilities. Digital parenting platforms, such as *e-parenting.id*, can offer education and counseling, while community-building initiatives led by trained counselors or psychologists can facilitate shared parenting experiences. Counselors should also receive training and supervision on parenting stress and offer family counseling to promote cooperative parenting and improve family quality.

Conclusion

Research findings identified five core themes: (1) the meaning of the parenting role, (2) mothers experiences in parenting adolescents, (3) parenting stress, (4) mothers hopes in parenting, and (5) parenting strategies. These sub-themes reflect the complex realities mothers encounter in the VUCA era and reveal their dynamic interconnections. The findings affirm that mothers roles in parenting



adolescents have shifted from traditional models toward more modern, adaptive, and holistic approaches influenced by digitalization.

Urban, highly educated mothers have adapted to contemporary demands by integrating technology into their parenting practices. However, this adaptation often comes with emotional pressure, role conflict, and psychological burdens. Mothers respond to these dynamics by engaging multiple components, including themselves, their adolescent children, their husbands, and community support. Resources such as digital literacy, counseling, and work-family policy support play a crucial role in helping mothers navigate these shifting roles in a healthy and sustainable way. However, without such support, the complexity of these roles can become emotionally burdensome and may negatively impact the mothers psychological well-being

By exploring mothers parenting experiences in depth, this study creates opportunities for developing more contextual and responsive policies and interventions that meet the needs of modern families. The findings also expand Duvall s family development theory by incorporating new dynamics such as technological influence, paternal involvement, and increasing socio-economic challenges.

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