

The Correlation Between Self-Acceptance and Stress Level Of Parents Of Down Syndrome Children at Ungaran Special School

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Abstract

Low acceptance of parents who have down syndrome children causes frustration, tension or even anger. The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship of social support with the self-acceptance of parents who have down syndrome children in Ungaran Special School. This was a descriptive correlation study with a cross-sectional approach with a total sample of 91 respondents using the total sampling method. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS 23.0. Bivariate analysis was conducted using the chi-square test. Most parents had good self-acceptance (64.8%) and normal stress level (63.5%). There was a significant relationship between self-acceptance and stress levels of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School with the p-value of $0.039 < 0.05 (\alpha)$. The family should do stress management by organizing a group or special group of parents who have down syndrome children so that they can share their feelings to minimize the stressors faced by parents.

Keywords : self-acceptance, stress level, parents, down syndrome children

Introduction

Children with down syndrome will have a big influence on families, especially mothers who become the closest figure to children (Mangunsong, 2011). Parents who have children with down syndrome are often stressed, especially for a mother who interact with her child more frequent than a father who usually is more focused on providing financially for the family (Venesia, 2012). A mother who has a Down syndrome child often gets negative views and ridicule from the surrounding community due to the limitations of her child. The level of emotional stability in accepting children with down syndrome affects the self-acceptance of a mother (Wijayanti, 2015).

Having children with special needs is one source of stress and burden for parents both physically and mentally. As explained by Lestari (2012), having children with special needs is one source of stress and burden for parents both physically and mentally. The burden experienced by parents caused by having children with special needs raises an emotional reaction in them. Denial is not only done by the neighbors but some of the family members are sometimes not accepted the children with down syndrome. Children who are born with developmental disorders sometimes cause

parents to blame themselves (Triana & Andriany, 2010).

Parents who have good self-acceptance are the ones who have good perceptions about themselves and attitudes toward appearance. Parents with good self-acceptance can think more realistic about appearance and how it looks in the view of others. A person can do something and speak well about his true self (Jersild, 2008). Negative self-acceptance involves an unwillingness to experience feelings, thoughts, and emotions, causing self-rejection (Aldrin, 2016). Someone who does not have self-acceptance will automatically try to deny, do self-rejection or suppress the feeling, including disconnecting themselves from reality (Aldrin, 2016). Factors that influence self-acceptance include self-understanding, realistic expectations, environmental barriers, social behavior, absence of emotional stress, parenting, self-concept, and social support from the surroundings (Nuryoto, 2012).

The characteristics of acceptance include being spontaneous and responsible, do not blame the existing conditions, as well as having desires, ideas, and aspirations. Individuals who can accept other people will have a realistic assessment of the ability and understanding of the meaning of others. People with self-

acceptance can accept their situation or develop an attitude of acceptance in themselves. Otherwise, people with low self-acceptance often reject their situation or can not be realistic (Wiwin, 2011).

Children with down syndrome need more attention because of their limitations. For a mother, giving more attention is not easy. She must be able to share time for her children with her obligations in the household; thus, she needs to be patient. The element that underlies patience is a form of attitude of acceptance from a mother because, with acceptance, the mother will pay attention to the development of the child's ability and provide affection and great attention to the child (Hurlock, 2008).

A preliminary study was conducted at the Ungaran Special School in Semarang Regency by giving a questionnaire to 10 parents with down syndrome children. The results show that among six mothers that had normal stress level, two mothers had poor self-acceptance while the other four mothers had good self-acceptance

Meanwhile, the other four mothers who had a high stress level consisted of two mothers with poor self-acceptance and two mothers with good self-acceptance. This indicated that most respondents had high levels of stress despite their good self-acceptance. Research question is there a relationship between self-acceptance and stress levels of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School?

Methods

This was a descriptive correlation study that was conducted at Ungaran Special School. The population in this study were 91 parents who had children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special school. This study used total sampling, where all of the population was taken as samples.

This study used total sampling, where all of the population was taken as samples. The sample of this research is 91 parent who have down syndrome children in Ungaran Special School, Semarang Regency The self-acceptance in this study was assessed using a non-standard questionnaire. This stress level is measured

using Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 42 (DASS 42) by Lovibond & Lovibond (2015)

The self-acceptance variables were tested for the validity to 10 parents of children down syndrome in Bina Putera Special School. The results show that the r-value ranged from 0.852 to 0.925, which were higher than are greater than the r-table of 0.632. This means that all self-acceptance variables in the questionnaire were valid.

Meanwhile, the reliability test results obtained the Alpha Cronbach value of 0.988, which was higher than the required value (0.60). This means that all statements used to measure the self-acceptance variables were reliable.

Results

1. Self-Acceptance of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

T able 4.1 Freq uenc y distri	Self- Acceptance	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
	Good	59	64.8
	Fair	32	35.2
	Total	91	100.0

bution of self-acceptance of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Table 4.1 shows that the self-acceptance of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School was mostly in the good category, with the number reached 59 people (64.8%).

2. Stress Level of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Table 4.3

Frequency distribution of stress level of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Stress Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Normal	76	83.5
Medium	15	16.5
Total	91	100.0

Table 4.3 shows that majority

of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School had normal stress level, with the number reached 76 people (83.5%), while the other 15 parents (16.5%) only had medium stress level.

1. Relationship between Self-Acceptance and Stress Level of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Table 4.4 Relationship Hubungan Penerimaan Diri between self-acceptance and stress level of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Self-acceptance	Stress level						p-value
	Normal		Medium		Total		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Good	3	89.8	6	10.2	59	100.0	0.039
Fair	3	71.9	9	28.1	32	100.0	
Total	6	83.5	15	16.5	91	100.0	

As can be seen in Table 4.4, 32 respondents had fair self-acceptance and most of them had normal stress level (not stressed), with the number reached 23 people (71.9%). This was more than the medium stressed level that reached 9 people (28.1%). Meanwhile, there were 59 respondents (89.8%) with good self-acceptance that had normal stress level while 6 people (10.2%) had medium stress level.

The results of statistical tests using the chi-square test obtained the p-value of $0.039 < 0.05$ (α). Thus, it can be concluded that there was a relationship between self-acceptance and stress levels of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School. Based on the Chi-Square test results, the Odds Ratio (OR) value was 0.289 with Confidence Interval (95%CI) between 0.092-0.907.

Discussion

1. Self-Acceptance of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Parents must bear the hard reality when they have children with down syndrome disorder (Ismail, 2008) This reality will affect the whole life of parents and families.

Parents of down syndrome children give sincere affection and accept the limitation of their children to show their self-acceptance. Tanudjaja (2011) states that parents who give genuine love will create an emotion or connection between parents and children. The acceptance of mothers who have down syndrome children can be indicated by giving sincere affection so that a relationship between the mother and the child can eventually help to develop the child's (Handayani, 2008).

The parents of children with ASD reported higher objective and subjective burden, more frequent psychological distress, lower social support. Mothers reported greater subjective burden than fathers (Picardi, et al, 2018)

Self-acceptance is associated with social support from the environment because social support from the environment can be beneficial for someone, among others, in strengthening or increasing feelings of self-esteem, providing information relevant to the problems faced and alternative solutions, giving advice or guidance, functioning for individuals in carrying out various social activities, and provide encouragement to individuals in making decisions and provide confidence that the problems faced can be resolved (Cohen and Syme, 2015)

Parents of children with Down syndrome provide genuine affection and accept the shortcomings of children with grace to show self-acceptance. Tanudjaja (2011) states that parents who give sincere affection will create an emotion or connection between parents and children

The authors believe that parents who live together with their down syndrome children will make the mother motivated to provide the best care for her children. Social support from the environment can be beneficial to someone in

strengthening feelings of self-esteem, providing information relevant to the problems faced and alternative solutions, giving advice or guidance, functioning for individuals in carrying out various social activities, give encouragement to individuals in making decisions, and provide confidence that the problems faced can be resolved. A form of support from the husband can reduce the level of stress experienced by mothers so that maternal acceptance increases.

1. Stress Level of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

Children with down syndrome can be are a source of stress for the parents and burden them both physically and mentally. Mangunsong (2011) explains that the magnitude of the stigma and stereotypes that exist in the community towards children with disabilities makes parents/families with children with disabilities have greater stressors.

Parents who have down syndrome children are often stressed, especially for mothers who are involved more frequently with their children compared to their fathers. In terms of parenting, mothers need more social-emotional support for a long time and more information about the child's condition. Mothers who have children with down syndrome tend to become stressed, as a mother sometimes feel shocked and not ready to have a child with down syndrome (Wenar & Kerig, 2010).

Parents who have down syndrome children experience stress when they meet parents with a normal child either at home or in a crowded place. Gupta and Singhal (2014) state that parents with down syndrome children naturally experience stress in various aspects of the family such as the demands for caring in everyday life, emotional stress, interpersonal difficulties, financial problems and adverse social consequences such as being excluded.

Some parents, especially in mothers with children who have Down syndrome have a tendency to be stressed one of them for example is because as a mother sometimes they can be surprised and not ready to be blessed with a child down syndrome, of course it is caused by

many factors or other sources that can cause stress on the mother

Feelings of shame for parents in crowded places is caused by the thinking that they have children who are different from normal; thus, sometimes they become the center of attention or even ridiculed by others. This causes them to become embarrassed and stressed when they invite their children with down syndrome to a crowded place. (Potter & Perry, 2009). Vashdev (2012) states that women are more easily stressed because they have a structure that is different from men.

1. Relationship between Self-Acceptance and Stress Level of Parents Who Have Children with Down Syndrome in Ungaran Special School

As explained by Potter & Perry (2009), factors that influence stress include someone's coping strategy, which is a series of responses that involve elements of thought to overcome everyday problems and sources of the stress involving demands and threats from the surrounding environment. Coping strategies used by someone who is working in the face of stress affect his level of stress

Personal events or experiences can also trigger stress. Stress is often caused by painful personal experiences, spouse's death, divorce, schooling, sick children or school failures, unwanted pregnancies, traumatic events or facing legal problems (Baron & Greenberg, 2009).

The good self-acceptance and normal stress level of the respondents can also be influenced by intelligence (Gunawati & Hartati, 2008). Someone who has a higher level of intelligence will be more resistant to sources of stress than someone who has low intelligence because the level of intelligence is related to adjustment. Someone who has high intelligence tends to be more adaptive in adjusting (Gunawati & Hartati, 2008).

The results of statistical tests using the chi-square test obtained the p-value of $0.039 < 0.05$ (α). Thus, it can be concluded that there was a relationship between self-acceptance and stress levels of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School.

Down syndrome children need more attention, but it is not an easy thing for a mother. The element that underlies sincerity and patience is a form of acceptance from a mother because, with acceptance, the mother will pay attention to the development of her child and provide affection and great attention to the child (Hurlock, 2011).

Research conducted by Cantwell (2014), states that parents who have children with Down syndrome who live together will make mothers who care for their children can provide the best care. The study shows that respondents provide social support for children with Down syndrome well.

Conclusion

There was a significant relationship between self-acceptance and stress levels of parents who have children with down syndrome in Ungaran Special School with the p-value of $0.039 < 0.05$ (α).

The family should do stress management by organizing a group or special group of parents who have down syndrome children so that they can share their feelings to minimize the stressors faced by parents.

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