

Perspective of The Psychological Assessment Team on Factors Influencing Parental Acceptance of Students with Disabilities

Hevearita G. Rahayu^{1*}, Hardi Warsono², Rina Kurniati³, Hartuti Purnaweni²

¹Doctoral Program in Social Sciences, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

²Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

³Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

Abstract. This study aimed to explore the perspective of the psychological assessment team on the factors influencing parental acceptance of students with disabilities. A qualitative design was used through a case study, with data gathered through in-depth interviews comprising four key participants, specifically two Psychologists and two Psychological Counsellors at Rumah Duta Revolusi Mental. The findings showed seven factors that either support or prevent parental acceptance of students with disabilities. The supporting elements include Knowledge, a Proactive and Open Attitude, Social Support, Financial Assistance and Capability, Availability of Facilities and Service Access, Experience, and Spirituality. Conversely, the preventing factors comprise Negative Stigma, Anxiety, Lack of Knowledge/Literacy, Maladaptive Beliefs, Negative Experience with Prior Services, Limited Financial Resources, and Limited Access and Infrastructure. Based on these findings, the study recommends that Semarang City should actively develop innovative policies to enhance parental acceptance of students with disabilities, addressing the identified factors comprehensively.

Keywords: Parental acceptance, students with disabilities, inclusive education

Psymphatic :
Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi
Vol.10:2, December
2023,
Page 185-196

eISSN: 2502-2903
pISSN: 2356-3591

Article Info

Received:

August 31, 2023

Accepted:

December 22, 2023

Published:

December 31, 2023

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.15575/psy.v10i2.29358>

Copyright © 2023 The Author(s). Published by Fakultas Psikologi UIN SGD Bandung, Indonesia.

This is an Open Access article under the CC BY 4.0 license

* Corresponding author: Doctoral Program in Social Sciences, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia

E-mail: hgr_ita@yahoo.com

Introduction

The development of students is a collaborative effort between educators and the immediate family, with parents contributing significantly to both educational and basic needs of the students. Family, recognized as the fundamental institution (Dahlan, 2014), significantly influences the development of student's personalities. This influence extends to both physical and psychological aspects, fostering a sense of security and affection. Additionally, these factors underscore the crucial role of parents in shaping the holistic development of students.

Disability is defined as the inability of an individual to perform certain tasks or a reduced capacity to carry out activities in a specific manner (Mangunsong, 2009). The various types of disabilities relate to physical specificities and other aspects, including intellectual abilities, behavior, and emotions. Consequently, effective treatment for students with disabilities requires collaboration across various entities, starting from the nuclear family.

Parents play critical roles in supporting students with disabilities, including establishing communication, providing social support, offering health services, and facilitating alternative education (Indahni *et al.*, 2023). Parents need to intensify the support for students with special situations, enhancing the student's academic achievements and motivation (Bariroh, 2018). Alternative education parents can provide is access to schools that cater to specific needs, ensuring optimal education and teaching based on the abilities of the student.

In Semarang City, the number of students with disabilities recorded in 2022 is 6,340 individuals (Pemerintah Kota Semarang, 2022). This number underscores the proximity of disabled students to everyday life, necessitating consideration for the students existence and well-being. An example of the government's commitment to students with disabilities is the establishment of *Rumah Duta Revolusi Mental* (Mental Revolution Ambassadorial House or RDRM).

RDRM is a free psychological service unit under the Semarang City Education Department, that

provides services to the school community. Initiated by Hevearita G Rahayu (Mayor of Semarang City), RDRM is a response to President Joko Widodo's instructions No. 12 of 2016 concerning the National Mental Revolution Movement. The objective is to cultivate family environments, educational and work units, as well as communities that are friendly, inclusive, and free of violence.

A program at RDRM includes psychological assessments for students with disabilities before receiving inclusive education services. Inclusive education accepts diversity, allowing disabled students to learn alongside others, receive support, and appreciate differences without discrimination (Pandia & Purwanti, 2019). This educational approach, rooted in the perspective of social disability and social justice, represents a new trend in Indonesia (Mangunsong & Wahyuni, 2018)

The latest annual report from RDRM showed that the organization conducted a minimum of 231 psychological assessments on students in 2022 (RDRM, 2023). Preliminary findings from interviews with psychologists at RDRM showed that some parents faced challenges in accepting that the students have disabilities and were advised to consider inclusive education services.

Parental acceptance of the child's condition is essential to the developmental process (Putri & Sairatu, 2023), including physical, intellectual, and other factors, such as disabilities. Hurlock (2017) defined self-acceptance as the ability of an individual to accept everything personally and the willingness to improve perceived shortcomings. This extends beyond internal aspects to external circumstances such as socio-economic status, education, or family conditions, including students with disabilities.

Parental acceptance includes comprehending the perspective of the child, accepting the experiences related to disability diagnosis, and focusing on the present relationship. Understanding the child's mental state, needs, and difficulties enables appropriate responses to signals and adaptation (Di Renzo, et al., 2020). Parental acceptance is connected to a more positive perception of students and the impact of raising students with disabilities on family life (Lecciso et al., 2013).

Visible signs of parental acceptance include warm care, support, total affection, and attention towards students with disabilities (Anjasari et al., 2020). The process of self-acceptance for parents of students with disabilities includes struggle, particularly when faced with unexpected news. This universal process becomes evident when parents first learn of the disability of the child. Zulfia & Allenidekania (2023) explore the experiences of mothers in caring for students with

disabilities, showing the challenges of parental acceptance during internal pressures, mental health problems, and social isolation following diagnosis.

Parents show various reactions upon discovering the child has a disability. The achievement of self-acceptance is marked by the ease with which parents discuss the condition of the child, provide balanced treatment, collaborate professionally, pursue unrelated interests, maintain discipline without excessive love, and avoid overprotective behavior (Mangunsong, 2011).

The self-acceptance process unfolds in stages, as outlined by Livneh and Antonak (2005) in Gultom and Budisetyani (2018). These stages include (1) Initial reaction, marked by shock, disbelief, anxiety, and panic when the initial response is unacceptable, (2) Intermediate Reaction, where the individual enters the depression phase with feelings of hopelessness, silence, crying, and discouragement after the initial response, often accompanied by anger towards the situation or event, and (3) Final Reaction, where positive self-acceptance helps subside anger, and individuals begin to adapt to the risks.

The process of self-acceptance is influenced by various factors according to Hurlock (in Gultom and Budisetyani, 2018), including self-understanding, realistic expectations, absence of environmental barriers, appropriate social behavior, lack of emotional stress, memories of previous successes, identification of an individual with reasonable adjustment, self-perspective, good childhood parenting, and a stable self-concept. These factors collectively contribute to shaping an individual's journey toward self-acceptance.

Several factors play a role in the process of self-acceptance for mothers with students with disabilities, such as education, social support, family, and parenting (Islami & Ansyah, 2020). These factors can either stand-alone or interrelate, significantly impacting parental acceptance processes. This also shows that factors influencing self-acceptance emanate not only from within the parents but also from the external environment, such as extended family, social surroundings, and educational units.

Social pressures play a crucial role in influencing parental acceptance of students with disabilities (Budiarti et al., 2016). Misunderstandings about disabilities often result in harmful stereotypes (Wicaksono, 2021), further complicating the self-acceptance process for parents.

An analysis conducted in 2016 stated that negative acceptance of students with developmental disorders persists among some parents due to unmet expectations, embarrassment, and fear of societal judgment (Faradina, 2016). These thoughts can significantly impact parental acceptance, reflecting

both internal and external factors influencing the child and the surrounding environment.

The high number of students with disabilities in Semarang, coupled with the challenges parents face in accepting the situation, reiterate the need to investigate factors hindering and supporting parental acceptance of disabled students. Addressing inhibiting factors and enhancing supporting elements is crucial.

Although previous works by Budiarti *et al.*, (2016), Zulfia & Allenidekania (2020), and Putri & Sairatu, (2023), have explored general factors influencing parental acceptance of students with disabilities, limited research examines this aspect from the perspective of professionals providing services. Therefore, this study aimed to fill the gap by identifying factors influencing parental acceptance from a professional's viewpoint, particularly those associated with the Semarang City RDRM service unit.

The objective of this study is to discern factors that either support or impede the parental acceptance process regarding students with disabilities, relying on the insights of professionals. The anticipated benefits include gaining a deeper understanding of the community's role and informing government policies to foster more inclusive education for disabled students.

The analysis adheres to ethical considerations, safeguarding the identities of parents and students with disabilities who participated in the assessment process by the evaluation team. These participants not only contributed to the research but also received psychological assistance for inclusive education.

Methods

The article presented qualitative research using a case study approach. The study used purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2015) to select participants, which comprised two Psychologists and two Psychological Counselors stationed at Rumah Duta Revolusi Mental (RDRM) in Semarang. The selection criteria took into account the participants' connection with the research data requirements, considering the roles as officers engaged in the daily psychological assessment process for students with disabilities in Semarang City. Throughout this assessment process, participants interacted directly with the disabled students and the parents.

The data were collected from in-depth interviews and observation. Questions posed to participants were formulated based on ten factors influencing self-acceptance, according to Hurlock (in Gultom and Budisetyani, 2018). For instance, a question aimed to explore the perspective of the participant on the parent's self-understanding regarding the condition and the challenges faced by the students. Another question

explored the views of the participants on the realistic expectations of parents during the psychological assessment process. Simultaneously, observations were carried out by witnessing the clinical interview process between psychologists, acting as research participants, and parents of students with disabilities undergoing psychological assessments.

The data collection spanned two interview sessions for each participant and observations were conducted between February and May 2023. The timing of data collection correlated with the period of psychological assessments for students with disabilities preceding the new academic year in Semarang City. Observational findings were documented in the form of anecdotal notes.

Subsequent data analysis adhered to qualitative techniques proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), consisting of three stages, namely data reduction, display, and conclusion. To enhance the study's credibility, strategies outlined by Creswell (2014) were adopted, including triangulation of research data and member checking with study participants.

Results and Discussion

Description of Research Participants

The study included participants who were Psychologists and Psychological Counselors at RDRM, a psychological service unit operating under the Semarang City Education Department. This unit specifically provided psychological assessments for students with disabilities (RDRM, 2023), a service designed for students in the educational unit environment showing indications of disabilities. Significantly, this service was offered free of charge, particularly for students from underprivileged families.

Participating psychologists comprised individuals with a doctorate and master's degrees, specializing in clinical psychology. However, the two psychological counselors possessed undergraduate degrees in psychology. The participants, consisting of 3 women and 1 man, were aged between 28 and 38, with over two years of experience.

Factors Supporting Parental Acceptance of Students with Disabilities

The exploration of factors supporting parental acceptance of students with disabilities yielded seven themes. Data analysis included grouping the data, leading to the identification of the following factors.

Parental Knowledge

The knowledge discussed pertains to parents having sufficient insight and literacy regarding students and disabilities in general. Information provided by research participants showed that parents with a higher educational background tended to show more advanced

progress in the acceptance journey for students, as participants stated with the following statements.

Selama proses asesmen, kita menemui ya kalau orang tua yang tingkat pendidikannya lebih tinggi itu menunjukkan kalau lebih banyak punya pengetahuan tentang kondisi anaknya. Mereka itu banyak tanya, banyak diskusi dengan kita, jadi bisa lebih paham kendala yang dialami anak (P2)
During the assessment process, parents with a higher level of education showed more knowledge about the child's condition. The parents asked a lot of questions and discussed with the counselors, thereby understanding the obstacles experienced by the students. (P2)

Saya pernah juga ketemu dengan orang tua, cerita perjuangannya buat bisa mengerti kondisi anak itu seperti apa, ada yang konsultasi dengan guru, kepala sekolah, dan konsul ke dokter anak. Kebanyakan dari yang begitu ya, mayoritas pendidikannya minimal SMA atau sarjana lah ya. (P1)

Counselors encountered parents who shared the struggles met to comprehend the child's condition. These parents requested guidance by consulting with educators, school principals, and pediatricians, with the majority holding a high school or college education. (P1)

Additionally, some parents pursued information from experts, such as teachers, psychologists, or child development doctors, indicating a proactive approach to understanding the disability of the students. Exposure to success stories and inspirational content featuring individuals with disabilities contributed to enhancing parental knowledge, as another participant mentioned.

Beberapa ada juga yang mulai bisa memahami disabilitas anak ya, setelah lihat-lihat konten parenting yang... ee.. inspiratif gitu dan kisah sukses para penyandang disabilitas lah, di YouTube apa di TikTok gitu. (P4)

Several parents began to understand more about the disabilities of the students after seeing inspirational parenting content and success stories of individuals with disabilities on YouTube or TikTok. (P4)

Parental knowledge and understanding, acquired through interaction with experts and exposure to media content, evolved as a crucial factor in shaping attitudes of acceptance toward students with disabilities.

Proactive and Open Attitude

According to information provided by the participants, certain parents who indicated acceptance showed an

open and proactive attitude. The openness in question pertained to the willingness to receive information or suggestions related to the condition of the child. Simultaneously, the proactive nature showed how the parents actively endeavored to provide optimal assistance based on the knowledge of disabled students, as a participant mentioned.

Sebagai asesor, saya itu senang kalau ketemu sama orang tua yang pikirannya terbuka. Mereka itu pasti sudah melewati tahap denial ya, jadi lebih mudah untuk sama-sama diskusi yang konstruktif buat perkembangan anaknya. (P3)

As an assessor, counselors were very happy to meet open-minded parents. The guardian passed the denial stage, making it easier to have constructive discussions regarding the development of the child. (P3)

Orang tua yang open-minded biasanya aktif bertanya, e.. cerita, mendengarkan, terus mendampingi anaknya, proaktif selama sesi asesmen dan terapi. (P1)

Parents who were open-minded were usually active in asking questions, telling stories, listening, and proactively accompanying the students in assessment and therapy sessions. (P1)

The openness was evident through the willingness of parents to ask questions, engage in discussions, listen, and share experiences related to the students with teachers and experts. The proactive stance was evidenced in how the parents actively monitored the growth and development of the students, facilitated therapy, accompanied learning, participated in parenting, and engaged in associations for parents of students with disabilities.

Social Support

Another factor supporting parental acceptance was social support, primarily from family members, the school environment including the teachers, students, and parents of others, and support groups such as the association of parents of students with disabilities. A participant made the following statements.

Ini salah satu sesi asesmen, saya lihat satu anak itu didampingi, ndak hanya sama orang tuanya lho, tapi juga sama kakek-neneknya plus shadow teachernya. (P4)

During one of the assessment sessions, the experts saw a child accompanied not only by the parents but also by the grandparents and shadow teacher. (P4)

Seorang ibu cerita dia bisa berdaya mendampingi anaknya karena suaminya mendukung banget dan

mau berbagi perannya dalam urusan rumah tangga. (P2)

A mother said empowering while accompanying the child because the husband was supportive and willing to share the wife's role in household matters. (P2)

Social support, significantly moral motivation, played a crucial role in fostering parental acceptance. Among the various forms of support observed by the participants, family members—spouses, siblings, grandparents, and extended family—offered acceptance without negative stigma, motivation, and facilitation, contributing to parents accepting the conditions of the students. In the school context, an inclusive and mutually supportive environment between teachers and parents also influenced parental acceptance of students with disabilities.

Financial Support and Ability

The study underscored the undeniable role of financial ability in supporting parental acceptance of students with disabilities. According to the participants, parents with more stable financial capabilities tended to concentrate on facilitating the students, both in terms of education and health, as a participant stated.

Saya temui dari interaksi dengan orang tua selama proses asesmen itu, orang tua yang punya sumber daya keuangan yang cukup, itu cenderung memiliki akses ke layanan kesehatan yang tepat dan layanan pendidikan untuk ABK. (P3)

Findings from interactions with parents during the assessment session was that guardians who have sufficient financial resources tended to have access to appropriate health services and educational services for students with disabilities. (P3)

However, even parents facing financial difficulties showed acceptance, specifically those receiving financial assistance, as expressed by a participant.

Menariknya, orang tua yang dapat bantuan dari pemerintah atau yang anaknya dapat beasiswa, juga kelihatan lebih menerima jika anaknya punya disabilitas dan harus mendapat pelayanan khusus. (P1)

Interestingly, parents who received assistance from the government or whose child received scholarships also seemed more accepting that the students had disabilities and should receive special services. (P1)

Financial aid, including scholarships, health insurance for supporting health services, and other government contributions, played a significant role in

facilitating acceptance among parents of students with disabilities.

Availability of Facilities and Service Access

Another factor affecting parental acceptance of students with disabilities was the availability of facilities and access to services. This factor comprised the presence of disability services and accessible infrastructure, particularly in social services, education, and essential health, that parents could readily access. Information from the participants showed that parents accustomed to accessing psychological services and receiving assistance in accessing services tended to show more appreciation and acceptance, as expressed by a participant.

Ini sangat penting, banyak orang tua bilang ke saya, mereka merasa terbantu oleh layanan asesmen psikologis gratis seperti yang ada ini. (P4)

This proved crucial as many parents informed psychologists that assistance came through the free psychological assessment service. (P4)

The availability of facilities and services plays a crucial role in fostering parental acceptance of students with disabilities. In Semarang, parents can easily access various services such as consultation, psychological assessment, counseling, psychotherapy, and free health services for underprivileged families. Additionally, the inclusive approach in all elementary and junior high schools in Semarang ensures accommodations and support tailored to the specific needs of students with disabilities. This comprehensive framework reiterates the significance of accessible services in promoting parental acceptance.

Experience

According to the perspective of the participants, parents with previous experience dealing with disabilities tended to show greater acceptance of disabled students. Some parents had family members with disabilities, while others worked in the health sector daily, particularly in disability services. These experiences made parents proactive when the child showed indications of a disability, as stated by a participant.

Ada juga orang tua yang proses penerimaannya lebih mudah, karena saudaranya juga punya disabilitas dan mereka sudah lama berhubungan dengan saudaranya itu. (P3)

Some parents found the acceptance process easier because they had relatives who also had disabilities and had interacted with the affected students for a long time. (P3)

Saya juga bertemu dengan dokter yang anaknya disabilitas, selama proses asesmen. Tentu saja ya, karena pengetahuan dan pengalaman,, mereka lebih terlihat menerima. (P2)

A counselor encountered a doctor whose child had a disability during the assessment process. Naturally, due to the guardian's knowledge and experience, the parents were more accepting. (P2)

Furthermore, positive experiences with service providers influenced how parents accepted the condition of the child, as stated in the following statement.

Sebagian orang tua itu mengatakan ya, mereka sebelumnya sudah konsultasi dengan psikolog dan merasa jadi memiliki pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang masalah disabilitas dan juga menganggap penting asesmen psikologis untuk pendidikan anak mereka. (P1)

Some parents had previously consulted with a counselor and felt having a better understanding of disabilities and the importance of psychological assessments for the education of the child. (P1)

Parents who routinely monitored the growth and development of the child, coupled with positive perceptions of the service, were more inclined to show acceptance behavior.

Spirituality

Spirituality evolved as a significant characteristic observed by the research participants in parents who showed acceptance. Spirituality, in this context, refers to the existence of meaning and gratitude for the child's condition. According to participants, several parents expressed the belief that God had entrusted the child, reiterating the responsibility to care for the child without judgment. A participant expressly stated.

Suatu hari, ada orang tua matanya berkaca-kaca, Beliau bilang kalau anak itu bukan anaknya, tapi anak Tuhan yang dipercayakan kepadanya. Apapun kondisinya, dia akan rawat anak itu. (P4)

With teary eyes, a parent expressed that the child was not solely a personal possession but rather a kid entrusted by God. Regardless of the condition, the commitment was to care for the child. (P4)

Some parents also expressed gratitude for the presence of the students, recognizing that not all guardians are blessed with having a child, as a participant mentioned.

Seorang Bapak yang membesarkan anaknya yang disabilitas itu sendirian. Bapak itu mengatakan kepada saya pada saat asesmen, Beliau pernah menolak untuk anaknya diadopsi sama sepupunya yang tidak memiliki anak. Alasannya Beliau

merasa bersyukur bahwa anak ini hadir dalam hidupnya. (P3)

A single father, taking care of a disabled child, shared during the assessment session the decision to decline a cousin's offer to adopt the child, expressing gratitude for the significant presence of the child in life. (P3)

Research participants stated that parents who accepted the conditions of the students appeared calmer, more mature, and better equipped to manage the feelings adaptively. This reflection pointed to spirituality as an integral factor when discussing parental acceptance of students with disabilities.

Factors Preventing Parental Acceptance of Students with Disabilities

Experts identified several factors impeding the process of parental acceptance of students with disabilities, alongside the supporting acceptance. These inhibiting factors comprised the following elements.

Negative Stigma

The study showed the presence of negative stigmas directed at students with disabilities and the parents. Guardians shared instances of encountering negative labels, such as 'failed child' or 'disgrace of the family,' originating from the family, educational environments, neighbors, or friends, as expressed by a participant.

Saya sudah berkali-kali berhadapan dengan orang tua yang masih di tahap denial ya, mereka cenderung menutupi informasi tentang disabilitas anak ketika asesmen. Setelah kita probing, ternyata mereka pernah dengar ejekan, yang ditujukan kepada anaknya, baik dari keluarga atau tetangga. (P1)

Counselors encountered several times where parents still in the denial stage tend to cover up information regarding the disability of the students during assessment sessions. After digging up information, it turned out that the parent had heard bad words directed at the students from family or neighbors. (P1)

The stigma, according to participants, led some parents in denial to conceal information during assessment sessions due to societal judgments and criticisms.

Anxiety about the Future

Excessive anxiety about the condition of the child was identified as another hindrance to acceptance. Although concern about the future of students with disabilities was common, this study found that excessive anxiety counter-productively impacted

parental acceptance. A research participant made the below statement.

Orang tua kadang terlalu khawatir dan sering diselimuti sama pandangan yang ndak realistis, misalnya, 'Jika orang lain tahu bahwa anakku disabilitas, maka anakku akan terluka' atau 'Apa yang bakal terjadi di masa depan anakku kalau dia tidak sembuh dan harus sekolah di SLB. (P2) Parents occasionally harbored excessive concerns, often immersed in unrealistic perspectives, such as fretting over potential harm to the students when others discovered the disability or anxiously contemplating the future, specifically when the students did not recover and ended up attending a special school. (P2)

According to research participants, these views contribute to denial, particularly observed during the psychological assessment process, where parents become less open about the child's condition due to excessive worry about the evaluation results.

Lack of Knowledge/Literacy

Another factor hindering parental acceptance was the lack of knowledge and literacy about disability issues. This study found that the knowledge gap evolved from factors such as parent's low educational background, insufficient socialization about disabilities for parents and teachers, and limited access to information. As the participant stated.

Kita baru sadar kalau masih banyak orang tua di luar sana yang tidak memiliki pengetahuan dasar tentang konsep disabilitas, ya karena latar belakang pendidikannya. Ada bahkan dari mereka yang tidak bisa membaca, menulis, atau bahkan berbicara bahasa Indonesia dengan lancar" (P3) Counselors realized that many parents lacked basic knowledge about the concept of disability due to limited educational backgrounds. Some struggled with reading, writing, or speaking Indonesian fluently. (P3)

Saya merasa ya, penerimaan orang tua terhadap anak-anaknya jadi seperti ini, ya karena kurangnya pengetahuan. Tapi jika kita dalam akarnya, itu bisa jadi karena kurangnya sosialisasi yang menyasar ke kelompok orang tua dengan latar belakang pendidikan yang rendah. (P4)

Counselors believed that parental acceptance of the students resulted from a lack of knowledge. However, a professional analysis suggested it was due to insufficient socialization among parents with lower educational backgrounds. (P4)

The lack of knowledge and literacy showed implications for various aspects, including parents' closed attitudes, parenting patterns disconnected from the needs of the students, and inadequate fulfillment of students' educational needs.

Maladaptive Beliefs

Maladaptive beliefs inconsistent with scientific understanding but firmly entrenched in parents of students with disabilities were identified in this study. The participants observed the beliefs of some parents who showed less acceptance of the condition of the child, as expressed by a participant below.

Misalnya, ada orang tua yakin banget soal hal-hal supranatural atau mistis, yang itu menurut mereka jadi penyebab anak mereka ada disabilitas, jadinya orang tua sering membawa anak-anak mereka ke 'Wong Pinter'. (P3)

For example, parents felt that supernatural/mystical things caused the disability of the child. Therefore, parents often take the students to 'Wong Pinter' (a shaman). (P3)

Additionally, some parents firmly believed that the child's condition would improve naturally without any treatment, as mentioned by a participant.

Menariknya, ada sebagian orang tua yakin se yakin-yakinnya, e... kalau anak mereka akan bisa pulih dengan sendirinya ketika nanti dewasa. Keyakinan seperti ini kan jadinya mencegah anak-anak mendapatkan layanan yang proper ya. (P1)

Interestingly, some parents were very confident that the students will be able to recover without treatment when growing up. This belief prevented students from getting proper services. (P1)

Negative Experience of Prior Services

Negative past experiences with disability services evolved as another obstacle to parental acceptance. Participants showed that negative parental perceptions of previous examinations or therapy often make the professional reluctant in the psychological assessment and treatment process. This was the participant's statement.

Ada juga orang tua yang awalnya menolak layanan asesmen ini. Kenapa? Setelah kami dengarkan ceritanya, itu karena orangtua pernah mengakses layanan untuk anak-anaknya, tetapi merasa tidak puas, misalnya karena biayanya mahal, petugasnya tidak ramah, prosesnya rumit, dan sebagainya. (P4)

There were also parents who initially rejected this assessment service. However, after listening to the story, we had previously accessed services for students but felt dissatisfied because the costs

were expensive, the staff was unfriendly, the process was complicated, and so on. (P4)

This issue was compounded by factors such as the quality of services falling short of excellence from disability service providers. Additionally, parental frustration with the child's slow developmental progress made the cost of services unaffordable, along with the unaccommodating attitudes of teachers who did not accept and facilitate the educational rights of disabled students. Another Participant mentioned the below statement.

Apa sebabnya orang tua makin khawatir untuk akses layanan asesmen psikologis ya karena beberapa guru di sekolah tertentu ya, sudah memberikan label negatif ke anak ya, atau bahkan sudah mengarahkan untuk pindah ke SLB, sepihak tanpa konsultasi dengan stakeholder terkait. (P2) What makes parents even more anxious about accessing psychological assessment services was that some teachers at certain schools give negative labels to students, or even direct students to move to special education without consulting with stakeholders. (P2)

Limited Financial Resources

Unstable financial conditions were identified as a barrier to the acceptance process. Family financial limitations hinder many parents from accessing various services for students with disabilities. According to research participants, this situation forced parents to focus more on meeting the family's basic needs, resulting in limited interaction with the students. A participant expressed concerns below.

Terkadang saya concern banget ya sama realita, banyak orang tua yang tidak punya biaya untuk sekedar akses layanan bagi anak-anak mereka. Kemampuan dari finansial hanya cukup untuk kebutuhan hidup sehari-hari. (P3)

There are moments when concerns arise about the reality. Numerous parents lack the financial means to access services for students, with financial capabilities only meeting daily survival needs. (P3)

Eventually, parents faced challenges in understanding and accepting the disability of the child due to limited financial resources.

Limited Access and Infrastructure

Limited access and infrastructure were identified as a hindrance to parental acceptance. Parents often refrained from accessing psychological or medical assessments for the students due to distance, transportation issues, and financial constraints. As the participant said,

Banyak orang tua enggan mengakses layanan karena lokasinya jauh dari rumah atau mereka mengeluh, tinggal di pinggiran kota, jauh dari jalur angkot atau BRT. (P1)

Numerous parents hesitate to use services due to the facility's distance from home, expressing dissatisfaction with suburban living and the lack of proximity to public transportation. (P1)

Complaints about living in suburban areas, far from accessible public transportation, added to the reluctance. Furthermore, not all service locations for students with disabilities were equipped with disability-friendly and suitable infrastructure.

In summary, these factors collectively present challenges to parents in accepting and understanding the disabilities in students, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the barriers.

Discussion

The results showed interconnections between each supporting and preventing factors, providing insights into the dynamics of parental acceptance of students with disabilities in inclusive education. This perspective is derived from the viewpoint of the psychological assessment team at RDRM.

The first connection is evident in how parents possess adequate knowledge of disability issues. Adequate and accurate knowledge supports parental acceptance, while a lack of literacy hinders acceptance of the disability. A solid understanding of the characteristics of the students is associated with several advantages, serving as an indicator of parental resilience (Widyawati et al., 2022) and enhancing the participation of students with disabilities in life situations, fostering growth, development, and a more meaningful life (Arakelyan et al., 2019). This knowledge aspect is essential, acting either as a support or constraint. Therefore, initiatives to enhance parental knowledge through psychoeducation, outreach, and campaigns about disability should be promoted, enabling parents to acquire a proper understanding of students with disabilities. Parents require assistance in comprehending how to accept and care for students with disability, such as autism (Muhammadi et al., 2020).

The knowledge is related to other factors, particularly the attitudes and beliefs of parents. The study shows that a proactive attitude is a supporting factor for acceptance, while maladaptive beliefs act as deterrents. Adequate parental literacy can lead to proactive and open attitudes, while a lack of knowledge fosters maladaptive beliefs detached from scientific facts. This is evident in instances where parents place more trust in alternative medicine and traditional

healers to address the disabilities of the students. It is crucial to recognize that disability is not a disease and cannot be cured through approaches lacking scientific basis.

Knowledge is also connected with parental experience. What parents have experienced or witnessed regarding disabilities can influence how parental knowledge eventually shapes acceptance of the condition of the child. The findings show that positive experiences, such as having siblings with disabilities or accessing services, support acceptance. Conversely, negative experiences regarding previous service history hinder parental acceptance of students with disabilities in inclusive education.

In terms of services for students with disabilities, the study identifies a relationship between supporting and preventing factors. Besides experience, it appears that adequate facilities and affordable access to disability services are crucial factors in supporting parental acceptance. Access and services bring parents closer to psychoeducation, information, and various other forms of support, acting as catalysts for the acceptance process. Conversely, limited infrastructure and access to services hinder the acceptance process. This is reinforced by other research, including the [Poernomo study \(2016\)](#), which states physical barriers to inclusive education, such as inadequate access to classrooms, laboratories, and libraries.

Services for students with disabilities relate to availability, ease of access, and financial resources. The study affirms that financial support and the ability of the parents are factors supporting acceptance, while the limited resources are components hindering acknowledgment. [Rajan et al. \(2016\)](#) asserted that as students with disabilities mature, parents are faced with increasing challenges, including career adjustments, stigma, concern for the future, and growing financial burdens. Stable financial conditions provide parents the flexibility to access health services and education, fostering efforts to stimulate the growth and development of the students. Therefore, families or parents facing financial challenges should be granted free access to health and education services.

Support for parents of students with disabilities extends beyond financial aid or resource availability alone. Social support from the family and environment significantly bolsters the process of parental acceptance of students with disabilities. [Dasuki \(2017\)](#) stated that family support is crucial for parents, specifically when caring for students with disabilities, such as mental retardation, which can evoke feelings of inferiority and burden. Similarly, in Central Java, social support evolved as the most dominant factor influencing parental acceptance of students with disabilities ([Gusrianti et al., 2018](#)).

Paradoxically, negative stereotypes or stigmas directed at students with disabilities persist in society, leading to social isolation or bullying, even within the school environment. These findings correlate with [Poernomo's study \(2016\)](#), which states that many students with disabilities encounter non-physical barriers in inclusive education, including emotional isolation, bullying, and discrimination from teachers. The negative stigma poses a substantial obstacle to acceptance. Therefore, efforts to increase knowledge about disability conditions will not be effective when solely targeted at parents. The entire school community, specifically in the city of Semarang, should be equipped with knowledge and awareness of disabilities to counteract negative stigma.

The presence of students with disabilities can also impact the psychological well-being of parents. Parents of students with disabilities, especially with developmental challenges, often face stress and encounter difficulties compared to guardians without responsibilities ([Suzuki et al., 2013](#); [Chen et al., 2023](#); [Heiman, 2021](#)). This study identifies excessive anxiety about the future of the child as a preventing factor for parents in accepting the condition of the students. Additionally, the analysis states parental spirituality as a supporting factor for acceptance. Spirituality comprises how parents constructively express positive meaning, gratitude, and manage emotions, including anxiety. Consistent with these findings, [Pandya \(2017\)](#) shows that spirituality is a tool used by various practitioners in European countries, America, Australia, and Canada to aid parents in accepting, coping with, and fostering resilience in students with disabilities.

This study acknowledges several limitations that warrant consideration. Being qualitative research, the analysis explores data solely from the perspective of professionals in the services field for students with disabilities. Therefore, the results do not include the experiences of parent from their perspective and cannot be universally applied to other settings. Future research will benefit from combining data from both parents and professionals providing services, using a mixed-methods approach. Additionally, this study is limited to Semarang City, and generalizations will not apply to other regions with distinct sociocultural characteristics and conditions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study found that each supporting and preventing factor of parental acceptance of students with disabilities in Semarang was interconnected. This connection showed how parental acceptance was a dynamic process, determined by each factor. The factors primarily centered on knowledge, resources,

availability, and access to services, as well as the presence or absence of social support and parental spirituality.

The results showed implications for how the Semarang City Government should constructively respond to enhance parental acceptance of students with disabilities for psychological well-being. Historically, the Government established Rumah Duta Revolusi Mental (RDRM) as a unit dedicated to providing psychological services for students with disabilities in inclusive education, at no cost for underprivileged residents.

This initiative required further reinforcement by empowering various regional entities, including the Education Department, the Social Affairs Department, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Department, and related stakeholders. The focus was on implementing more effective psychoeducation and training strategies for parents, facilitating access, and enhancing the quality of services for students with disabilities—specifically catering to parents with economic limitations. Additionally, there was a need for policies that endorse the fulfillment of the educational rights of students with disabilities through the provision of inclusive education in the City of Semarang.

References

- Anjasari, H., Sari, E. K., & Priyono. (2020). The correlation between hope with acceptance of parents toward children with special needs in the special education school in all districts of Ngawi. *JPK (Jurnal Pendidikan Khusus)*, 16(2), 65-74. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v16i2.33604>
- Arakelyan, S., Maciver, D., Rush, R., O'Hare, A., & Forsyth, K. (2019). Family factors associated with the participation of children with disabilities: a systematic review. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*, 514-522. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dmcn.14133>
- Bariroh, S. (2018). The Influence of Parents' Involvement on Children With Special Needs' Motivation and Learning Achievement. *International Education Studies*, 11(4), 96–114. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v11n4p96>
- Budiarti, M., Wibhawa, B., & Ishartono. (2016). Penerimaan Orangtua Terhadap Anak dengan Retardasi Mental. *Social Work Journal*, 8(1), 31-38. <https://doi.org/10.24198/share.v8i1.16111>
- Chen, C., Bailey, C., Baikie, G., Dalziel, K., & Hua, X. (2023). Parents of children with disability: Mental health outcomes and utilization of mental health services. *Disability and Health Journal*, 16(4), 101506. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2023.101506>
- Creswell, J.W. (2014) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed)*. Sage Publication.
- Dahlan, M. D. (2014). *Psikologi perkembangan anak dan remaja*. PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Dasuki. 2017. Hubungan pengetahuan keluarga dan tingkat retardasi mental dengan kemampuan keluarga merawat. *Journal Endurance*, 2(2), 186-193. <https://doi.org/10.22216/jen.v2i2.1143>
- Faradina, N. (2016). Penerimaan Diri Pada Orangtua yang Memiliki Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus. *Psikoborneo*, 4 (1), 18 – 24, <http://dx.doi.org/10.30872/psikoborneo.v4i1.3925>
- Gultom, S. T. N, & Budisetyani, I.G.A.P.W (2018). Penerimaan diri difabel (different abilities people) : Studi tentang remaja tunanetra perolehan. *Jurnal Psikologi Udayana*, 278-286. https://simdos.unud.ac.id/uploads/file_penelitian_1_dir/c30db6188b386ad5c8a8d564d8e8cc83.pdf
- Gusrianti, E., Winarni, T.I., & Faradz, S.M.H. (2018). Factors Affecting Parents' Acceptance towards Children with Familial Intellectual Disability (ID). *Journal of Biomedicine and Translational Research*, 2, 45-50. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14710/jbtr.v4i2.3659>
- Heiman, T. (2021). Parents Voice: Parents' Emotional and Practical Coping with a Child with Special Needs. *Psychology*, 12 (5), 675-691. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2021.125042>
- Hurlock, E. B. (2017). *Psikologi Perkembangan Suatu Pendekatan Sepanjang Rentang Kehidupan (edisi 5)*. Erlangga
- Indahni, A., Solina, E., & Syafitri, R. (2023). Peran Orang Tua dalam Menangani Anak Penyandang Disabilitas di Kecamatan Sagulung, Kota Batam. *Social Issues Quarterly*, 1(2), 385-400. <https://ejournal.umrah.ac.id/index.php/siq/article/view/64> (Original work published February 6, 2023)
- Islami, E. D. P., & Ansyah, E. H. (2020). Self Acceptance of Mothers Who Have Children With Special Needs. *Indonesian Journal of Cultural and Community Development*, 7(1), 6-11. <https://doi.org/10.21070/ijccd2020688>
- Lecciso, F., Petrocchi, S., Savazzi, F., Marchetti, A., Nobile, M., and Molteni, M. (2013). The association between maternal resolution of the diagnosis of autism, maternal mental representations of the relationship with the child, and children's attachment. *Life Span Disabi.* 16, 21–38. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258227491_The_association_between_maternal_resoluti

- on_of_the_diagnosis_of_autism_maternal_mental_representations_of_the_relationship_
- Mangunsong, F. (2009). *Psikologi dan Pendidikan Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus Jilid Kesatu*. Lembaga Pengembangan Sarana Pengukuran dan Pendidikan Psikologi (LPSP3) Kampus Baru UI.
- Mangunsong, F. (2011). *Psikologi dan Pendidikan Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus Jilid Kedua*. Lembaga Pengembangan Sarana Pengukuran dan Pendidikan Psikologi (LPSP3) Kampus Baru UI.
- Mangunsong, F. M., & Wahyuni, C. (2018). Keterlibatan orang tua terhadap keterampilan sosial siswa berkebutuhan khusus di sekolah dasar inklusif. *Jurnal Psikologi*, 45 (3), 167-180. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpsi.32341>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc
- Muhammadi, R., Nasir, S., Thamrin, Y., Thaha, R. M., Seweng, A., & Citrakesumasari, C. (2020). Analysis of coping behavior of parents who have children with special needs (autism) in public special school 1 Kendari. *Interdisciplinary Journal Papier Human Review*, 1(2), 28-36. <https://doi.org/10.47667/ijphr.v1i2.47>
- Pandia, W., & Purwanti, M. (2019). Teachers' perceptions of school climate in inclusive schools. *Psikohumaniora: Jurnal Penelitian Psikologi*, 4(1), 27-42. <https://doi.org/10.21580/pjpp.v4i1.3357>
- Pandya, S.P. (2017). Spirituality and parents of children with disability: Views of practitioners. *Journal of Disability and Religion*, 21(1), 64–83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2016.1270178>
- Pemerintah Kota Semarang. (2022, Agustus 24). *Dinsos Kota Semarang Akan Buat Kartu Disabilitas*. https://semarangkota.go.id/p/3787/dinsos_kota_semarang_akan_buat_kartu_disabilitas#
- Poernomo, B. (2016). The Implementation of Inclusive Education in Indonesia: Current Problems and Challenges. *American International Journal of Social Science*, 5(3), 144–150. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Implementation-of-Inclusive-Education-in-%3A-and-Poernomo/2a44fbee8075078758f7fb187b330a2e75bd7b57>
- Putri, P. K., & Sairatu, J. C. (2023). Parental acceptance of special needs children. *KREATIF*, 1(1), 40-48. <https://doi.org/10.33830/jpaud.v1i1.5105>
- Rajan, A. M., Romate, J., & Srikrishna, G. (2016). Resilience of parents having children with intellectual disability: Influence of parent and child related demographic factors. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing*, 7(7), 707–710. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/306263424_Resilience_of_parents_having_children_with_intellectual_disability_Influence_of_parent_and_child_related_demographic_factors
- RDRM. (2023). *Rumah Duta Revolusi Mental : Unit Layanan Psikologis Masyarakat Sekolah di Bawah Naungan Dinas Pendidikan Kota Semarang*. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Di Renzo, M., Guerriero, V., Zavattini, G. C., Petrillo, M., Racinaro, L., & Bianchi di Castelbianco, F. (2020). Parental Attunement, Insightfulness, and Acceptance of Child Diagnosis in Parents of Children With Autism: Clinical Implications. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1849. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01849>
- Sugiyono. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R & D*. Bandung : Alfabeta
- Suzuki, K., Kobayashi, T., Moriyama, K., Kaga, M., Hiratani, M., Watanabe, K., Yamashita, Y., & Inagaki, M. (2015). Development and evaluation of a parenting resilience elements questionnaire (PREQ) measuring resiliency in rearing children with developmental disorders. *PLoS One*, 10 (12). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0143946>
- Wicaksono, D., Suryandari, N., & Camelia, A. (2021). Stereotip tentang Difabel : Sebuah perspektif komunikasi lintasbudaya. *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 33-43. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.10.1.33-43>
- Widyawati, Y., Otten, R., Kleemans, T., & Scholte, R. (2022). Parental Resilience and the Quality of Life of Children with Developmental Disabilities in Indonesia. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 62(6), 1946-1962. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2020.1834078>
- Zulfia, R., & Allenidekania, A. (2020). Mother's Experience in Taking Care of Children with Special Needs: A Literature Review. *IJDS*, 7(1), 8-18. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21776/ub.IJDS.2019.007.01.2>

This page has been intentionally left blank