

Parenting Style for Children with Special Needs

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Abstract. Children with special needs are children who experience abnormalities (physical, mental-intellectual, social, and emotional) and need special attention. In carrying out their daily activities, children with special needs need assistance from their families, especially their parents. The parenting style of parents who have children with special needs is different from children in general. Parents need knowledge about proper parenting for children with special needs. The purpose of this study was to describe the parenting style of children with special needs at SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng (School for Exceptional Children). This research is a type of qualitative research with descriptive methods. Sampling in this study was purposive sampling. The findings of this study indicate that the parenting styles of children with special needs are associated with four factors: parenting, showing appreciation, communicating with the children, and enforcing discipline.

Keywords: *Children With Special Needs, Parenting Style*

Abstrak. Anak berkebutuhan khusus adalah anak yang mengalami kelainan (fisik, mental-intelektual, sosial, dan emosional) dan membutuhkan perhatian khusus. Dalam melakukan aktivitas sehari-hari, anak berkebutuhan khusus membutuhkan pendampingan dari keluarga khususnya orang tua. Pola asuh orang tua yang memiliki anak berkebutuhan khusus berbeda dengan anak pada umumnya. Diperlukan pengetahuan orang tua tentang pola asuh yang tepat bagi anak berkebutuhan khusus. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui gambaran pola asuh orang tua dari anak berkebutuhan khusus di SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng. Penelitian ini merupakan jenis penelitian kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Pengambilan sampel dalam penelitian ini *Purposive Sampling*. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pola asuh berhubungan dengan empat hal, yaitu pengasuhan, apresiasi, komunikasi orang tua dan anak, dan pendisiplinan.

Kata kunci: *Anak Kerkebutuhan Khusus, Pola Asuh Orang tua*

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Introduction

The parenting style of parents who have children with special needs is different from children in general. Caring for children with special needs (ABK) requires additional energy and thought and higher costs than caring for children in general (Putra, Herningrum, & Alfian, 2021). Parents need knowledge about proper parenting for children with special needs. Ignorance of parents about proper parenting for children with special needs can cause children with special needs not to receive parenting according to their abilities and potential, so children with special needs do not develop and cannot live independently in the future (Puspitasari & Hikmah, 2015).

Parenting style influences the development of independence in children with special needs. This is confirmed by the results of Zainar's research (2019), which found results that parenting styles affect the independence of children with Down syndrome. The parenting style that needs to be applied to achieve independence for children with Down syndrome is democratic parenting. To achieve independence in children with Down syndrome, the parenting style that needs to be applied is democratic parenting. Children need to be trained and guided patiently by their parents at home. The research conducted by Pulungan, Purnomo, and Baharuddin (2019) also found that parenting styles related to the learning achievement of mentally disabled children.

Researchers have conducted a preliminary study at SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng in Manggarai Regency. The author interviewed with the Head of SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng, on July 5, 2022. The researcher found information that SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng is one of the special schools and the only school in Manggarai Regency that accommodates all types of children with special needs. The number of students attending SLB Tenda Ruteng is 99 people. The

author obtained the fact that the graduation rate achieved by Tenda Ruteng State SLB reached 100%. According to the head of the school, a high graduation rate correlates with a good upbringing from parents at home.

The results of pre-research interviews with three parents who have children with special needs at Tenda Ruteng State SLB, with the first informant, aged 49, having children with mental retardation. The informant explained that his son was shy, closed himself off, and did not like socializing. This makes parents encourage their children to want to socialize with the surrounding environment, such as peers in the environment and at school, so it is hoped that this will enable children to grow positive social attitudes and learn more about new things in the environment they meet and parents still supervising children's activities. The second informant, aged 53, has a child with mental retardation. The informant explained that their child is unable to perform self-skills such as eating and wearing shoes or clothes independently. This is what makes parents try to encourage children to be independent, for example, telling children to eat and dress themselves so that they are not dependent and learn to be independent. Then the third informant, aged 51, has a child with mental retardation. The source explained that their child has unstable emotions. This is shown when something makes him angry, he will go berserk and act aggressively, such as slamming the cell phone he is holding. What parents do to respond to this is patiently calming them down and then advising their children not to do that.

The phenomena described above made the writer interested in conducting research titled "Parents' Parenting Style for Children with Special Needs at SLB Negeri Ruteng".

Method

The study was conducted at the SLB Negeri Tenda Ruteng from September 2022 to October 2022. This type of research is qualitative research with a descriptive method. The participants of this study were six mothers of special needs children. The interview used an interview guide developed from the aspect of parenting, namely affection, rules, and communication. The interview technique used was a semi-structured interview containing the central questions then, followed by questions or answers that emerged from the respondents' responses (Bastian, Winardi, & Fatmawatis, 2018). Data was collected in Ruteng NTT from September until November 2022.

Result

The author then analyzes the data obtained from the interview process using the Miles and Huberman (1994) model for the thematic analysis process. The data obtained from the author's interviews were analyzed and grouped into themes. Finally, the authors determine four main themes that describe parenting, appreciation, parent and child communication, and displacing.

Table 1
Participant Demographic Data

Pseudonym	Age (Year)	Last Education	Types of Children With Special Needs
Dian	37	Vocational High School	Autistic
Alda	33	S1	Down syndrome
Putri	38	Senior High School	Intelektual disability
Noni	35	Vocational High School	Intelektual disability
Wulan	49	Senior High School	Down Syndrome
Paulus	44	S2	ADHD

Theme 1 Parenting

a. Barriers to Parenting

Parents of children with special needs have obstacles in caring for their children. The participants said that being parents of ABK had many obstacles in parenting, including children who had difficulty socializing and communicating, difficulty processing information, children who had uncontrolled emotions, negative views from the environment, difficulties in academic matters, and children who could not be independent.

Dian said the obstacles experienced in parenting were that their children could not socialize, and it was difficult to communicate.

"So the obstacle is that he cannot get along with the term socialization. He is very passive in the socialization... this child cannot yet be invited to communicate" (Dian).

Putri revealed that she experienced problems in parenting. Her child became easily angry when his wishes were not followed.

"He's easy to get angry if we don't follow his wishes" (Putri).

b. How to Overcome

In overcoming parenting obstacles, the participants made several efforts, among others. In her interview, Dian said that she still accompanied her child and decided not to work so she could care for her child.

"I blend her with children of the same age... still have to be accompanied... me, one of my husbands, and we make the decision that only one of us is working because if everyone is working, this child will be neglected" (Dian).

Then, Alda, in overcoming obstacles if her child has difficulty processing information, will give explanations repeatedly when her child does not understand the orders given, as seen in the following interview excerpt:

"If I tell him to take a spoon, if he doesn't know I'm standing, 'this is called a spoon' until he finally understood" (Alda).

Noni, in overcoming obstacles where her child is often fussy and sometimes hurts herself, said that she would seduce and hug her child.

"When she was crying, as a parent, it was a pity. After that, we hugged her, seduced her, held her, and then she's calm down" (Noni).

Participant Putri, in overcoming obstacles to raising her child, consulted with doctors regarding the obstacles he experienced, as seen in the following interview excerpts:

"all this time, I often consult with Doctor Maria" (Alda).

Wulan, in overcoming parenting obstacles, said that she would have a big heart and adapt to her child's abilities:

"Just a big heart, like it or not, because if we force him, he can't, so I have just to give in slowly" (Wulan)

Then Paul, in overcoming the obstacles of raising his child, Paul said he was helped by his other children, as seen in the following interview excerpt:

"he has a younger brother who is in grade one elementary school, slowly he can follow his younger sibling....helped in communication, craftsmanship also"(Paulus).

Theme 2 Appreciation

a. Achievement

The achievements of the participants' children were almost the same, where their children could help with household chores such as washing dishes, cleaning the house, and feeding pets. In her interview, Dian said:

"I appreciate it like this. Every time after she eats, she always washes the dishes even though I don't ask her to... spilt food or drink he will find something to clean it up"(Dian).

Wulan said that her child could help wash the dishes, sweep the house and feed the pets. Wulan says:

"He can wash dishes... he picks up a broom he knows if the house isn't clean, he can tidy it up...then if his brother too late to feed these dogs he goes to get the food he takes the frying pan he goes to share all the food"(Wulan).

The participants in this study appreciated their children's achievements verbally and non-verbally. The participants will give appreciation in the form of praise and hugs. This is a characteristic of parents who apply authoritative parenting. Participants said they would compliment and give hugs when their child achieved an achievement.

"That's great, applause, that's smart, Andin is beautiful, come here and hug mom"(Dian).

b. Failure

Participants in this study explained their responses to the failures experienced by their children. The participants will calm, accompany, and train their children, not force their abilities, and always try to do what is good for their children. Dian said she would calm down and help her daughter if she failed to achieve:

"I will still give compliments, for example 'it's okay' and then do it together, I mean help her to do it"(Dian).

In the interview, Noni explained that she would accept the failure experienced by her daughter and still try her best for her child. Noni says:

"as a parent, whatever the situation must be accepted... but as parents, we keep trying"(Noni).

Theme 3 Parent and Child Communication

a. Parent and Child Activities

Participants explained that they often do various activities with their children, such as playing, cooking, washing dishes, studying, looking for fodder, and praying together. Dian said that she accompanied her child to play while studying.

"Playing, cooking, learning while playing"(Dian).

Then, Paul and his son's activity was to accompany their children to learn to read, write, and pray together. He said:

"at night, we also often teach him to read, write, then also do count...we also pray" (interview, Paulus)".

b. Problems Experienced by Children

Every child must experience various things that cause problems or obstacles for him. Some children tell stories when they experience problems, while some do not tell stories when they experience problems. In her interview, Dian said that her daughter would tell her when she felt pain in a part of her body.

"When she feels pain, she will say it hurts in a certain part that she feel pain"(Dian).

In her interview, Wulan said that her child would tell stories when his friend beat him at school.

"He told me it looked like someone was hitting him"(Wulan).

c. Response to the Problems Experienced by Children

In responding to the problems experienced by their children, parents respond by paying attention by listening, asking their children, giving advice, and also giving their children a warm hug to provide comfort.

"I asked 'where does it hurt?' then he would point to the part that hurt...then I rubbed and hugged her (Dian)".

Paul he will respond by giving advice to his son, he says that:

"Usually if he have a fight with his friend, I tell him like this, you can't fight with friends, you can't take friends' book, you can't disturb friends, you can't throw stones at friends" (Paulus).

Theme 4 Disciplining

a. Agreed Rules

Rules are one way for parents to discipline their children so they can behave properly. When raising children with special needs, parents set various rules. Dian made rules, namely before and after sleeping. Her daughter had to pray, brush her teeth, and have breakfast before going to school.

"Every time she wants to go to sleep, after going to sleep she must pray, every time he wants to eat he prays that's for sure... every time she takes a shower she has to brush her teeth... every morning she has to do it for sure, she has to have breakfast, it's a must"(Dian).

Then Wulan made a rule by forbidding her children to play with cellphones before bed, brush their teeth, and wash their hands before bed. She said:

"Before sleep, I say that the cellphone must be far away, you can't take it to sleep. So before going to bed, wash your hands, brush your teeth, after that sleep, you can't hold your cell phone"(Wulan).

b. Response to Violation of Rule

The response given by parents to violations committed by children consists of several responses. Noni and Dian have the same way of responding when their child violates the rules that have been made. They say that when their child violates the rules, they will advise and direct them to follow them. In her interview, Dian said:

"I have never given a punishment if he disobeys. I remind her to pray tomorrow, have breakfast tomorrow, brush your teeth when you shower"(Dian).

In contrast to Alda, Wulan and Paulus said that when their children violated the rules that had been made, they would scold, pinch, and beat them. This is one of the characteristics of parents who apply authoritative parenting, where parents are rude to their children. Alda, in the interview, said:

"I hit...I pinched him"(Alda).

"I'm angry, I also give sanctions to him, so he knows it's also necessary to be harsh with him.... sometimes I hit... I grumble too (Interview, Wulan)".

c. Control

The participants explained that for their children to comply with the rules that had been agreed upon, they exercise control in several ways, including by accompanying and reminding their children and always supervising and

monitoring their children to comply with the existing rules. In her interview, Dian said:

"I still accompany, and I always remind"(Dian).

Then Noni said that she would often check and monitor her child so that she would not go anywhere without telling, as can be seen in the following interview excerpt:

"Every time, maybe five or ten minutes, I pay attention... that's why I pay intermittently... I often remind Nadin not to go out far, not to go for walks, just stay at home with mom (interview, Noni)".

Discussion

Participants in this study said that the parenting process in daily life has a problem. Participants revealed that the obstacles experienced were that their children had difficulty socializing and communicating, had difficulty processing the information received, got angry easily when their wishes were not followed and sometimes hurt themselves, children who were not yet independent and still had negative views from the environment. Research conducted by Rosmawati (2019) found that the community's social perception of children with special needs shows a fairly good social perception. The community accepts the existence of children with special needs and knows about children with special needs. The results of this study differ from the findings of this study, where participants still receive negative views from the surrounding environment. Widhiati, Malihah, and Sardin (2022) in their research also found that there is still a negative stigma given to children with special needs in the form of ridicule and ostracism. Social support is very influential on children with special needs in making these children not feel different from other children in general.

Despite the many obstacles experienced in parenting, the participants always made various efforts to overcome that problem. Previous research found that there are still parents who do not take care of their children properly, whereas there are children with special needs who do not receive proper education, are not cared for like other children and are neglected (Maisarah, Saleh & Husna, 2018). This research is different from the results of research conducted by researchers where, despite the many obstacles in caring for children with special needs, the participants did not just give up, but rather they accepted their child's situation, tried to overcome existing obstacles, always helped and accompanied their child, giving warmth with hugs. Previous research explained that accompaniment accompanied by

compassion, instilling empathy, attention, and tolerance resulted in changes in the behaviour of children with special needs, especially for those who were difficult to control (Nurvitasari, Azizah & Sunarno, 2018).

Participants also said that they were helped by the presence of other children (siblings). This is supported by research conducted by Sholikhah and Satiningsih (2021), where they said that he said that having more than one child helped participants in parenting and caring for children with special needs, where they needed more attention and supervision. Participants also said that in overcoming parenting obstacles, the participants decided not to work. Participants said that if both parents worked, their children would be neglected because of the lack of attention from parents because they were busy working. Therefore, the participants decided not to work to focus more on raising their children. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Siswati (2020), who said that some women decided to stop working because they were afraid of losing valuable time to observe their development and raise their children.

Participants in this study said their children had simple feats, such as helping with household chores, namely sweeping, washing dishes, and feeding pets. Responding to their children's achievements, the participants showed their appreciation by giving praise and hugs. The responses given by the participants are characteristic of parents who apply authoritative/democratic parenting. Previous research found that parents who apply democratic parenting have consistent characteristics of giving rewards to their children (autistic children) in the form of words of praise and hugs when their children perform achievements, such as carrying out instructions given by their parents (Nitya, 2018). The response given by the parents is positive, which is much needed in achieving achievement, and the child will feel supported and valued. Research conducted by Sari and Susilawati (2020) states that family support has an important role and influence on every child's success, especially families with children with special needs who must receive more attention and support than children in general.

However, in addition to the achievements achieved, children with special needs sometimes experience failures. Responding to this, parents said that what they did was to understand, support, and continue to accompany their children patiently. The positive response given by parents in caring for their children is very necessary; this is beneficial for the growth and development of children, who will feel cared for and supported by their

parents. Previous research conducted by Rahayu (2018) said that parents who want their children to be able to achieve an achievement should be able to make a positive contribution and not be indifferent to their children's deficiencies. Parents must always guide and foster children at all times so that children feel safe, happy, and loved. Haryana (2022), in his research, also said that support from parents for children with special needs is very important because it plays an important role in the learning process and improving children's achievement.

Through communication, parents interact by carrying out activities with their children. Participants in this study explained that the activities that participants and their children often carried out varied, including studying, playing, cooking, washing dishes, looking for pet food, and praying together. Through the activities carried out by parents and children, it is hoped that parents can become friends with their children so that they have a sense of comfort and trust in their parents. Research conducted by Aprianti, Hairunnisa, and Arsyad (2022) says that parents who treat children as friends will make children feel comfortable and open to parents. This feeling of comfort and trust in parents is the foundation for children to want to tell their parents when they experience an obstacle or problem.

As was done by the children of some of the participants, namely their children told stories when they were having problems. The problems experienced by the children of the participants included telling stories when they felt sick and also telling their parents when a friend hit them at school. In responding to this, parents pay attention by listening, asking for further problems experienced by children, then giving gentle strokes, hugging, and giving advice to their children. What the participants did is characteristic of parents who apply authoritative parenting, which gives opportunities, listens to children's explanations, and gives advice when children make mistakes (Baumrind in Santrock, 2010). Ruliati (2020), in her research, said that interactions developed by parents are characterized by care, approval and positive feelings of parents towards children. This support will make children feel comfortable in the presence of parents, and they feel accepted and recognized as individuals. One of the characteristics of authoritative parenting is that communication between parents and children is established in two directions, where parents and children share information.

Participants in this study said that in raising their children, the participants applied rules in everyday life. Some rules include praying before and after going to sleep, limiting time for playing mobile phones, washing hands, brushing teeth and feet before bed, asking

permission before going to a friend's house, then sleeping and getting up on time. The participants hoped that by enacting these rules, their children would become disciplined even though it took extra effort and time compared to most parents with children. Research conducted by Nitya (2018) says that the goal of parents is to apply rules so that their children learn discipline and behave according to the norms that exist in society, for example, bathing, eating, defecating and urinating, which are related to activities in everyday life.

Some participants did not apply rules and controls in raising their children, arguing that they would be useless if the rules were made. Participants thought that their children would not understand the rules that were made. This is a characteristic of parents who apply indulgent/permissive parenting, where parents are weak in setting rules, controlling their children, and following their children's wishes. Previous research conducted by Friza (2020) said that permissive parenting is a parenting style for children that gives full control to the child, but very few or almost no rules are applied at home. This parenting style will make children impose their wishes and experience emotional outbursts if they are not complied with, such as crying while screaming and even hitting people around them (Fadhilah, Aisyah & Karyawati, 2021).

Participants said that it was not uncommon for their children to break the rules that had been made. In responding to this, the participants gave several responses, as stated by the participants, that they would advise, teach, supervise, and accompany their children patiently, without using violence either verbally or non-verbally. There were also several participants dealing with the behaviour of violating the rules committed by their children, including parents who would be emotional and angry, leading to parents pinching, hitting, nagging and scolding their children. This is an act of verbal and non-verbal violence committed by parents. Research conducted by Kurniasari (2015) said that parents or teachers who have treated acts of physical or emotional violence against children will cause physical injuries and trauma to children. The method used by the participants is a characteristic of parents who apply an authoritarian parenting style. Previous research said that parents who apply authoritarian parenting have the characteristics of being rude and applying both physical and non-physical punishments when children make mistakes (Baumrind in Santrock, 2010).

The participants did so so that their children obeyed the agreed-upon rules. The participants controlled their children by accompanying and explaining the rules that had to be followed, then monitoring and always approaching their children to carry out the agreed

rules. This is a characteristic of parents who apply authoritative parenting. Previous research conducted by Munaroh (2020) said that one of the characteristics of authoritative/democratic parenting is that parents encourage children to be independent and have freedom but are still under parental control.

From the discussion above, it can be understood that the parenting style adopted by students' parents at Tenda Ruteng State SLB is mixed, namely authoritative-indulgent and authoritative-authoritarian parenting.

Conclusion

Participants in this study experienced obstacles in raising children with special needs in their daily lives, such as a lack of social and communication skills. These obstacles do not make them give up on raising their children, but they try to overcome existing obstacles. From the efforts they put in, their children also made achievements in daily life, but sometimes they failed to make achievements. However, parents still appreciated, accompanied, and cared for their children. The relationship between parents and children is intertwined in daily life. Therefore, children will tell stories when experiencing a problem, and parents always respond by giving gentle strokes, hugging, listening, and giving advice to their children. In disciplining their children, participants apply rules and controls to regulate their children's behaviour following applicable norms. However, some participants did not apply rules and controls in raising their children. Sometimes, their children violate the rules that have been agreed upon. In response, the participants respond by advising, teaching, supervising, and accompanying their children patiently, without committing verbal or non-verbal violence. Several participants faced the behaviour of violating the rules by their children. Their parents were emotional and angry, which ended with pinching, hitting, nagging and scolding their children.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the parenting style adopted by students' parents at Tenda Ruteng State SLB is a mixed parenting style, with authoritative-indulgent and authoritative-authoritarian parenting styles.

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