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Empowerment of Muslim Family Education and Parental Resilience Towards Children with Special Needs at the "Purworejo Kita Semua" Foundation

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the empowerment of family education grounded in Islamic values to enhance the resilience of parents of children with special needs at the "Purworejo Kita Semua" Foundation (*Yayasan Purworejo Kita Semua* [YPKS]) in Purworejo Regency. The study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. The research subjects included the foundation's teachers and administrators as well as parents of children with special needs. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, and were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study focuses on three main aspects: the conditions of parents of children with special needs, the forms of family education empowerment implemented by the foundation, and the impact of these interventions on parental resilience. The findings show that the parents' initial conditions were marked by emotional stress, social stigma, and difficulties in parenting. The empowerment programs implemented by the foundation included an Islamic parenting program, JURASIK (*Jum'at Berbagi itu Asyik* / Friday Sharing is Fun) activities, Islamic spiritual activities, and lifelong healthy exercise programs integrating

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educational, social, and spiritual aspects. The impact of these programs is reflected in increased parental acceptance of their children's conditions, stronger emotional resilience, greater optimism regarding their children's future, and improved spiritual well-being. This study concludes that family education empowerment grounded in Islamic values can strengthen parental resilience through a comprehensive and sustainable approach, and it contributes practical insight into the development of supportive interventions for families of children with special needs.

Keywords: Children With Special Needs; Family Education Empowerment; Islamic Parenting; Islamic Values; Parental Resilience

INTRODUCTION

Children are a gift from the family, the next generation and a source of happiness for their parents. They are expected to grow optimally physically, psychologically, and socially. However, not all children are born as expected; some experience developmental challenges and require special education and care. They are known as children with special needs (ABK), namely children with physical, mental, intellectual, social, or emotional limitations who require a different approach than that of ordinary children (Bahari et al., 2025). The presence of a child with special needs creates complex dynamics for families, with psychological, social, and economic challenges. Parents act as primary caregivers and companions, managing the child's therapy, education, and development, often causing significant emotional distress due to discrepancies with initial expectations (Idhartono & Hidayati, 2024).

Resilience is an important concept in the study of family psychology, referring to an individual's ability to survive, adapt, and bounce back in the face of difficult situations or life pressures (Maisyaroh et al., 2026). In families with children with special needs, resilience is not only about emotional resilience but also about parents' ability to manage stress, adapt to the child's condition, and maintain a positive parenting role. Parental resilience is a key factor in determining the quality of parenting and the success of a child's development, as parents with strong psychological resilience tend to be better able to provide optimal support for children with special needs (Amelasasih, 2018a).

In practice, the resilience of parents of children with special needs is influenced by both internal and external factors. One of the most dominant factors is social support,

whether from family, partners, or the community. Social support has been shown to play a significant role in helping parents reduce emotional distress and improve their ability to cope with parenting challenges. Research shows that parents who receive strong social support tend to have higher resilience than those who face the situation alone (Rukmana & Mariyati, 2024). In addition, a community with similar experiences can be a source of emotional strength for parents, as they can share experiences and strategies to deal with various difficulties.

Another factor influencing resilience is coping skills, which are individual strategies for managing stress and pressure. Parents of children with special needs are required to have adaptive coping skills to face various parenting challenges more effectively. Positive coping strategies, such as seeking social support, increasing knowledge about the child's condition, and developing an optimistic mindset, have been shown to help parents build greater psychological resilience (Idhartono & Hidayati, 2024). On the other hand, negative coping strategies can worsen the psychological condition of parents and hinder the process of adapting to the child's condition.

In addition to social support and coping, religiosity also plays a significant role in shaping parental resilience, particularly in the context of Muslim families. Spiritual values such as patience, sincerity, and trust in God can be a source of inner strength that helps parents make sense of the experience of raising children with special needs. Research shows that religiosity reduces parenting stress and increases parental emotional resilience by fostering positive meaning-making in the face of life's challenges (Dwinanaita, 2024). The resilience of parents of children with special needs results from the interaction of various factors, including social support, coping strategies, and the strengthening of spiritual values , which complement each other in building family resilience.

Family education in Islam is the process of fostering parents as primary educators to shape a child's personality, morals, and overall development. The family, as the primary educational environment, instills values of faith, morals, and character from an early age, moving beyond physical needs to focus on good morals and closeness to God. This education encompasses cognitive, spiritual, and emotional aspects (Dwinandita, 2024). In families with children with special needs, the role of parents as primary educators is even more crucial, requiring intensive and adaptive support. In addition to caregivers, parents must understand their child's condition and adapt their educational methods accordingly.

Islam emphasizes that every child is a trust to be raised responsibly, without physical or mental discrimination, so parents need patience, diligence, and a strong commitment (Islam, 2015).

Islamic values such as patience, trust in God, and gratitude are the foundation of parenting children with special needs. Patience supports calm in the face of challenges; trust in God's will through effort; and gratitude maintains a positive outlook and reduces despair. Research shows these values strengthen family resilience and parents' adaptation to the pressures of parenting (Marqomah & Ichsan, 2023; Munawaroh & Ichsan, 2024; Umami & Ichsan, 2024). Family empowerment is a systematic process that increases individuals' and families' capacity to manage their potential and face challenges independently. In education, this includes improving parents' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and confidence in parenting—especially for families of children with special needs who face complex educational, social, and psychological challenges. Research shows that this intervention increases understanding of children's needs and family resilience to stress (Tetlow et al., 2024). The main goal of family empowerment is to increase the capacity of parents to support the development of children with special needs (*Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus*/ABK) while encouraging independence in facing challenges, through activities such as parenting education, the formation of support communities, and social interactions to share experiences—which not only provide practical knowledge but also strengthen psychological support; research shows that this involvement increases self-confidence, coping skills, and family resilience.

The Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation (*Yayasan Purworejo Kita Semua*/YPKS), a non-profit organization located on Jalan Tentara Pelajar, Kledungkradenan Village, Banyuurip District, Purworejo Regency, focuses on inclusive education and community empowerment to improve the quality of human resources. Through the Puja Kesuma Community Learning Center (PKBM), the foundation provides non-formal equivalency education and skills development, along with social activities such as educational seminars, character building, and religious services. Field observations on February 11, 2026, demonstrated active engagement with parents of children with special needs through parenting, religious study groups, and participatory activities, which not only educate but also build a comprehensive social support ecosystem for families.

The presence of a child with special needs brings changes in parenting and complex psychological dynamics for parents. In the early stages, they often experience shock, sadness, confusion, and even denial of the diagnosis due to the gap between expectations and reality. Research shows high psychological distress, characterized by negative emotions and difficulties adapting (Maisyaroh et al., 2026). Based on an interview with Subject VP, parents of children with special needs (ABK) experience strong emotional reactions such as deep sadness, crying, and shock when they first learn about their child's condition, accompanied by daily parenting challenges in the form of difficulty understanding their child's needs, limited communication, and different behaviors that cause ongoing stress—especially if there is a lack of knowledge and skills—plus social pressure from societal stigma that makes some parents feel ashamed and hide their children from the environment, as revealed by Subject DF (interviews with parents of children with special needs and foundation managers, 2026).

This finding is in line with research, which states that social stigma and lack of public understanding of children with special needs can increase the psychological burden on parents and affect the overall well-being of the family (Rukmana & Mariyati, 2024). Thus, the condition of parents of children with special needs is influenced not only by internal family factors but also by external factors such as social support and the surrounding environment. Given these conditions, YPKS is an interesting case for study because it serves not only as an educational institution for children with special needs but also as a space for family empowerment that integrates educational, social, and spiritual aspects in a holistic program. Observations show that parents not only play a passive role as companions but are also actively involved in various activities to enhance their capacity to accompany their children, reflecting a practical and sustainable empowerment approach. This research is increasingly important because there are still limited specific studies on the educational empowerment of Muslim families in the context of community-based institutions, even though field findings reveal the great potential of an approach that integrates spiritual values with social and educational support to build the psychological resilience of parents, so that a deeper understanding of integrated empowerment practices is needed to develop a more contextual and Islamic-based mentoring model.

Various previous studies have examined the psychological well-being and resilience of parents of children with special needs. Most studies have focused on emotional distress, parenting stress, and the coping strategies parents use when dealing with the condition of

children with special needs. Furthermore, several studies have highlighted the importance of social support and the role of the environment in enhancing parental psychological resilience. These findings indicate that parental resilience is a crucial factor in supporting the success of parenting children with special needs (Amelasasih, 2016b).

Although existing studies tend to limit resilience to psychological and social perspectives alone without comprehensive integration of Islamic values-based family education approaches—which are crucial in a religious society like Indonesia for shaping family perspectives, attitudes, and coping strategies—research on family empowerment as a systematic approach that combines education, social support, and spiritual strengthening is still limited, especially in the context of community-based educational institutions such as foundations that interact directly with parents of children with special needs and have the potential to provide ongoing support through integrated programs. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the educational empowerment of Muslim families at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation to increase the resilience of parents of children with special needs, by describing the conditions of these parents, identifying the forms of empowerment implemented by the foundation, and analyzing its impact on their psychological resilience in raising children. The problem formulation also focuses on three main aspects: the conditions of parents in the foundation, the forms of family educational empowerment, and the impact of the program on parental resilience, to guide research on this phenomenon.

METHODS

The researchers in this study used a descriptive, qualitative, naturalistic approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of empowering family education grounded in Islamic values to increase the resilience of parents of children with special needs. Qualitative research was chosen because it allows researchers to holistically explore the meanings, experiences, and social dynamics experienced by the subjects in a natural context. The method used was field research, so data were obtained directly through the researchers' involvement at the research location.

The research was conducted at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation (*Yayasan Purworejo Kita Semua*/YPKS), located on Jalan Tentara Pelajar, Kledungkradenan Village, Banyuurip District, Purworejo Regency. The location was selected based on the

foundation's family education empowerment program, which actively involves parents of children with special needs through various educational, social, and spiritual activities. This location was deemed relevant to the research focus because it provides a representative context for examining family empowerment practices based on Islamic values. The research subjects consisted of teachers or foundation administrators and parents of children with special needs involved in the family empowerment program at YPKS. Subjects were selected purposively, based on their direct involvement and understanding of the phenomenon under study. The object of this research was Islamic-based family education empowerment and its impact on the resilience of parents of children with special needs.

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were used to gather information directly from informants regarding the parents' conditions, the types of empowerment programs, and their impact on resilience. Observations were conducted to observe activities and interactions during the implementation of empowerment programs within the foundation. At the same time, documentation served as supporting data in the form of photographs, activity archives, and other relevant documents. These three techniques were used in a triangulation approach to obtain more comprehensive and accurate data (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Sugiyono, 2017a).

The data analysis in this study used the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on data relevant to the research focus. The data was then presented in a descriptive narrative format for easy understanding and analysis. Conclusions were then drawn based on patterns, themes, and relationships between findings that emerged in the field (Adiyaksa & Hastaning, 2016; Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Rukin, 2019; Sugiyono, 2017a). To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation and member checking techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing data across sources and data collection techniques. In contrast, member checking involved reconfirming interview results with informants to ensure the researcher's interpretation aligned with their intent. Through these techniques, the data obtained is expected to be highly credible and scientifically accountable (Nasution, 2023; Sugiyono, 2017b).

RESULTS

Conditions of Parents of Children with Special Needs

The presence of a child with special needs in a family often brings significant changes to the parents' psychological well-being. Parents not only face challenges in parenting but also experience complex emotional stress, especially in the initial phase of learning about their child's condition. According to research on the resilience of parents of children with special needs, common initial reactions include shock, sadness, disappointment, and even rejection of their child's condition (Amelasasih, 2018b). This condition arises from a mismatch between parents' expectations of their children and the realities they face.

Furthermore, parents of children with special needs are also susceptible to higher levels of parenting stress compared to parents in general. It is due to more complex parenting demands, such as communication difficulties, the need for therapy, and child behavior that requires special attention. Other research shows that parental psychological stress stems not only from internal factors but is also influenced by external factors such as social stigma and lack of environmental support (Rukmana & Mariyati, 2024). Thus, the condition of parents of children with special needs can be understood as a situation that requires high levels of adaptability and adequate support.

Based on the results of the interview with Subject O1, it was found that when the informant first learned about his child's condition, he experienced a very strong emotional reaction in the form of deep sadness, crying, and feelings of shock because he never imagined he would face this condition in his life (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). This finding indicates that parents experience significant emotional stress in the initial stages of accepting their child's condition.

Furthermore, based on the results of interviews with Subject G1, information was obtained that in the initial stages, some parents felt ashamed of having a child with special needs, and some even chose to hide their children from their social environment (interview with the foundation manager, 2026). It indicates the existence of social pressure and environmental stigma that also influence the psychological condition of parents in accepting the presence of a child with special needs. In addition, based on the results of interviews with Subject O3, it was found that the process of accompanying children with special needs requires a high level of readiness because parents must provide intensive

attention almost all the time, which ultimately causes physical and emotional exhaustion in carrying out care (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). This finding shows that caring for children with special needs requires greater energy, patience, and resilience than caring for children in general.

Based on the author's observations regarding parental interactions during activities at the foundation on the date of the observation, parents were seen actively accompanying their children. Still, some also showed signs of fatigue and heightened vigilance in monitoring their children's behavior. Furthermore, the researcher observed interactions among parents who shared experiences of the difficulties of accompanying children with special needs.

Based on interview and observation data, the conditions of parents of children with special needs at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation demonstrate complex psychological dynamics. Emotional reactions such as shock, sadness, and feelings of unpreparedness experienced by parents in the early stages indicate that accepting their child's condition is a challenging process (Andreyko, 2016). This finding aligns with research suggesting that parents of children with special needs tend to experience a difficult emotional phase before reaching the acceptance stage.

Furthermore, the social stigma that causes parents to feel ashamed and even hide their children indicates that environmental factors have a significant influence on parents' psychological well-being. It reinforces previous research findings that a lack of public understanding of children with special needs can increase the family's psychological burden (Ahmad et al., 2026). Furthermore, the high demands of parenting can leave parents physically and emotionally exhausted. This situation indicates that caring for children with special needs requires readiness that extends beyond emotional preparedness to include physical and social aspects (Phillips, 2023). Therefore, the parents' condition in this study can be understood as a situation that requires comprehensive support from the family, the social environment, and educational institutions.

Muslim Family Education Empowerment Program

Family empowerment is a crucial strategy for supporting the educational success of children with special needs. In raising children with special needs, families, especially parents, play a crucial role, as children spend most of their time with them. Therefore, the success of the educational process is not solely determined by school-based learning

activities but is also greatly influenced by parental involvement in supporting their children at home. In this regard, the YPKS strives to develop programs that empower parents to acquire the knowledge, skills, and emotional resilience to support children with special needs.

The research results show that family education empowerment at YPKS is carried out through various activities that integrate educational, social, and spiritual aspects. The approach not only focuses on improving parents' understanding of their children's conditions but also emphasizes strengthening Islamic values as a foundation for parenting. Through this approach, it is hoped that parents will be able to fulfill their parenting role with greater patience, sincerity, and optimism in facing the various challenges that arise.

1. Islamic Parenting Program

One form of family empowerment implemented at the foundation is the Islamic parenting program. This activity aims to provide parents with an understanding of appropriate parenting styles for children with special needs, linking them to Islamic values. In this activity, parents are provided with materials on various parenting strategies, including how to manage tantrums, build effective communication with children, and support their children's emotional development and independence.

Parenting programs are a form of family empowerment aimed at increasing parents' capacity to support their children's development. In the context of family education, parenting serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as an effort to develop effective parenting attitudes and skills. Research on family empowerment shows that parenting programs can increase parents' understanding of their children's needs and help them manage parenting stress more adaptively (Tahseen et al., 2026).

From an Islamic educational perspective, parenting is not only oriented towards the technical aspects of parenting, but also emphasizes spiritual values such as patience, sincerity, and responsibility in educating children as a trust. Islamic-based family education teaches that parents have a primary role as educators, guiding their children with a compassionate approach and leading by example (Abubakar et al., 2023). Thus, Islamic parenting programs are a form of empowerment that not only improves parenting skills but also strengthens parents' spiritual resilience.

Based on an interview with Subject G1, the foundation provides parents with education on how to handle children with special needs, including strategies for dealing

with tantrums and communication difficulties (interview with the foundation manager, 2026). This finding indicates that the Islamic parenting program functions as an educational tool in increasing parents' understanding regarding patterns of support for children with special needs. Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with Subject O1, it was discovered that after participating in parenting activities, the informant felt they had a better understanding of how to deal with children and no longer panicked easily when faced with difficult situations in parenting, as they had previously experienced (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates that the parenting program increases parents' understanding, readiness, and confidence in accompanying children with special needs.

Based on the author's observations on the date of the observation, the activities included delivering materials to parents, discussing parenting patterns for children with special needs, and linking these practices to Islamic values. During these activities, parents were seen actively following the material, taking notes, and discussing their experiences in supporting their children. Based on interview and observation data, the Islamic parenting program implemented at YPKS plays a significant role in increasing the capacity of parents to support children with special needs. This program not only provides practical knowledge of parenting techniques but also helps parents better understand their children's conditions.

These findings align with research showing that parenting programs can improve parents' competency in facing various parenting challenges, particularly in families with children with special needs. Furthermore, integrating Islamic values into parenting activities also strengthens parents' spirituality, enabling them to better cope with their children's conditions with patience and sincerity (Akbar & Hidayati, 2025). Through Islamic parenting activities, parents not only gain knowledge but also experience changes in their thinking and attitudes toward their children's conditions. It demonstrates that Islamic parenting programs are an effective form of family empowerment because they integrate educational and spiritual aspects into a single, ongoing activity.

2. Formation of the Parents' Association Community

In addition to the parenting program, the YPKS also established a parent-teacher community that serves as a forum for parents to share experiences and offer emotional support. This community is crucial because parents of children with special needs often experience feelings of loneliness or a lack of understanding. Community-based activities are

a form of family empowerment that serves to strengthen social support among family members. In the context of families with children with special needs, social support is a crucial factor in helping parents reduce psychological distress and improve their ability to adapt to their child's condition. Research shows that involvement in a community of like-minded individuals can provide emotional benefits, such as a sense of acceptance, understanding, and belonging, when facing parenting challenges (Rukmana & Mariyati, 2024).

Community sharing activities can also serve as an informal learning platform for parents. Through sharing experiences, parents can acquire more effective coping strategies and develop a more positive perspective on their child's condition. From a family education perspective, social activities like this are considered a form of community-based empowerment that emphasizes collaboration, empathy, and solidarity among family members (Faatinisa et al., 2024). Therefore, activities like JURASIK (*Jum'at Berbagi itu Asyik*/Friday Sharing is Fun) have great potential to strengthen the emotional resilience of parents of children with special needs.

Based on the results of the interview with Subject O3, it was found that JURASIK activities provide a space for parents to share stories and experiences with other parents of children with special needs, so that they feel more relieved and emotionally helped in facing various parenting challenges (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). This finding indicates that JURASIK activities help reduce parents' emotional burden by fostering the sharing of experiences within a supportive community. In addition, based on the interview with Subject G1, it was found that JURASIK activities also encourage the creation of social support among parents, so that they do not feel alone in facing the challenges of children with special needs (interview with the foundation manager, 2026). It confirms that JURASIK activities serve to strengthen social support for parents through interaction and community solidarity.

Based on the author's observations of JURASIK activities on the date of the observation, the activities were carried out in a relaxed, togetherness atmosphere. Parents were seen interacting with each other, sharing stories, and providing support. Furthermore, these activities also involved sharing activities that fostered empathy and social awareness among community members. Based on interviews and observations, the JURASIK activities implemented at YPKS serve as an important social support platform for parents

of children with special needs. Through these activities, parents have a space to express their feelings, share experiences, and receive emotional support from other individuals with similar conditions.

These findings align with research suggesting that community social support plays a significant role in increasing the resilience of parents of children with special needs. This support can help individuals reduce stress, increase self-confidence, and develop more adaptive coping strategies (Dey & Amponsah, 2020). Furthermore, the JURASIK activity demonstrates that family empowerment can be achieved not only through educational approaches but also through community-based social approaches. The interaction between parents in this activity creates a supportive environment in which they can learn from and strengthen one another. It is crucial because one of the main factors in building resilience is ongoing social support.

3. Islamic Spiritual Activities

The family empowerment program at YPKS also includes Islamic spiritual activities, such as religious study, collective *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and *tahlil* (Islamic recitation). These activities aim to strengthen parents' spirituality and to provide inner peace as they face the various challenges of raising children with special needs. Spiritual activities within the family are a form of empowerment that strengthens individual spiritual resilience. In families with children with special needs, spirituality is a crucial factor in helping parents make sense of their life experiences. Religiosity serves not only as a form of worship but also as a coping mechanism that helps individuals manage stress and emotional distress. Research shows that individuals with high levels of religiosity tend to be better able to cope with life's difficulties and demonstrate greater resilience (Dolcos et al., 2021).

From an Islamic perspective, values such as patience, trust in God, and gratitude are the main foundations for facing life's trials. Islamic-based family education emphasizes that every situation is part of God's will and must be lived with full faith and sincerity. Therefore, spiritual activities such as religious study, dhikr, and communal prayer serve not only as acts of worship but also as a means of mental and spiritual strengthening for parents in facing the various challenges of raising children with special needs (Maisyaroh et al., 2026).

Based on the interview with Subject G1, the foundation held joint religious study and dhikr activities to help parents draw closer to God and strengthen their spiritual resilience in dealing with the challenges of children with special needs (interview with the foundation manager, 2026). This finding indicates that spiritual activities are intended to strengthen parents' spiritual aspects in facing various parenting challenges. In addition, based on the results of the interview with Subject O3, it was discovered that when experiencing fatigue or sadness in accompanying children, the informant tended to calm themselves through prayer and draw closer to God, which was felt to be able to provide inner peace and emotional strength (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates that religiosity is a source of calm and a spiritual coping mechanism for parents in dealing with the pressures of parenting.

Based on the author's observations on the date of the observation, the activities consisted of religious study and dhikr (remembrance) together, attended by parents and foundation administrators. The atmosphere during these activities was solemn and serene. Parents appeared to take the activities seriously and showed calmer expressions afterward. Based on interviews and observations, the Islamic spiritual activities conducted at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation play a significant role in strengthening the spiritual resilience of parents of children with special needs. These activities not only provide religious understanding but also help parents construct positive meanings for the conditions they face. These findings align with research suggesting that religiosity can be a source of strength in increasing individual resilience, especially in the face of significant life pressures. Spiritual values such as patience and trust in God help individuals manage their emotions and develop an optimistic attitude toward life (Akhtar, 2024).

Furthermore, spiritual activities also serve as a coping mechanism that helps parents reduce parenting stress. By drawing closer to God, parents can gain inner peace, which improves their ability to face various parenting challenges. It demonstrates that the spiritual aspect plays an equally important role as the educational and social aspects in the family empowerment process.

4. Community Social and Health Activities

In addition to educational and spiritual activities, the foundation also organizes various social and health activities for parents. One such activity is JURASIK (Friday Sharing Is Fun), a sharing activity involving parents, teachers, and the surrounding

community to foster a sense of togetherness and social awareness. This activity serves to strengthen relationships among members of the foundation's community while fostering empathy for others. Physical health is an important aspect in supporting individual well-being, including for parents of children with special needs. In the context of parenting, a healthy physical condition significantly influences parents' ability to fulfill their roles optimally. Research shows that physical activity, such as exercise, can help reduce stress levels, improve mood, and strengthen an individual's immune system (Idhartono & Hidayati, 2024).

Group exercise also serves a social function, strengthening relationships within a community. From a family empowerment perspective, physical activity done together can foster positive social interactions and create a supportive environment. It is important because the well-being of older adults is determined not only by their psychological and spiritual well-being but also by their physical condition that supports daily activities (Lawler-Row & Elliott, 2009). Therefore, healthy exercise activities can be understood as part of a holistic family empowerment effort.

Based on the interview with Subject G1, the foundation was found to conduct healthy exercise activities to maintain parents' physical condition, so they remain fit and do not easily experience fatigue while accompanying children with special needs (interview with the foundation manager, 2026). This finding indicates that healthy exercise activities are intended to support parents' physical readiness to carry out their parenting role optimally. In addition, based on the interview with Subject O3, it was found that participation in exercise activities provides benefits, including increased physical fitness and the opportunity to interact with and gather with other parents in a positive atmosphere (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates that healthy exercise activities not only provide physical benefits but also strengthen social interactions between parents. From the interview, it is clear that healthy exercise activities provide physical benefits and serve as a means of social interaction for parents.

Based on the author's observations on the date of the observation, the healthy exercise activities were carried out together by parents in a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere. Parents were seen actively participating in the exercise movements and interacting with each other in a friendly manner. This activity not only focused on exercise but also provided a space for parents to relieve stress from daily parenting. Based on interview and

observation results, the healthy exercise activities implemented at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation helped maintain the physical and social balance of parents of children with special needs. This activity had a positive impact on physical fitness and helped parents reduce fatigue from the demands of intensive parenting.

These findings align with research showing that physical activity can help reduce stress levels and improve an individual's mental well-being. Furthermore, exercise performed together can strengthen social relationships and create a supportive environment (Idhartono & Hidayati, 2024). Furthermore, healthy exercise activities demonstrate that family empowerment focuses not only on educational and spiritual aspects but also on physical aspects that support parents' ongoing role in caregiving. With better physical condition, parents will have more energy and be better prepared to support children with special needs.

DISCUSSION

The Impact of Family Education Empowerment on the Resilience of Parents of Children with Special Needs

Parental resilience is the ability to survive, adapt, and recover from life's various pressures, particularly when supporting children with special needs. In the family context, resilience is influenced not only by internal individual factors but also by external support such as the social environment, education, and spiritual empowerment. Research shows that structured family empowerment can improve parents' adaptive abilities, both emotionally, socially, and spiritually (RN et al., 2017). The family education empowerment program implemented at YPKS demonstrates a comprehensive approach through the integration of educational, social, and spiritual activities. This approach enables parents to gain not only knowledge but also emotional support and strengthened religious values. Research has identified several key impacts of the program on parental resilience, including increased acceptance of their child's condition, increased emotional resilience, increased optimism, and strengthened spiritual aspects.

1. Increasing Parental Acceptance of Children's Conditions

One of the most visible impacts of the family empowerment program is increased parental acceptance of children with special needs. In the early stages, some parents still

struggle to accept their child's condition. Feelings of sadness, disappointment, and guilt often arise because their initial expectations do not align with the reality they face. Parental acceptance of their child's condition is an important indicator of building family resilience. In psychology, acceptance is the stage at which individuals understand and accept conditions that do not align with initial expectations without excessive rejection. Research shows that parents who can accept their children with special needs tend to have lower stress levels and better adaptability in fulfilling their parenting roles (Amelasasih, 2018a).

The acceptance process does not occur instantly; rather, it involves emotional stages of sadness, rejection, and ultimately acceptance. Adequate social support and education are crucial factors in helping parents reach this stage of acceptance. Thus, increased parental acceptance can be understood as the result of an adaptation process influenced by various factors, including family empowerment programs.

Based on interviews with Subject G1, it was found that after participating in various empowerment programs at the foundation, parents showed increased confidence in accompanying children with special needs. They no longer hide their children from their social environment and have even begun to take pride in the development their children have achieved (interview with foundation administrators, 2026). This finding indicates a change in parental attitudes, from previously being closed to being more open in accepting their children's condition. Furthermore, based on the results of interviews with Subject O1, it was discovered that the informant had experienced a process of better acceptance of their child's condition. While previously felt like a heavy burden, now the informant is more focused on efforts to support optimal child development (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates a shift in the parents' mindset from rejection to a more positive, constructive acceptance of their child's condition.

Based on the author's observations of parental interactions during foundation activities on the date of the observation, parents appeared more open to accompanying their children in social environments. Parents no longer displayed a closed attitude, but were actively involved in activities with their children and interacted with other parents. Based on interview and observation results, the family education empowerment program implemented at the Purworejo Kita Semua Foundation has had a positive impact on increasing parental acceptance of children with special needs. The change in attitude from previously feeling sad, embarrassed, and tending to be closed to being more open and

accepting indicates an increase in parental adaptability. These findings align with research showing that acceptance is a crucial step in building resilience in parents of children with special needs. Parents who can accept their child's condition well tend to be better able to manage stress and provide positive support for their child's development (Amelasasih, 2018a). Parental involvement in various empowerment programs, such as parenting, community, and spiritual activities, also accelerates the acceptance process. These programs provide a space for parents to understand their child's condition, share experiences, and receive emotional support from others.

2. Increasing Emotional Resilience of Parents

In addition to increasing acceptance of their child's condition, family empowerment programs also impact parents' emotional resilience. When raising children with special needs, parents often face situations that require a high level of patience and emotional control. Without adequate support, these conditions can lead to stress and emotional exhaustion. Emotional resilience is a key component of resilience, relating to an individual's ability to manage emotions, cope with stress, and remain stable in the face of difficult situations (Rice & Liu, 2016). In the context of parents of children with special needs, emotional resilience is crucial because they face various ongoing parenting challenges. Research shows that parents with high levels of emotional resilience tend to be better able to manage stress, reduce anxiety, and maintain long-term psychological well-being (Idhartono & Hidayati, 2024).

Furthermore, emotional resilience is influenced not only by internal factors but also by external support, such as the social environment and community involvement. Interacting with individuals who have similar experiences can help parents express their emotions and find more adaptive ways to cope with stress. Thus, emotional resilience can develop through social learning processes and experiences gained in a supportive environment.

Based on the interview with Subject O3, it was found that social interactions within the foundation community provide a space for parents of children with special needs to share experiences and stories with other parents. This condition made the informant feel more emotionally relieved and experienced a decrease in stress levels compared to before (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). This finding indicates that social interactions within the community help parents reduce the emotional stress they

experience. Furthermore, based on the results of the interview with Subject O1, it was obtained that the informant now shows increased patience in dealing with children and is no longer as easily angered as before, because he has a better understanding of the child's condition (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates a change in parental emotional management, marked by greater ability to regulate emotions during parenting.

Based on the author's observations regarding parental interactions during foundation activities on the date of the observation, parents appeared calmer and more able to control their emotions when accompanying their children. In some situations, parents remained patient even when their children exhibited difficult-to-control behavior. Furthermore, the interaction between parents appeared warm and supportive. Based on the interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the family education empowerment program at YPKS has had a positive impact on parents' emotional resilience for children with special needs. Parents who previously experienced high levels of emotional distress, such as stress and anxiety, showed changes, becoming calmer and better able to manage their emotions. This finding aligns with research suggesting that social support and community involvement can help individuals improve their emotional regulation skills and reduce stress levels (Iwueke et al., 2023). Interaction with other parents who have had similar experiences provides a space for individuals to express their feelings and obtain the emotional support they need.

Furthermore, involvement in empowerment programs such as parenting activities, JURASIK, and other social activities also contributes to increasing parental understanding of their child's condition. This understanding helps parents develop more adaptive emotional responses, such as increasing patience and reducing negative reactions to their child's behavior.

3. Increasing Parental Optimism for Their Children's Future

Another visible impact of the family empowerment program is increased parental optimism for their children's future. Before joining the foundation, some parents felt pessimistic about their children's development due to a lack of information about the potential of children with special needs. Optimism is a crucial aspect of resilience, relating to how individuals view the future positively despite facing various difficulties. In the context of parents of children with special needs, optimism shapes hope and motivation to

continue supporting their children's development. Research shows that individuals with high levels of optimism tend to be better able to cope with life's stresses, have more adaptive coping strategies, and demonstrate better psychological well-being (Carver & Scheier, 2017).

Furthermore, optimism is also influenced by learning experiences and environmental support. Parents who gain knowledge and observe their children's positive development tend to have a more optimistic outlook on the future. In the context of family empowerment, educational and mentoring programs can help parents build realistic expectations while increasing their belief that their children have potential that can be developed. Thus, optimism is not only an emotion but also a result of the learning process and the experiences parents undergo (Gazzi et al., 2023).

Based on interviews with Subject G1, parents reported increased optimism about their children's development after participating in the empowerment program at the foundation. Parents began to believe that children with special needs still have the potential to develop, albeit in different ways and processes than children in general (interview with foundation administrators, 2026). This finding indicates a change in parents' perspectives on their children's potential, becoming more positive. Furthermore, based on interviews with Subject O1, the informant now has more realistic expectations for their children's development. The informant no longer demands excessive achievement but rather focuses on gradual development and independence for children, according to their abilities (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). It indicates that parents have developed an optimistic attitude accompanied by more adaptive expectations regarding their children's development.

Based on the author's observations regarding parental involvement in foundation activities on the date of the observation, parents were seen actively supporting their children's activities and demonstrating greater confidence in their children's abilities. Parents also appeared to provide positive encouragement to their children during the activities. Based on interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the family education empowerment program at YPKS has increased parental optimism about the future of children with special needs. Parents who previously felt pessimistic and uncertain about their children's development now show a more positive attitude and have more realistic expectations. This finding aligns with research showing that optimism is a crucial

factor in building individual resilience. Individuals with a positive outlook on the future tend to be better able to face challenges and have stronger motivation in carrying out their roles and responsibilities (Resnick, 2018).

Furthermore, parents' involvement in various empowerment programs provides them with direct experience, helping them see their children's development in action. It contributes to building confidence that children with special needs still have potential that can be developed. This change in perspective also demonstrates a shift from unrealistic expectations to more adaptive and constructive ones.

4. Spiritual Strengthening as a Source of Resilience for Parents

One distinctive aspect of the YPKS family empowerment program is the integration of Islamic values into parenting activities. Spiritual strengthening through Koran recitation, collective dhikr (remembrance of God), and religious discussions helps parents gain deeper meaning in the experience of raising children with special needs. Spiritual strengthening is a crucial aspect in building individual resilience, particularly in the face of stressful life situations. In the context of parents of children with special needs, spirituality serves as a source of inner strength, helping individuals interpret life experiences more positively. Research shows that religiosity is significantly related to resilience, with individuals with a spiritual connection tending to be better able to manage stress and exhibiting greater psychological resilience (Akbayram & Keten, 2024).

From an Islamic perspective, values such as patience, trust in God, and gratitude are the main foundations for facing life's various trials. Family education based on Islamic values emphasizes that every situation experienced is part of God's will and must be faced with faith and sincerity. Thus, spiritual strengthening serves not only as a form of worship but also as a coping mechanism that helps individuals build inner peace and adapt to the circumstances they face (Maisyaroh et al., 2026).

Based on the interview with Subject O3, the informant reported an increase in spiritual aspects after participating in various religious activities at the foundation. It was demonstrated through more intense prayer habits and the emergence of a sincere attitude toward accepting the child's condition, based on the belief that this condition was God's will (interview with parents of children with special needs, 2026). This finding indicates an increase in spiritual attitudes characterized by greater sincerity and acceptance of the child's condition. Furthermore, based on the interview with Subject G1, it was found that the

religious activities organized by the foundation fostered a patient attitude and strengthened parents' inner resilience in facing the various challenges of raising children with special needs (interview with foundation managers, 2026). It indicates that spiritual activities help strengthen parents' inner condition and psychological resilience.

Based on the author's observations regarding spiritual activities at the foundation on the date of the observation, parents were seen participating in the religious study and dhikr activities with great sincerity. The atmosphere of the activities was solemn, providing a sense of calm to the participants. After the activities, parents appeared calmer and displayed a more positive attitude in their interactions. Based on interviews and observations, the family education empowerment program at YPKS has had a significant impact on strengthening the spirituality of parents of children with special needs. Parents showed a change in how they interpreted their children's condition, from previously seeing it as a burden to seeing it as part of life's trials that must be faced with patience and sincerity. This finding aligns with research that states that religiosity plays a role in increasing individual resilience. Spiritual values such as patience and trust in God help individuals manage emotions and develop a more positive attitude in facing life's difficulties (Alfain et al., 2023).

Furthermore, regular spiritual activities provide a space for parents to draw closer to God and attain inner peace. It demonstrates that spirituality serves not only as a supplement but also as an integral part of the family empowerment process. This spiritual strengthening also contributes to strengthening emotional and cognitive aspects, thus fostering greater resilience.

CONCLUSION

The family education empowerment program at the *Purworejo Kita Semua* Foundation has significantly increased the resilience of parents of children with special needs, initially characterized by emotional reactions such as sadness, confusion, and anxiety, as well as the challenges of intensive parenting, including social pressure and physical and emotional exhaustion. Through a holistic approach that includes Islamic parenting, community groups, spiritual activities such as religious study and dhikr (recitation of the Qur'an), and socio-health programs, this initiative provides not only practical knowledge about parenting but also emotional and social support from fellow

parents, thereby increasing acceptance of the child's condition, emotional resilience, optimism for the future, and positive spiritual meaning. These findings underscore the importance of community-based interventions and religious values in supporting parents of children with special needs, offer practical implications for developing similar programs in the context of inclusive education in Indonesia, and enrich the literature on family resilience from an Islamic perspective.

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