



## The Role of Parents in Forming The Self-Concept of Children with Special Needs when Interacting in The Community

Maria Kezia Vania  
Siti Meisyaroh

Institut Bisnis dan Informatika Kwik Kian Gie  
Jl. Yos Sudarso Kav 85 No.87, RT.9/RW.11, Sunter, Jakarta Utara,  
Kec. Tj. Priok, Jkt Utara, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta 14350,  
Indonesia

### Abstract

In essence, humans are social beings where they need each other to interact and communicate. This is also needed by children with special needs even though they have significant differences in terms of physical, psychological, cognitive and social which makes it take a longer time and process to understand something and achieve life goals. This research was conducted to determine the role of parents in forming self-concept, providing motivation, and increasing the confidence of children with special needs when interacting in the community. This research was carried out based on social interaction theory as the research basis. When humans interact there is interpersonal communication, namely communication between two or more people directly where the sender and receiver of messages can exchange messages directly. The research subjects were three mothers of children with special needs with mental retardation, namely children who have significantly below average intelligence and behavioral inability to adapt during development. This research method is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques directed interviews and documentation. Parents admit that educating them requires more patience, process, and time than children in general. The results of the research through interviews show that the role of parents is carried out in a concrete way by encouraging children to want to learn, be independent and interact with others and tell what is good and bad. So it was concluded that the role of parents is very important in forming self-concept, giving motivation and confidence to children with special needs when interacting in the community.

#### Corresponding Author:

Maria Kezia Vania

#### Email:

kasengkangkezia28@gmail.com

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings who need other people to interact, communicate and even depend on other humans. Through interaction arises the process of interpersonal communication with other humans. Instinctively social beings, humans have feelings of empathy, sympathy, tolerance, loyalty, mutual help, and mutual understanding. Humans as social beings like to interact with other humans, and cannot live alone, human potential to develop is greater when living in society. This is also what children with special needs need, to interact with others, to develop their potential, and to be treated like humans in general.

As fellow human beings, what we can do is provide support, provide motivation, and not make him feel inferior. If someone feels inferior, it will be difficult for him to communicate with others. Because they are afraid of being blamed, ridiculed, and even humiliated, this is often felt by children with special needs (ABK) because they feel they are not accepted by society.

According to Irda Murni (2018: 4), in the book *Understanding Children with Special Needs*, it is explained that Children with Special Needs (ABK) are those who are significantly different from children in general, are said to have special needs if they have significant deficiencies or even advantages compared to children in general.

According to J. David Smith (in Irda Murni 2018: 4-5) Children with Special Needs (ABK) are children who have significant abnormalities, deviations in various ways such as physical, mental, intellectual, sensorimotor, social, behavioral, emotional, or even all of them. during the growing season.

According to Irda Murni (2018: 8) disability or disability can cause psychological problems. This damage will cause serious problems, this causes children to experience difficulties in their activities. These obstacles cause emotional reactions that will cause impulsive symptoms such as low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

Parents need to provide good parenting patterns that need to be instilled since a husband and wife are married and preparing to have children. This waiting attitude is very important for a child to grow and develop so that he can also share this feeling of being loved, cared for, and cared for by his younger siblings and each other.

According to Siti Maimunawati and Muhammad Alif (2020:27-38), parents are those who have the main role in guiding children. Parents must be role models, educators, and teachers, evaluate, and give encouragement and support so that children have the motivation to achieve what they want. Parents play a major role in nurturing, guiding, setting an example, teaching children, and fulfilling children's needs physically and psychologically. The child's personality will be formed through the pattern and habits given by parents. If parents can set an example (example) and good habits it will have a good impact on the personality and development of children.

According to Siti Maimunawati and Muhammad Alif (2020:30-38), there are several concrete things that parents can do to create a comfortable atmosphere while studying, accompany children to study, set good examples, guide and advise children, and communicate with teachers. Provide guidance and advice to children so that children have intellectual and emotional maturity. So that children have mature abilities in terms of reasoning and speaking, are free to express opinions critically, and be able to give conclusions objectively.

According to Duvall and Logan (1986, accessed 30 November 2023), family is people who come together through marriage ties through birth or adoption to create, maintain the culture, and develop physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially the people in it. So the role of the family is very important in forming the character of children, especially parents.

With an attitude of acceptance from parents to children, the child's need for affection, attention, and other physical and spiritual needs will be sincerely fulfilled so that the child will develop properly. Even though the external environment rejects it, if the internal family environment accepts, motivates, and even supports its development, children will adapt more easily to the external environment because they have gained self-confidence.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Interpersonal Communication**

Communication is taken from Latin if it is interpreted as meaningful communication. Communication is the process of conveying a message by someone to another person whose purpose is to inform and modify attitudes, opinions, and behavior verbally or not. Communication will take place well if the message to be conveyed or the feedback that the communicator gives to the communicator can be interpreted properly.

Everett M Rogers and Lawrence Kincaid (1981) in a book entitled "Communication Network Toward a New Paradigm for Research" Communication is a process of exchanging information between two or more people which will create a sense of mutual understanding. Through interpersonal communication, it is hoped that there will be changes and developments after the communication takes place. Then there is an interaction of giving encouragement, inspiration, and encouragement so that there is a change in attitudes, behavior, and thoughts.

This communication will be successful if there is mutual openness, trust, mutual support, understanding, and respect for one another. Interpersonal communication that occurs between mother and child is a type of dyadic communication, namely communication with only two participants which can be in the form of relaxed conversations or deeper dialogues. This communication is carried out to improve the quality of mother and child relationships, overcome and avoid conflicts, share knowledge and experiences, and get to know oneself, others, and the environment.

## Social Interaction

Social interaction occurs dynamically or changes continuously. There are symbols that are used when interacting and there are values given to them by others. Social interaction according to experts is defined as a relationship between two or more people where each other influences, changes or makes improvements according to H Bonner (in Isnainia Solicha 2019: 78)

This formulation clearly has reciprocity where individuals make adjustments to each other with others. Social interaction occurs when social contact and communication go well. Social contact is the first step, while communication is the process of conveying messages, and giving views and actions on these messages.

Physical characteristics and appearance can be a source of information on the occurrence of social interaction and communication according to Karp and Yoels (in Muhammad Ali Ridho, 2019: 9). Physical characteristics are something that everyone must have from birth which includes gender, race, and age. Appearance is physical attractiveness, body shape, clothing appearance, and speech. Social interaction also has rules that can be seen with the dimensions of space and time according to Robert T Hall (in Muhammad Ali Ridho, 2019: 9).

Hall divides it into four distance limits, including intimate distance, personal distance, social distance, and public distance. In addition, Hall explained the rules of time where the time tolerance limit also affects the form of interaction. W. I Thomas also put forward one rule regarding social interaction, namely the situational dimension. The situation dimension is a person's interpretation before reacting.

## Self Concept

Self-concept is obtained by observing oneself so that we have an image and self-assessment. As William D. Brooks said (in Rakhmat 2018: 122) he defines self-concept as "those physical, social and psychological perceptions of ourselves that we have derived from our experiences and interactions with others". Self-concept is the perspective and feelings that we have towards ourselves which can be psychological, social, and physical.

It should be noted that self-concept is not only a description of a descriptive explanation but also a person's assessment and perspective of himself, what we think and feel about ourselves. There are 2 components of self-concept, namely cognitive and affective components. The cognitive component is also known as self-image, while the affective component is also known as self-esteem. There are two factors that influence self-concept, namely other people and reference groups Other people

An existentialist philosopher Gabriel Marcel (in Rakhmat, 2018: 124) writes about how the role of other people understands us. He said, "The fact is that we can understand ourselves by starting from the other, or others, and only by starting from them". These words mean that by

knowing other people we will also know ourselves because how other people judge you will shape our self-concept.

Harry S.S. (in Rakhmat 2018: 124) explains that there is a feeling of being accepted, valued, and respected by others because a situation tends to make us respect and accept ourselves. On the other hand, if other people belittle us, or reject us, it will have an impact on us who don't like and even hate ourselves.

In the end, we have judgments about the views of others as a whole towards us, this is generalized others. Seeing yourself as others see it means positioning yourself to be someone else. This concept was presented by George Herbert Mead.

### **Reference Group (Reference Group)**

Groups that directly and indirectly bind emotionally and have an impact on the creation of our self-concept are the notion of a reference group. Someone will tend to direct the behavior and adapt to the characteristics of the group. The norms that are run by the reference group will be a benchmark for a person's behavior concept, namely other people and reference groups

### ***The Effect of Self-Concept on Interpersonal Communication***

#### **1) Self-fulfilling prophecy**

A person's behavior according to his self-concept is known as a self-fulfilling prophecy. If a person has the thought that he can't then he really can't do anything. Conversely, if someone feels they can overcome the problem, then no matter how difficult the problem will be faced and overcome. Humans always try to live according to the label attached to them. "You don't think what you are, you are what you think".

Conversely, if an individual considers himself as someone who is low self-esteem, it will be difficult for him to give ideas to others, unable to speak in public, and there is hesitate to express opinions. A person's positive or negative self-concept greatly determines the level of success of interpersonal communication.

There are 4 signs when an individual has a negative self-concept, including: first, he is very sensitive to criticism given to him, meaning he will be easily offended if someone criticizes him. This criticism will be perceived as an attempt by others to eliminate his self-esteem. He prefers to disappear during open dialogue and continues to try to stick with his opinion even with faulty logic.

Second, very sensitive to praise even though he pretends to avoid it, he will look very enthusiastic. Everything that supports his self-esteem will be highly considered. They are also hypercritical. A hypercritical attitude is an attitude of giving criticism, reproach, and insults that

are very excessive to others. People who have a hypercritical attitude always complain, and can't see positive things in other people, it's very difficult for them to praise other people.

Third, he feels that he has never been liked by others and that no one wants to pay attention to him. Feeling that other people think negatively of themselves, thinking that other people are enemies. So in a friendly relationship, there is no feeling of warmth and familiarity. Instead, they always think of themselves as victims and never do self-examination.

Fourth, being pessimistic about competition, reluctant to do competition and competition, he considers competition as something that will make him lose. These four characteristics of negative self-concept were put forward by William D Brooks and Philip Emmert (in Rakhmat, 2018: 129-130).

On the other hand, there are 5 characteristics of someone who has a positive self-concept, including he has the belief that he can solve a problem, feels that everyone is the same including himself, is not ashamed when he receives praise, is aware that everyone has desires, behaviors, and feelings, which are different from each other so that we cannot make everyone agree with us. Finally, willing and able to make self-improvement because they are able to do self-introspection on aspects of their personality that they don't like and are willing to try to change for the better.

According to D.E. Hamachek (in Rakhmat, 2018: 130-131), there are 11 characteristics of someone who has a positive self-concept including:

- (a) He has a strong stance on the principles and values he adheres to so that he is able to defend them. But over time, based on experience and the latest evidence, if there are errors in these principles, he is also able to make changes to these principles
- (b) He acts based on good judgment without excessive guilt He wastes no time worrying about what will happen tomorrow
- (c) He has the confidence to be able to solve problems even when he fails
- (d) He realized that all people are equal
- (e) He knows he is someone who is important and valuable, at least for those closest to him
- (f) He can receive appreciation and appreciation without pretending to be humble and feeling guilty
- (g) He tends to reject other people who will dominate him
- (h) He is willing, to be frank, if he has an urge and desire
- (i) He enjoys himself to the fullest in all activities
- (j) He is sensitive to the needs of others
- (k) According to Sidney M. Jourard (in Rakhmat, 2018: 132), a communicant who has a positive self-concept is someone who is transparent and open to others

## 2) Open Yourself

Knowing ourselves will make interpersonal communication quality. Communicating with others makes us better knowledge and understanding of ourselves. The more in line with self-concept and experience, the more open we are to new experiences and ideas, avoid being defensive and look more carefully at ourselves and others.

From the previous explanation, there is a link between self-concept and self-disclosure which is explained more fully through the Johari Window concept. The Johari Window explains the level of openness and level of awareness about ourselves. The Johari Window can be explained through the following pictures:

**Figure 1. Johari Window**



Source : Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Psikologi Komunikasi Edisi Revisi (2019)

Based on the Johari Window image above, it can be explained as an open area that houses things that you and others know are called an open area. In this area usually someone already understands his strengths and weaknesses. The second part is the hidden area, which is something that you know, but other people don't know about it.

Then the blind area is the opposite of the hidden area, our blind area doesn't know everything but other people do. Someone will ask other people how other people see him. The last is the unknown area, the part where you and others do not know but only God knows. This section is usually potential that needs to be explored deeper.

So the wider our public, the more open and familiar we are to other people. The more we know about and about other people, the more familiarity will arise so that the window will be opened wider, and the openness will be even more intertwined.

## 3) Self Confidence

Confidence is a belief in one's own ability to increase positive judgments about oneself and others. Meanwhile, Anthony (in Ida N.Z, 2022: 9) says self-confidence is an individual attitude

in which a person can accept reality, increase self-awareness, have positive thoughts, be independent, and have the ability to get something they want.

#### 4) Selectivity

Self-concept will cause some selectivity, among others: selective exposure, selective perception, selective memory, and selective encoding. If someone has a negative self-concept, he will tend to make perceptions with negative reactions to himself. If someone feels stupid, then he will not care about the awards people give to his work. Precisely he will pay more attention to the criticism that others give this is the influence of self-concept on selective perception.

Self-concept will not only influence perception but will also affect what we remember. One more thing is selective encoding (selective encoding). Encoding is a process of compiling symbols to translate what is in our minds. Each of us composes a message that we will issue according to our self-concept.

### Parenting Style

Parenting is an activity in which individual and collective behavior will clearly influence a child's behavior (Darling in the University of Psychology, accessed 11 November 2022). Baumrind (in the University of Psychology, accessed 11 November 2022) explained that the parenting style adopted by parents will shape the character of the child. The character of children with good emotional skills will be formed if parents show their acceptance of children by giving love, educating, telling right and wrong things patiently, applying discipline and responsibility, and applying open communication.

Ulwan (in the University of Psychology, accessed 11 November 2022) gave a statement that a teenager's negative self-image will arise if they are treated cruelly, educated by beating, insulted by their own parents, ridiculed, and given negative words. Meanwhile, according to Irawati (in the University of Psychology, accessed 11 November 2022) on the contrary, good parenting is based on love and tenderness, followed by learning patterns that are appropriate to the development of the child's age and intelligence.

### Parenting Dimensions

#### 1) Responses or *Responsiveness*

Where parents are receptive to the presence of children is evidenced by the treatment given to children such as wanting to understand, listening to children's complaints, trying to meet children's needs, and reassuring their minds and bodies by giving appreciation to children. That way makes children feel welcome so they will be open to parents.

2) *Demandingness*

In addition to being responsive parents, parents also need to make parental demands on children. The demands here mean giving arrangements to children, making them more socially competent, having good intellectuality, and discipline requires arrangements from parents so that children are ready to face social life.

***Types of Parenting Styles***

- 1) Democratic Parenting: prioritizing the interests and freedoms of the child even though the child is still under the supervision of the parents. Parents are very rational about this type. Parents give freedom to children by being realistic about their children's abilities, so that children can comfortably tell stories to their parents. In this modern era, democratic parenting is needed because it will make children more open to their parents so that nothing is hidden.
- 2) Authoritarian Parenting: the child has no choice in this type of parenting, the child is obliged to carry out the rules that have been designed by the parents, if they commit a violation there will be a pending sanction. This parenting style uses one-way communication and no compromise.
- 3) Permissive Parenting: there is freedom given to children, children are allowed to do things without being supervised by parents. The tendency of parents will not give a warning when their child is in danger, and very little guidance is given. Even so, parents of this type are very warm to their children.

***Motivation Theory***

Motivation is a desire, encouragement, will, desire, or interest that comes from ourselves (internal) and around us (external). This urge arises because humans have a plan for something they want to get. Someone indirectly will have this motivation when they want something. Motivation is defined as a force that moves a person to take action to fulfill a desire.

Motivation comes from several languages, namely the Latin "movie" which means to move, and also the English "motivation" which means encouragement which is the reason why we have to carry out activities to achieve certain goals. In essence, motivation is a condition in which humans can arouse enthusiasm in themselves to immediately do something. Encouragement, hopes, desires, needs, interests, desires, and ideals are things that make a person highly motivated.

Maslow's Motivational Theory This theory was presented by Abraham Maslow called the Hierarchy of Human Needs Theory, currently, Maslow's theory is a very well-known theory for motivational theory. This theory contains the main human needs to be motivated to do something.

There are 5 levels in Maslow's pyramid where the lowest order is the priority that must be met first. Here is Maslow's pyramid with an explanation:

- 1) Physiological Needs : are basic human needs physically such as eating, drinking, clothing, shelter
- 2) Safety Needs (sense of security): is the need for a sense of security
- 3) Social Needs (affection): the human need to be able to meet and get acquainted with people who can be trusted
- 4) Esteem Needs (appreciation): needs related to honor, humans will create motivation so that they can be respected such as getting titles and status

Self Actualization (actualization): desire to be useful and can be relied upon by others. Someone wants to be a leader in order to have power and be able to make changes.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The subject of the research is the limitation that is carried out in the research, it can be determined by objects, things, or even people to attach a research variable (Suharsimi Arikunto: 2010, accessed November 17, 2022). The subjects of this study were parents who have school-age children with special needs (ABK). Research design is defined as a series of procedures and methods for analyzing and collecting data in determining research topic variables.

Research design is used to integrate various components logically and systematically so that when analyzing what happens in research it becomes logical, effective, and becomes a good research center. This study uses a qualitative research method, which means a research procedure in which the data is in the form of a description of the personal speech of the source, which is called descriptive data. The descriptive method is a method of researching a group of people, objects, conditions or systems of thought, or current classes.

\Qualitative research with a descriptive design provides a careful description of individuals and certain groups regarding the circumstances and symptoms that occur (Koentjaraningrat, 1993, accessed November 17, 2023). Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe, describe systematically factual things, the nature and interrelationships between the phenomena being investigated. According to Rukajat (2018: 1) there are descriptive characteristics such as describing an event, clarifying relationships, conducting hypothesis testing, predicting, and finding the meaning and implications of the problem to be solved.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Obstacles experienced by children such as difficulty speaking clearly, being seen as strange by other people who do not know them, and not being able to quickly and responsively

understand things that are happening around them. This can cause emotional reactions in the form of impulsive symptoms such as a lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, and even no motivation in life according to Irda Murni (2018: 8).

So good parenting will greatly influence the shape of a child's personality such as being confident, accepting and loving oneself, and having emotional skills so that he can carry himself when he meets other people. This is concerned with the formation of the child's self-concept, and how the child sees himself in front of himself and others.

So the role of parents in forming a positive child's self-concept is by following the child's will so that the child knows himself by himself, besides that also by telling what is allowed and what cannot be done and the main thing is to instill life values, namely so that the child is independent and have the will to learn.

In addition, the role of parents in increasing children's self-confidence is also discussed in a way that does not discriminate between treatment and siblings, while also encouraging children to carry out daily activities such as reciting the Koran, playing, studying, etc. In other words, parents want children to interact with the local community. Because self-confidence is the ability to convince oneself of one's own abilities to develop positive judgments for oneself and others.

With this self-confidence, children will have motivation in life to do things they like. Motivation is a desire, desire, encouragement, interest, or deep desire that comes from ourselves and from around us. So to have motivation one must have a goal or desire in life. Parents provide motivation by giving positive affirmations to give an understanding that they can do whatever children generally do so enthusiasm is needed, and continue to encourage children to learn and be independent. Because motivation comes from two things, namely yourself and others. So parents try to give motivation so that children have the enthusiasm to achieve their dreams.

Like the type of motivation from Maslow, namely Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Abraham Maslow (1943) these children have a burning enthusiasm when talking about their aspirations, some want to become radio broadcasters, police officers, even bakery owners, and so on, this is one of the needs. someone including children with special needs, namely self-actualization needs, namely the need to show one's expertise, so parents continue to encourage children to learn a lot

In addition to doing activities by interacting which is a social need/belonging, namely the desire to interact with others, there will be a lot of learning and experience. Parents tirelessly instill life values in their children, so that they will become provisions for their children when they grow up, namely to become independent children and always want to learn, and do not need to focus on other people who don't like them or look at their condition strangely.

Although to provide understanding requires patience, process, and more time than children in general. But with this process, they will understand and see themselves as able to do what others do. If a person sees himself positively and has good self-confidence. This will facilitate

the child's progress in life because he believes that he can do it as the saying goes "You don't think what you are, you are what you think" Then it will affect the motivation that is in him to develop the potential that is in him.

So based on the results of the interviews, it can be said that the role of parents is very important in forming self-concept, providing motivation, and increasing self-confidence in children with special needs because parents, especially mothers, are the first madrasah for their children. By encouraging children to interact with fellow individuals in carrying out daily activities such as studying, looking after stalls, reciting the Koran, etc

## CONCLUSIONS

So it can be concluded that the role of parents has a very big and important impact in forming a positive self-concept and providing motivation and support for self-confidence in children with special needs. Encouragement from parents to continue learning, being independent, and interacting with the community are concrete things that parents do to make children have a positive self-concept, have motivation, and have confidence in their lives.

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